



## GENERAL COMMENTS

In 2010 the examination paper consisted of three sections: Section A required a response to one text, Section B required a response to a prompt related to a selected Context and Section C required completion of two different tasks in response to unseen material.

Assessment is holistic, using the published assessment criteria. Assessors relate student performance directly to these criteria. Their judgments are assisted by the use of a set of descriptors. Both the criteria and the descriptors are fully explored and directly related to the range of student responses in intensive assessor training before and during the marking process. Teachers and students should be aware of the assessment criteria, the descriptors and the sample examination paper, which are published on the VCAA website.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

### Section A – Text Response

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	1	1	2	7	13	19	23	19	10	4	1	5.8

Students were required to produce one piece of analytical or expository writing in response to one text. There were two topics for each of the 20 prescribed texts. This was the third year of the VCE English/ESL study in which knowledge of the text includes the ways in which authors use structures, features and conventions to construct meaning and the assessment descriptors include ‘... consideration of its concepts and construction’. While some students incorporated references to structural features, this was more evident with films, with not a lot of students addressing this aspect of non-film texts. Reference to imagery and symbols needs to be blended with the discussion or analysis in the essay. In mid-range responses the attempt to include such features was often expressed awkwardly and disconnected from the body of the response.

The more successful responses demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the topics and texts through an ability to craft meaningful, analytical and relevant discussion in direct response to the chosen question. The best responses were able to weave knowledge of the text skilfully into the fabric of the analysis. Student writing generally reflected awareness of the construction and interpretation of texts but less sophisticated responses still focused on the plot. Almost all responses displayed some knowledge of the text and an adequate knowledge of essay structure.

While all set texts were used in student responses, the five most popular texts were used in 82% of responses. The most popular texts and their mean scores are shown in the table below.

Text	% of students	Average mark
<i>Look Both Ways</i>	37 %	5.7
<i>Maestro</i>	19.7 %	5.7
<i>A Man for All Seasons</i>	10.6 %	6.2
<i>Cosi</i>	8.1 %	5.7
<i>Interpreter of Maladies</i>	6.5 %	5.7

The overall mean score was 5.76.

Stronger responses were characterised by a sharp focus on the key words in the topics, selective and considered use of the text, and ideas expressed with strong language skills. There were very few short or incomprehensible responses. In planning, students need to brainstorm all the key words as well as pay particular attention to modifying words and comparatives within the question. A well-planned response is less likely to slip into retelling the story or trying to adapt a pre-prepared response to fit the question. Students need to be able to explore how texts are constructed and the effects of the writer’s choices in developing a narrative.

*Look Both Ways* was clearly the most popular choice. In responding to the first topic, discussion of film techniques was strong but a limited reading of the topic led some students to confine their responses to what characters learnt in general



terms from the mortality of others rather than what they learnt about themselves. Students who carefully read the topic wrote about the impact of the 'mortality of others', but some made little distinction between the impact of other characters' mortality and other factors upon a particular character. In some responses to the second topic, students began a discussion they couldn't sustain with evidence from the text or simply responded from a personal perspective.

Both questions on *Maestro* elicited some detailed, precise and relevant responses. The first question allowed for discussion of a range of characters central to the novel and strong responses did this successfully. The less successful students limited their discussion to one character. The second question invited discussion of the role that music played in relationships. The less successful students wrote about music in general rather than the effect on relationships.

The responses to *A Man for All Seasons* showed a strong understanding of the historical period, but responses derived from practice essays lacked relevance to the topic. Some lengthy responses appeared to ignore the topics altogether. In strong responses to the first question students worked through the notion of fear as a motivating aspect for the characters and differentiated different types of fear as well as writing about a range of characters.

The first question on *Cosi* produced a range of responses. The topic invited a discussion of the happy/sad contradiction but some students ignored the comical element in the play and focused only on the sadness. Some very good responses sustained a discussion of the black humour in the play – that behind the one liners and comical behaviour were the sad lives of these characters. Many responses to the second question were limited to a superficial analysis of what Lewis learnt about himself or what Lewis and others learnt, rather than what Lewis learnt 'about himself and others'.

Both questions on *Interpreter of Maladies* contained a number of complex ideas. Some responses to the first question explored loneliness in general rather than in the context of the characters' ordinary lives. Attempts to include all the stories often resulted in superficial analysis.

In preparing students, teachers need to spend time looking at how the text is constructed, the point of view of the author and the message for the audience rather than merely looking at what happened, the themes and the characters. Students need to develop writing skills which will enable them to adroitly weave references to structural features and the values of the text into their responses. Questions invite students to demonstrate their own thinking on the text by unpacking topics in ways which explore the question fully. With short stories, students often find it difficult to move beyond telling the story; they need to be encouraged to look for the links and connections between the stories.

