Researching, revising and editing

Chapter overview

The art of being able to revise and then edit one's work is a difficult art indeed. Every author (at some point) will face the dilemma of having to delete a passage so brilliant, yet so irrelevant, that it almost hurts. However, as Mark Twain suggests, replacing the almost right word (or paragraph) with the right word (or paragraph) is necessary in order to produce superior work.

In addition to revising and editing, quality work begins with quality research. Research has been described as 'finding something brilliant that's waiting to be found if you seek it hard enough'; it is not just about typing a few key words into a search engine; it's about curiosity and persistence—going further than others to find information.

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.

Mark Twain (1835–1910), novelist

Building better paragraphs and essays

The written word is all around us. Whenever you read a sign on a shop window, send a text asking your parents to pick you up, or read the nutritional information on the cereal boxes at breakfast time, you are engaging with the written word.

English, at its most basic level, is made up of little bits of sounds (such as 'th' and 'er') known as phonemes. These phonemes, when combined, make words. When combined correctly, they make a sentence. From here, sentences are joined to make paragraphs and then a series of united paragraphs make an essay.

Many pieces of work are let down by the construction of their paragraphs. All too often paragraphs lack cohesion and focus, and never lead the reader to any conclusion or end. Paragraphs should be considered the building blocks for an essay. Part of the editing and revising process must include focusing on paragraph construction to ensure that paragraphs follow logically and contain a topic sentence and supporting sentences.

Paragraphs

A paragraph is a collection of sentences that all relate to one main idea. This means that every sentence in the paragraph must be about the same topic or idea.

There are lots of different ways to structure a paragraph; however, one of the most effective ways is through a process known as TEEEL.

TEEEL

T = topic sentence

A topic sentence organises the whole paragraph and contains the subject to which all other sentences relate. It makes a statement that the other sentences expand upon, describe or explore, or prove (with evidence) in some way. For example:

It's a sad thing, but not everybody who writes in English loves the Roman alphabet.

What do you think every sentence in this paragraph is going to be about? That's right—why not everybody loves the Roman alphabet!

DID YOU KNOW...

The Roman alphabet is the most widely used alphabet in the world. Not only do we use it to write English, but French, Spanish, Italian and many other European languages as well.

E = expand

To expand your topic sentence you must provide more detail about the statement being made. This is where you begin to give specific information and build your argument. For example:

The main complaint is that the Roman alphabet was really meant to write the sounds of Latin words, not English ones.

E = explore

This is where you investigate and explain why your first two sentences are true. You will need to present even more detail that shows your reader the point you are trying to make. This may take a few sentences. For example:

In English, there are at least 40 different sounds, and yet the Roman alphabet (even with the extras thrown in, like J, V and W [during the Middle Ages]) has only 26 letters. It's not surprising that all sorts of funny mixtures of letters have been used to create the sounds. But this has meant that we've ended up with some pretty strange spelling rules.

E = evidence

The evidence phase of your paragraph requires you to provide proof that your claim is true. This could be quotes from characters from texts you are studying (for text-based essays), quotes from experts (for expository or discussion essays), facts or opinions (for persuasive essays) or other relevant information that supports your statement. Quotes should always be written into the sentence and not tacked on the end. For example:

> Most of us think, 'Oh well, that's the way it goes, better learn my spelling list (sigh) and be done with it …' [… But] some people have more adventurous minds—the famous American thinker, Benjamin Franklin for one. Way back in 1779, he endeavoured to change the alphabet to make spelling more sensible. He suggested kicking out C, J, Q, W, X and Y, and replacing them with six new letters, including a special one for the sound 'ng'.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Make sure your **evidence** relates to your main topic. If it doesn't, then your reader will think you don't know what you're talking about. In the extract from the *Word Spy*, the evidence about Benjamin Franklin relates directly to the topic sentence—'some people have more adventurous minds'.

L = link

Your linking sentence has an important job and can be used in one of two ways:

- to link back to your topic question to show that your paragraph answers or relates to the topic; it should be used in the last paragraph before the conclusion.
- to connect to your next paragraph so that the two ideas are related.

Your linking sentence does not always have to come at the end of your paragraph. Sometimes it will come as the first sentence in the next paragraph so it still ties the two ideas together. For example:

> Ten years later in 1789, another American, the dictionary maker Noah Webster, had a different idea.

It is really important to note that this structure can be adjusted, but each of the TEEEL elements must be present.

So, a complete paragraph will look like this:

THE WORD SPY
By Ursula Dubosarsky

It's a sad thing, but not everybody who writes in English loves the Roman alphabet. (Sob!) The main complaint is that the Roman alphabet was really meant to write the sounds of Latin words, not English ones. In English, there are at least 40 different sounds, and yet the Roman alphabet (even with the extras thrown in, like J, V and W) has only 26 letters. It's not surprising that all sorts of funny mixtures of letters have been used to create the sounds. But this has meant we've ended up with some pretty strange spelling rules (as I'm sure you would have noticed!) Most of us think, 'Oh well, that's the way it goes, better learn my spelling list (sigh) and be done with it …' But the Word Spy has discovered that some people have more adventurous minds. The famous American thinker Benjamin Franklin, for one. He had ideas about all sorts of things, including the English language. Way back in 1779, he said we should change the alphabet to make spelling more sensible. He suggested kicking out C, J, Q, W, X and Y, and replacing them with six new letters, including a special one for the sound 'ng'. Ten years later in 1789, another American, the dictionary maker Noah Webster, had a different idea.

Source: Ursula Dubosarsky, *The Word Spy*, Penguin 2008

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 What does the acronym TEEEL stand for?

Understanding

2 How does a topic sentence help the paragraph?

3 What is unique about a paragraph's linking sentence?

Analysing

4 Why is a paragraph structure useful?

Text types

Written language is categorised into formal communication (such as essays and business letters) and informal communication (such as written notes, food packaging and blogs). These categories are then broken into sub-categories known as 'genres'.

Over the course of your schooling you will be asked to write a large number of essays. Not all these essays will be the same—some will require you to be creative and come up with a story of your own; others will ask you to argue a point of view and persuade your readers. These essay types have a unique framework of their own.

Essay types

Essay writing is often considered harder than it actually is. This is because there are so many different types of essays, it's often difficult to know exactly where to start. The main essay types ask you to inform or describe, to explain or discuss (known as 'expository'), to instruct, to argue, to narrate. Although each essay type has its own specific structure, you can adapt the basic essay structure you were taught during your earlier years of high school. A brief re-cap of the basic essay structure follows.

> **Writer's TOOLBOX**
>
> A **thesis statement** is a sentence that describes the main idea of your essay.

Five-paragraph essay structure

- **Introduction**
  This is your mini-outline for the essay and will include your contention (also known as a thesis statement) or the topic of your essay.
- **Paragraph one** ⎫
- **Paragraph two** ⎬ Each body paragraph will provide evidence for, develop and explain your thesis statement, or will provide information on your topic.
- **Paragraph three** ⎭
- **Conclusion**
  Here you briefly restate the main idea of your essay and connect this to the evidence you have provided.

It is extremely important that, as a writer, you understand the demands of each essay type prior to beginning your task. In the middle years of high school, you will be asked to extend your writing skills by focusing on developing your expository and argumentative writing. These essay types are outlined below.

Expository essays

The main function of an expository essay is to explain why something happens or has happened. This then allows the reader to picture a logical sequence of events or steps in their mind.

Expository essays require you to examine the causes and effects of your topic. This means that you must know why something happens and how that affects the outcome.

The first step in an expository essay is to ask:
- What is the event/issue/topic you are explaining?
- When does it take place?
- Where does it happen?
- Who is involved?
- How does it occur?

Once you have answered these points, you are then ready to consider its cause (why it happens) and effect (what the outcome is).

A plan for an expository essay should look like this.
- **Title**
- **Introduction**
  Here you introduce the topic and why it was chosen. You also state the key points of the topic that you will be explaining throughout your essay.
- **Paragraphs**
  Your paragraphs develop the main points you outlined in your introduction. Each paragraph should focus on one main idea. You need to provide evidence that supports each point you make so that your readers are convinced of your knowledge and opinions.
- **Conclusion**
  Your conclusion will draw together your main ideas and show how they relate to the cause of the issue and the effect that this has had.