### Student Response – Example 1

This response is controlled, relevant and well structured. It demonstrates strong language skills as it analyses relationships in depth, making appropriate and selective use of the text. The minor lapses in expression are common in ESL student writing. This is an example of a high-scoring response.

### What role does music play in the relationships in *Maestro*?

*Peter Goldsworthy's 'Maestro' demonstrates that music is a 'common language' that can act as the 'sticky glue' for developing and maintaining relationships. He attempts to instil this notion within the audience by exploring the relationships that exist between Paul's parents, Paul and Keller, Paul and Rosie and also Paul and the members of the band 'Rough Stuff'. These relationships are constructed as the characters show a common interest in music. Consequently, in this novel, relationships flourish allowing the characters to understand each other in a more deeper level, through music.*

*Paul's parents who are portrayed as 'polarities' in fact lead a happy life together in each other's company. This is evident when Paul describes his parents as having different opinions or views about even the 'most ordinary noun'. However their conflicting views do not act as a barrier for their happiness. In fact, Paul suggests that their differences have been proven insignificant in the light of music. Even though Paul's father appreciates music in a different way than Paul's mother, who makes 'more mistakes' but in the end 'has more fun', it is this common sense of passion that runs between these 'polarities' that unites them and bind them together 'spiritually' and emotionally.*

*The very beginning of the relationship that blossoms between Paul and Rosie, the 'other smart kid', can be attributed to their shared interest in music. Although Rosie is not initially admired by Paul, Rosie's persistence in wanting to learn music allows Paul to take on a teacher role. Consequently, Rosie's company during every lunch time with Paul strengthens their relationship gradually. Although Paul does not feel the 'love or lust' for Rosie until they sit 'pressing thigh', the lunchtime sessions between the two characters seems to serve as the uniting aspect of their relationship. Moreover, it is evident that Rosie's interest in music fuels her interest in Paul, whose musical capabilities can only be found in 'one in a thousand'. This suggests that the blossoming of Paul and Rosie's relationship took place in the light of music.*



Furthermore, one of the most important relationships explored in this novel, is the connection between Paul and Keller. It is clearly evident that this relationship develops due to the opportunity provided by music. Although Paul's 'initial impression' of Keller are associated with 'arrogance' and 'invulnerability' as indicated by the harsh narrative voice, the common goal of musical achievement allows those two protagonists to construct a deeper and more meaningful relationship. This is demonstrated when Paul states that 'how much I have come to love the man. To depend on him'. Their shared interest in music allows this relationship to mature significantly to such an extent where Paul is able to learn invaluable life lessons from his music lessons, such as the 'self-satisfied go no further' and 'to never trust the beautiful'. Likewise Keller also adopts a fatherly figure as the novel progresses. His 'affection' for Paul grows and enables Keller to relate to Paul as his 'own son'. This is illustrated when he is willing to reveal his tragic past. When Keller states 'I tell this for you, not for me' Keller's genuine concern for Paul is indicated. Similarly, Keller's constant advice to Paul, who at the time perceived it as an insult to his musical capabilities, were indeed aimed to indicate the 'complexity of the world'. In this sense, both Keller and Paul strengthen their relationship and change immensely through the path of music. Although as the novel progresses, Paul writes to Keller 'infrequently' and views him a 'small-town drunk', Peter Goldsworthy clearly indicates their relationship endures as Paul discovers more about Keller in Vienna. This allows Paul to understand Keller more clearly. This is exemplified when he states 'Perhaps I was mistaken. Perhaps they were not the same man in a sense'. As Paul decides to accompany Keller during his final days in Darwin, Paul demonstrates that their relationship has in fact endured and music is a powerful source of influence that has the ability to bind individuals together.

Moreover, Paul's association with the members of the Rough Stuff can also be attributed to their common desire in music. Although Paul's musical abilities lie within the realms of the piano, he asserts that he can 'play everything'. Consequently, he is able to 'tame' the perceived bullies of his school: Jimmy, Scotty and Regie. This is evident when he states that 'music, the universal common language' has come to provide him with the 'permanent protection in the schoolyard'. Due to this he is also able to become a member of short-lived band: 'Rough Stuff'. Through his 'musical talent', he earns respect and admiration from his band, which includes Megan, who in the end presented herself as a 'disappointment'. Nonetheless, Paul's ability to obtain a 'safe conduct into even the darkest corners of the covered area' and become a valid member of the 'Rough Stuff' band is indeed due to the common bond of music.

The novel 'Maestro' demonstrates the life journey of the various characters through the path of music. As an important aspect of the life journey, the characters converge and develop important relationships. The common interest in music binds these characters together enabling them to strengthen their relationship. Consequently, through music, the characters' relationship with each other allow them to mature and grow.

## Student Response – Example 2

This mid-range response to *A Man for All Seasons* is organised, structured and attempts to stay relevant to the question. There is a clear structure around three characters and fear. It begins by contrasting the way fear acts differently on the characters and demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the text. Ideas are supported from the text even though clarity is sometimes affected by the limited expression skills.

### **'Fear is a significant and powerful influence on the characters in the play.' Discuss.**

Robert Bolt's play 'A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS' depicts the story of the conflict between the conscience and the fear that they can not satisfy their desire. The fear for a human not only means the dread by the coerce of the hegemony, but also the fear that lose wealth. Cromwell as a man service to the King, he afraid that king will get back everything he own even his life. Richard as a man have a desire could never be fill up, he afraid lose all the wealth. Thus they can do the thing that would sully their conscience. But not More. He also fear that he will lose these, however the conscience is more important for him. Nothing could change him.

The treasure of life would make human give in to the hegemony. Everyone have one life. If we died, that means we lose everything. Everyone afraid to lose their life. The character Cromwell shows this view. He did everythings as what King told him. And he never care if it is right. The needs of king would be the most important in the world. If he refused the needs of the king, he will lose his life. Life means everything. The conscience could make people eulogized him, but it could not help him to alive. The compare of each makes him be a man refuse conscience and choose the life. Therefore sometimes the fear of losing life will change a man.

The fear of losing wealth would makes people throw away their conscience. For some people whose desire could never be fill up, losing wealth would be a thing equal to kill them. The conscience for them is also a goods, they can trade it if it worth. The character Rich Richard is a good example for this opinion. By the behaviour that he provided the fake evidence to exchange the power and wealth, Richard shows his conscience could be trade, it has a price. The power and wealth he got worth the lose of his conscience. Thus, the fear comes from lose wealth for a man who controlled his desire hardly will be a strong influence to him.

In contrast, Thomas More conflict this view, that not everyone's conscience can be traded. More as man face a situation that he need to choose his life, wealth and power or his conscience. The conscience for someone else could be worthless. However, the conscience for More worth everything. Nothing could exchange his conscience. It would sully his conscience. His decision makes



*him lose everything, but he still hold his value. Nothing could makes him fear. Thus, not everyone would be fear to lose everything.*

*In conclusion, the coerce from hegemony and wealth could be a significant and powerful influence on the human, but not everyone would be affected by this. More's choice demonstrate that it still have some people can resist fear.*

## Section B – Writing in Context

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	1	1	2	7	15	21	24	16	8	3	1	5.5

Students were required to complete an extended written response which was an expository, persuasive or imaginative piece of writing. They were required to base the writing on the ideas in the prompt and draw directly from the selected text studied in the Context. All set texts were used in student responses. Better responses were characterised by original ideas in response to the prompt and an ability to link these ideas to a broad range of texts. In some responses the ideas were explored through thought-provoking and insightful personal stories, often beginning with an interesting anecdote. Some responses clearly attempted to include a 'point of difference'. However, the most obvious weakness was a tendency to write another text response, using the prompt as a text response question with little or no reference to ideas outside the selected text. Responses of this type usually began with a short introduction then gave a long analysis of the text and a brief reference to the prompt. Some wrote directly to the text without first presenting ideas that the text illuminated. The less successful responses began with a standard definition of the Context without grappling with the prompt or indicating how the task would be approached.

There was a broad range of writing beyond 'text response', which included reflective and personal pieces as well as creative pieces. Some students ignored the prompts and wrote to the Context, and a few also wrote about personal experience only. There were a few responses where students used the prompt from one Context with a text from another Context.

Assessment was based on the interrelationship among:

- the quality of ideas, as formed through the Context and text
- understanding of the implications of the prompt
- the quality of writing.

Just over 60 per cent of the responses were to Context 4 – Exploring issues of identity and belonging. *Growing up Asian in Australia* was the most popular text, used in 45 per cent of responses to this Context, while *Witness* was used in 38 per cent of responses. Students' writing generally dealt with the idea that it can be difficult to feel as though you belong. Stronger responses addressed the individual's sense of being different (or one's own feelings about belonging) as distinct from group expectations or pressure to conform. Some struggled with the phrase 'sense of being different ...' and wrote about 'common sense' or the 'five senses'. This limited understanding of the prompt produced simplistic responses condemning being different and praising the idea of abnegating the self in order to 'belong'. A great variety of resources was used in responses to this prompt. *Witness* and *Growing Up Asian in Australia* were well used but also produced some problems. The use of *Witness* produced a lot of storytelling. Alice Pung did not write all the stories and even though some of the stories in *Growing Up Asian in Australia* are very short, some responses had incorrect story details.