Look at the introduction, main paragraphs and conclusion from a descriptive essay on the Rudd Government's economic stimulus package of 2009.

Writer's TOOLBOX

'**Stimulus**' means something that spurs on or motivates.

THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE OF 2009

The introduction presents the topic of the Government's 2009 economic stimulus package and states why Australia needed to go into debt. It explains that the topic was chosen because it was a topic that caused much debate. It also states the main point of the topic: that without the money from the Government, the Australian economy would not have remained healthy.

Figures quoted, such as '$22.5 billion dollar debt', 'under $100,000' and (on the next page) 'between $300 and $950' provide evidence for the economic stimulus package.

Introduction

In February of 2009, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and his Government sparked widescale debate in Australia over their planned economic stimulus package that would see approximately 8.7 million Australians receive a 'free' handout from the Government. This gift to individuals would cause the Australian nation to fall into a $22.5 billion dollar debt that would take years to climb out of; however, the Australian Government did not have a choice. Without the economic stimulus package, many Australians would have lost their jobs and homes, therefore creating a greater strain on the Government's purse-strings.

Who is involved?—The Australian public and the leader of the Government.

The introduction states the issue—the economic stimulus package.

Body

In mid 2008 a slow panic began to sweep the world as news trickled out of America that house prices had started to fall. Since American banks had been lending money to people who could not afford to repay their loans, lower house prices meant that the banks were not be able to get back all their money, even after selling the homes. Companies and individuals all over the world started to sell their shares in major banks and investment companies to avoid losing money and this resulted in the stock market collapsing.

As Australia is part of the world financial market, it meant that it was also affected by the drop in financial stability. A lack of world funds meant that investment in Australian companies began to decline and many Australians were at risk of losing their jobs. This eventually would have had a flow-on effect on the housing and consumer market, as unemployed people are unable to repay loans or spend money on food, clothing or entertainment. As a result of this, more Australians would have therefore become unemployed because small businesses would have lost customers and struggled to make an income. One

February 2009 was when the stimulus package was launched.

of Prime Minister Rudd's solutions to this problem was to provide all Australian workers who earned under $100,000 a grant from the Government between $300 and $950 to encourage them to spend money. This occurred in February 2009 and payments were made from February to July, allowing people to spend the money over a six-month period. This meant that small businesses were able to continue to thrive and limit job losses. As a result, the Australian economy did not behave as poorly as America's.

The main point is developed here by showing how the American economy collapsed and how this could happen in Australia.

Essay paragraphs continue. The next paragraph could be about how the economic stimulus package helped the real estate market.

The conclusion restates the main idea that the Rudd Government had no choice but to spend money on the economic stimulus package. It ties in the cause and effect when it highlights that the lack of free-flowing finances in America resulted in their economy breaking down and this would have occurred in Australia as well.

Conclusion

The Australian Government did not have a choice when it came to committing Australians to a $22.5 billion dollar debt. Without the economic stimulus package, the population would have collapsed into hard times and less money would have been spent. This would have resulted in nationwide job losses which, in turn, would have seen families unable to pay their home loans and Australia heading for a drastic economic crisis as seen in America and parts of Europe.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 Write a list of the questions that should be answered in an expository essay.

2 List the five different essay types you may be asked to write.

3 What is the purpose of an expository essay?

Understanding

4 What is meant by the term 'cause and effect'?

5 Explain in twenty-five words or less the outline of a generic essay structure.

Analysing

6 Identify the TEEEL structure in the article on the 2009 economic stimulus package.

7 Answer these questions about the article on the 2009 economic stimulus package:
   a Is the structure easily identifiable in the writing?
   b If not, what difficulties did you have in identifying the elements?
   c If easy, what components of the structure made them easy to find?
   d What top three tips would you give classmates on identifying TEEEL in existing pieces of writing?