Context 3, Encountering conflict, was chosen by 28 per cent of students. In this Context *The Crucible* was the most popular text, used in 56 per cent of responses, while *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif* was used in 24 per cent of responses. The negative construction of the prompt was difficult for some students. Some responses indicated a misunderstanding or a lack of attention to the prompt. Some interpreted it as 'difficult to avoid' conflict rather than 'difficult not to get involved'.

Context 1, The imaginative landscape, was chosen by 5 per cent of students. *Island* was the most popular text, used in 41 per cent of these responses. *Island* and *The Poetry of Robert Frost* were both used well in responses to this Context.

Context 2, Whose reality?, was chosen by only 4.3 per cent of students. *A Streetcar Named Desire* was overwhelmingly the most popular text, used in over 90 per cent of these responses. This prompt worked very well, and students were able to use it effectively with all the selected texts. Strong responses focused on living metaphorically, not just literally 'in a world created by other people', while weaker responses included banal descriptions of 'a world created by parents'.





It is recommended that the Section B response be taught as a writing task and not as a text task. Working with the ideas of the prompt should be the focus of this piece of writing. The Context is about exploring ideas and students need lots of classroom practice at teasing out ideas before they address the selected text. It will be a source of ideas to explore later in their study. In the best pieces of writing it will not dominate. Models of student writing should be used to explore how connections between texts, the prompt and students' own experiences are made. This task rewards students who read widely, consider ideas carefully and synthesise them. Students need an 'idea bank' and an 'example bank' from which to draw on for this writing. Not every item in the 'bank' can be used with a particular prompt or stimulus. Students should be encouraged to keep their own files of material during the year, including keeping reflections in a journal. Teachers should provide students with a number of activities which encourage them to write a variety of pieces in different forms and styles. Choosing to write three short and different pieces for the school-assessed task is one way of doing this. Teachers could also model different ways in which the ideas of the chosen text could be incorporated into a piece of writing.

### Student Response – Example 1

This strong response to Context 4 demonstrates the potential of this task to draw on very different writing skills from those required for Section A. The response is sustained and thoughtful. It provides evidence of considering the prompt beyond the text and draws appropriately on texts and other sources.

*Human beings are all quite different from each other, but are the same species. Our main difference with other animals is our higher innate intelligence and the ensuing advanced social structure. Human society is built around commerce and other such material concepts, but the strongest thread binding us together is having similarities which allow us to form communities. Since having similarities is the bedrock of our existence, being different can affect our ability to belong to communities and therefore affect a fundamental need akin to food, shelter and clothing. It is important to analyse how being different, or thinking that you are different, affects your ability to belong.*

*Recently, Australian Rules footballer Dermott Brereton 'tweeted' (posted on twitter) ever tried being blond in downtown Seng Xeng?' Although it is a superficial example it illustrates the effects that presumably small differences can have on people. Appearance is the first thing that makes an impression, and therefore plays a large role in determining whether you 'fit in' or not. A 'different' appearance affects a person's social standing and indeed his own perception of himself. Recent migrants to Australia can be traumatised as a result of this phenomenon. 'Being different was like a free ticket for all the playground bullies to indulge'/ the proverb goes 'beauty is skin deep'. But the effects of being judged purely on your appearance are profound and lasting and make it quite difficult to belong to a group.*

*Further differences may encompass language, culture and prejudices. Language is the single most important factor in communication, and being unable to speak the major language of the country can cripple a person's social life. This can prompt abandonment of your original language in order to embrace the new, but this leads to further problems. Ivy Tseng in 'Growing Up Asian in Australia' shuns Chinese in favour of English. She succeeds in belonging at her school community and the wider social strata, but her disfluent Chinese acts as a barrier between Ivy and her father. Therefore it is clear that belonging to one group can adversely affect belonging to another. Speaking about cultured, John book in 'Witness' presents an ideal case study. Thrust into a conservative Amish community in Philadelphia, his perception as an 'English' authority figure by the Amish hinders his attempts to blend in. Culture and prejudices are large factors in formation of ghetto areas. A ghetto is inhabited by a vocal minority, who establish a sort of 'home away from home' location and 'vibe'. The Jewish and African-American ghettos in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century United States are an example. A sense of being different from the majority of inhabitants in a country makes it difficult to blend in and belong, prompting a form of 'us vs. them' mentality and banding together in search of a community that they can belong to. Such 'cultural hotspots' can also be found in Australia; Lygon Street, Victoria Street and Springvale are a few examples.*

*To draw on a more personal example, as well as some observation, I too found it difficult to belong to a new group of people when I first arrived in Australia. When I first arrived in Australia I had heard 'horror stories' of South Asian migrants being bullied and targeted in violent crimes. This knowledge... made me quite reticent. As a result I was essentially on my own for the first three or four weeks. As time passed however, my anxiety levels dropped and I was successful in belonging to my new school community and making friends. Here too, a sense of being different in both appearance and language, hindered my initial attempts at belonging.*

*This effect can also work in reverse. It is important to differentiate between 'being different' and 'having a sense of being different'. Your mental status and pre-conclusions may harm your sense of belonging. The aforementioned John Book did not differ drastically from the Amish in appearance. His own mental status affects his interactions with members of the community. When he speaks to Rachel Lapp, at whose house he is staying for the course of the investigation, after they were close to being intimate, he says to her 'If I had slept with you last night, either I would have to stay or you would have to go.' This example illustrates how he feels that he is 'different' from the Amish, and how it affects his belonging to the community. A similar experience occurred to me and some of my cousins who were born in Australia. When we went back to ... for a holiday, they were unsure of the events occurring around them and were reluctant to talk to other people. Despite 'blending in' perfectly regarding appearance, their sense of 'being different' made it difficult for them to fully belong.*



*In conclusion, it is indeed true that having a sense of being different makes it difficult to belong. Since belonging is an integral part of a healthy life and mind, this issue is especially important. Differences such as appearance, language and cultural aspects of our lives can cause this. It is important that we properly manage all these factors, and succeed in living happy, well-adjusted lives.*

**Student Response – Example 2**

This mid-range response uses the text and the student’s own experience to demonstrate an understanding of the prompt. It challenges the prompt and displays an engaging liveliness despite the significant expression difficulties. The language is simple but manages to express the ideas.

*In this world, everyone is unique, everyone is different. When we are born, we have already belonged to different groups. At school, we belong to our class. At company, we belong to our work team. At home, we belong to our family. In all this places, we all have different identities, however, we go together, belong to some group.*

*Everyone has not only one identity. I have many identities as well. I have been to Australia for three years. When I first came to here, everything is terrible for me. Everyday has many challenge for me. When I got into my first school. I did not know anyone from there. I had no friends. Also at the start, I was so lonely and did everything by myself because I scared of talk to others. I thought everyone speak very good english and if I talk to them, they might laughed at me. One day, I was sitting by myself as usual. Suddenly, one group of people came up to me and asked my name and made friend with me. After that I did not fell lonely anymore. All of us have different background but we also can come together. All of us have different sense but we still can be into a group. In Catcher in the Rye Holden Caulfield is a loner though he has many identities as me. Why does he belong to the groups so hard? The answer is he does not want to belong to any groups. For Holden Caulfield, having a sense of being different makes it difficult to belong. Holden Caulfield thinks the world is full of phoney. At school, he does not have many friends. At home, he does not talk to much to his family. Even he leaves school, he does not tell this to his parents. He scaries of face with his parents because he thinks his parents come from the phoney world not like him. If people have different senses with him, then he thinks people betray him. That is why he is difficult to belong.*

*At the end of The Catcher in the Rye, Holden Caulfield has mental breakdown because he has never belonged to any groups, always stay with himself. But me, I live very happy everyday. I have people to love, have people to talk with. Although we have different senses, we still can belong to the same group. Having a sense of being different does not really make it difficult to belong. Whatever we have different senses, if we open our heart, listen other’s opinion, try to understand others. Then different senses will not make it difficult to belong.*

*Overall, having a sense of being different does not really makes it difficult to belong. It depends how you face to them. If you want to belong, there will be nothing can stop you.*

**Section C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)**

**Part 1**

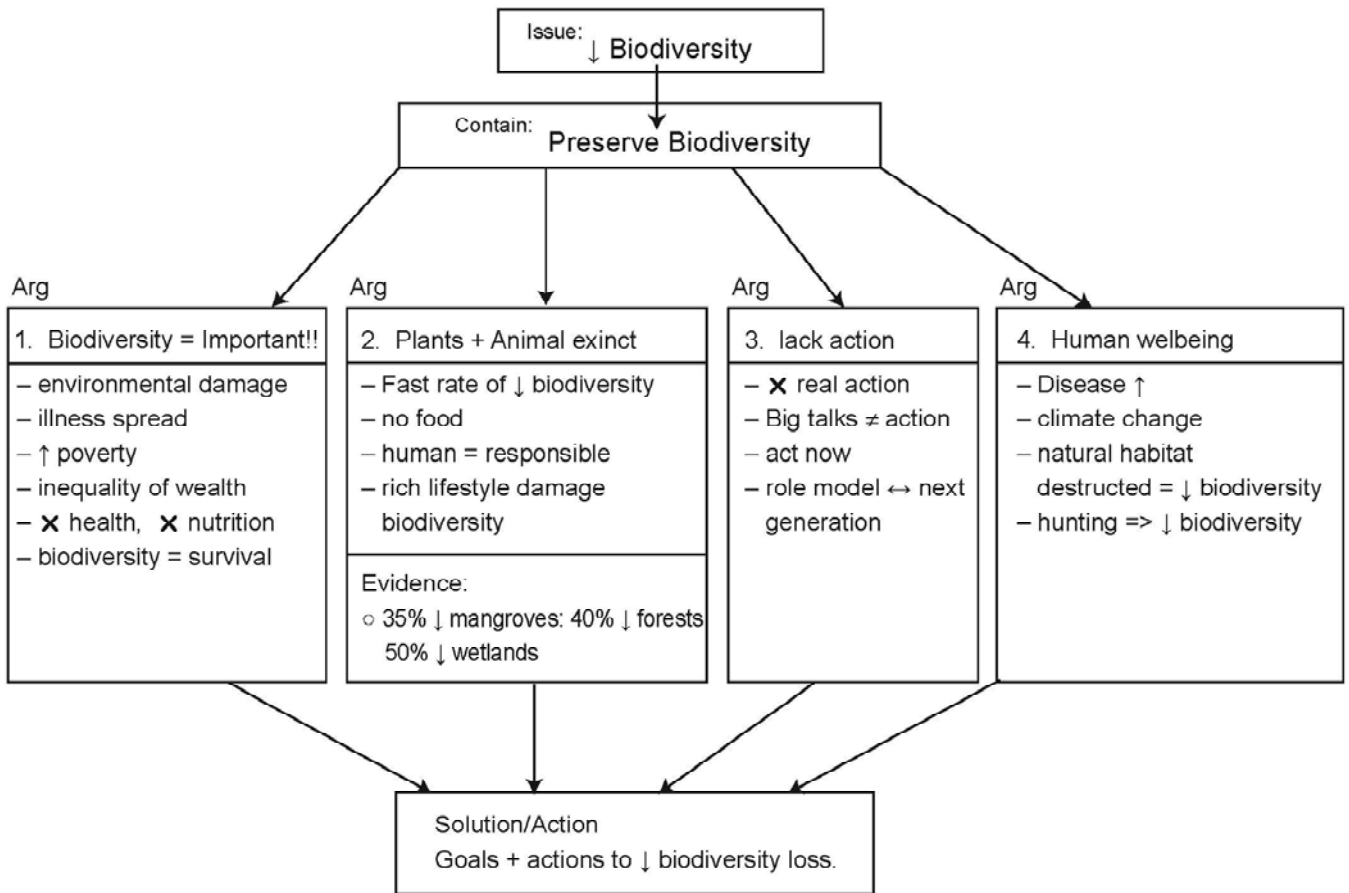
Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	2	5	9	14	18	18	16	10	3	1	5.2

The unseen material for this task was both abstract and practical. The key knowledge and skills required for these tasks, while challenging for second language learners, are a vital part of demonstrating an ability to use English in a first language environment.

The task material about the importance of reducing the rate of biodiversity loss was contemporary and the language was accessible. The form of a speech with supporting visuals was engaging and authentic. The note-taking responses demonstrated general understanding of the task and the material. Most students were able to identify at least three ideas, although some missed ideas that were embedded in the material but not explicitly stated; for example, there has been insufficient action to halt the loss of biodiversity and ‘we’ have a responsibility to lead. Although clearly understanding ‘biodiversity’, some missed the concept of ‘reducing the rate of biodiversity loss’. For/against was not an appropriate strategy for this material but some students struggled nevertheless to present a response in this form. Diagrams used in strong responses organised the material around the flow of argument rather than the structure of the speech. Weaker responses were characterised by the random use of lines or arrows which did not make meaningful connections. Others demonstrated selection of some of the ideas, but not understanding of the whole argument.

**Student Response – Example 1**

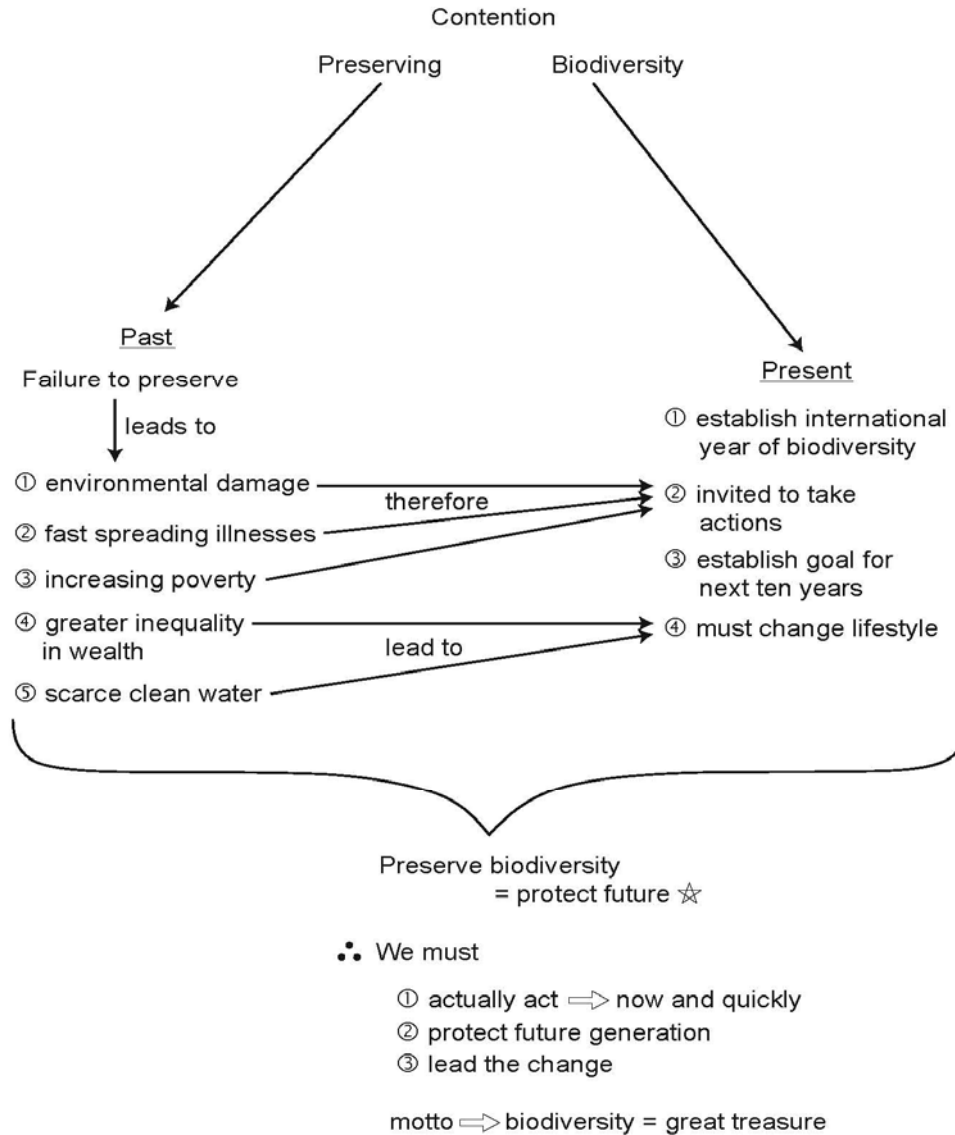
This response demonstrates an understanding of the material and an ability to select the key ideas and show how these ideas are linked to the main message of the speech. The structure used conveyed this in a meaningful way.





**Student Response – Example 2**

This response demonstrates similar skills to Example 1, but uses a different method of presentation.



**Part 2**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	5	4	7	12	16	18	15	13	7	2	1	4.7

In Part 2, some students struggled with the distinction between argument analysis and language analysis. The more successful responses demonstrated an awareness of the context of the speech and were characterised by perceptive comments about language and how it positioned listeners. Most students wrote something of value with some analysis. The less successful responses simply gave a description of what the writer was saying, writing only about ‘argument’ or labelling the language without any attention to ‘how’ it works to persuade. Some misunderstood the form and context of the speech. Nearly all responses made some reference to the visuals (although some only cursory) and many to the different ways statistics were used.

It is a concern that there was a small but significant number of responses which indicated a lack of awareness of the task requirements, such as answering Part 2 only, listing techniques with examples from the text (without analysis) or writing an argumentative piece. This is now the third year of this task and it is disappointing to note that a number of responses were not structured as an analysis of three points of argument. Some students are still organising their





analysis by devices; for example, paragraph one includes rhetorical questions, paragraph two includes authority figures, and paragraph 3 includes visual items. Others are going through the text from the start to the conclusion.

Model answers such as the two models on the VCAA website can be used as a guide to explaining what this task requires. Students should practise note-taking from shorter 'persuasive' pieces, presenting their notes in a variety of ways. It should not be assumed that a neat division of points into advantage/disadvantage or yes/no will always be possible. These skills are developed through practice and could be connected to other areas of study; for example, using material related to the Context study, and practised from early in the year. Short letters from the media which present only one point of argument using several persuasive strategies are a useful starting point for Part 2. Generic explanations of language devices are insufficient; knowledge of a writer's possible tactics must be applied directly to the unseen passage. Students should look for subtleties in language choices, focus on specific words and phrases and fully explore their connotations and emotional impact with an awareness of the characteristics of the audience.

### Student Response – Example 1

This high-range response, although well written, makes assumptions about the impact of the speech on the audience. Each paragraph uses a point of argument to launch into analysis of how the writer uses language and the visuals to attempt to persuade.

*This transcript of the opening speech given by Professor Chris Lee at the International Biodiversity Conference 2010 addresses the issue of biodiversity, its importance and the actions human have taken to preserve it.*

*For his opening slide, Professor Lee used a visual that shows human, an adult and a child, holding hands in harmony whilst surrounded by animals and plants, all designed around the year 2010. This visual shows the importance of biodiversity. Professor Lee began his speech by quoting the United Nations' statement of declaring 2010 to be the 'International Year of Biodiversity', and then quickly added two rhetorical questions, 'Has this been a year of celebration of life on earth? Has this, in fact, been a year of action?' to pull the audience back into reality. By using these questions, Professor Lee made the audience feel intrigued and interested to find out what has actually been done to preserve biodiversity. Professor Lee also brought up the fact that many countries committed to achieve 'significant' reduction in biodiversity loss eight years ago, however, he expressed sadness, implying that not much action has actually been taken.*

*Biodiversity is extremely important. Professor Lee emphasises the importance of biodiversity by outlining many problems associated with the 'failure' to preserve it. Knowing that problems like environmental damage, illnesses, poverty and so on arise from human's lack of actions, the audience would feel guilty and responsible, and would review the role that they had played in this issue. Lee also generalised that biodiversity is important to all people, be it rich or poor, as everybody depends on biodiversity one way or another. However, he emphasises that it is particularly important for the '1.1 billion people who live in extreme poverty'. This would cause people who are 'well-off' to feel guilty and trigger their conscience.*

*Biodiversity on earth is in a bad condition. Professor Lee used statistics to make the audience feel more convinced about the how bad the current situation is like. Animals and plants are becoming extinct, forests and wetlands are lost, all because of human actions. Professor Lee included the audience by saying that its because of 'our' thoughtless actions that is causing these extinctions, to get the audience to feel more involved in this important issue and to make the audience feel that they too are responsible, that they too play a part in this issue. He also said that 'it is essential to human well being that we reverse this negative trend.'*

*Action should be taken now to preserve biodiversity. Professor Lee used subtle sarcasm by asking the audience 'Why haven't we done more? What example are we giving to the next generation...' despite 'we' being the 'most educated' generation that has ever lived. Also, the use of emotive language like 'lack of genuine commitment', 'wonderful words', 'glossy brochures', 'inspiring documentaries' and so on show how lacking we are in addressing this issue. The visual he used in his closing slide shows a pair of hands holding the globe in their palms. This is significant as it shows that whatever we, humans, do would impact the earth, it is in our power to preserve biodiversity and ultimately preserve the earth for future generations.*

### Student Response – Example 2

This mid-range response has some awareness of the task and moves between explaining and an attempt at analysis. It reveals some understanding of how writers attempt to persuade but struggles to apply it accurately to the passage.

*The speaker points out the damaging effects that we fail to preserve biodiversity, like increasing environmental damage and fast-spreading illnesses and so on to make the audience to feel a sense of guilt about not doing well in protecting our earth and make people worry about these negative environmental damage will in turn effects our lives. By using the first pronoun like 'we' 'us', the speaker attempts to make the audience think we all share responsibility for our earth. So most audiences will in support in the speaker's view that we should preseve 'biodiversity'.*

# 2010 Assessment Report



*After increasing the audiences' confidence, the speaker points out that terrible facts of the nature rate of extinctions. The speaker uses a lot of statistic to show that fact which increasing the authority of the argument. By using a logic tone to describe the terrible situations currently in our globe make the audience be swayed to feel alarmed. And the speaker the facts on a logical base positions the audience think that the speaker are persuading them in a reliable fact rather than the speaker's simple emotion. So most people will agree with the speaker.*

*At last, the speaker uses many rhetorical questions to attempt to draw the audiences' attention on how should we do to reverse the bad situations. By using 'we' to make the reader to feel a sense of togetherness and suggests that if we got together, we can make it better to change the situations. By using the photographic, it persuade the audiences to think that our earth is so vulnerable, and it need us to protect and love it.*