Evaluating

8 When would a five-paragraph essay structure be useful?

Checklist

When revising and editing your expository essay, check that you have:

- ☑ included what, when, where, who, how and why
- ☑ included cause and effect
- ☑ written using formal language
- ☑ written in third person
- ☑ maintained the reader's interest through a varied sentence structure
- ☑ provided clear examples or evidence
- ☑ checked your spelling and grammar.

Argumentative essays

Argumentative essays are essays that ask you to analyse an issue and argue a clear point of view. Words or phrases that indicate your essay response should be argumentative are 'analyse', 'evaluate', 'establish', 'determine', 'prove', 'examine', 'investigate', 'consider', 'explore', 'discuss' or 'Do you agree?'. Think of the essay as a sum or equation—just like in maths!

argument + evidence = a proven point

This equation can be used as the basis for your paragraphs. Take the following argument as an example.

Question: Should Australia re-introduce capital punishment to deter crime?

Argument: Capital punishment should not be re-introduced because innocent people may die.

+

Evidence: Timothy Evans of Britain was executed in 1950 for murder, only to be pardoned posthumously when it was discovered his roommate had committed the deed.

=

Proven point: Innocent people, such as Timothy Evans, are killed under capital punishment and therefore it should not be re-introduced.

An argumentative essay should be written in formal language.

A plan for an argumentative essay should look like this.

- **Title**

- **Introduction**
  Introduce your topic and outline your contention, briefly describing how you will prove this viewpoint.

- **Paragraphs**
  Start each paragraph with a point that you are going to explain and provide evidence to support this view.

- **Conclusion**
  A good way to finish an argumentative essay is to reinforce the points you made in the body of your essay, emphasise your point of view and state why these points do this successfully.

Writer's TOOLBOX

'**Logical**' means reasonable and consistent.

'**Posthumously**' means occurring after death.

<filler a/w needed. A/w #?
Cam to send/supply brief>

So, an introduction, paragraphs and a conclusion for an argumentative essay on the subject 'School canteens should not be able to sell junk food' would look like this.

Introduction

Recent studies have shown that record numbers of children and adolescents are considered by <u>health experts</u> to be overweight or <u>clinically obese</u>. These children carry so much extra weight they put their bodies at risk of early heart failure, diabetes, kidney disease and extra physical strain and stresses just through daily living. Health experts attribute these shocking rates to two distinct causes—a lack of a nutritional diet and not enough exercise. As a consequence, <u>school canteens should remove all non-nutritional food from their shelves</u> so that students can practise healthy eating.

First paragraph

In 2008, <u>one-quarter of all Australian children</u> and adolescents were considered overweight or obese and lacking a healthy diet and regular exercise. A healthy diet involves eating the right amount of food from each of the five food groups every day. Too much sugar and fat like those found in pies, sausage rolls and other typical school canteen food can cause children to feel full, but their bodies aren't getting enough nourishment, resulting in feelings of bloating, tiredness and general lethargy. This <u>leads</u> to less focus in the classroom, affecting student learning.

Second paragraph

Foods rich in essential vitamins and minerals, such as fruit, cereal, green salad and lean meat and pasta dishes <u>can help</u> stimulate an interest in learning as the brain receives the fuel necessary for concentration and thinking. Since too much junk food is not good for healthy minds and bodies, school canteens <u>should remove</u> these items from their shelves and instead promote foods that are high in nutritional value.

Words and phrases such as 'health experts' and 'clinically obese' help to establish a formal tone.

The author's contention is that school canteens should remove junk food from their shelves to encourage healthy eating and to help reduce obesity.

Statistical evidence such as 'one-quarter of all Australian children' supports the author's contention. These key words help lead the reader to the same view as the author.

The essay is written in the present tense. Words and phrases such as 'leads', 'can help' and 'should remove' indicate this.

The next paragraph could focus on sport in schools and how selling junk food at the canteen counteracts the exercise that the students do in sport. The final paragraph could focus on what school canteens can do to support student health and nutrition.

Conclusion

While schools are not solely responsible for the education and physical health of children, they play a large role in their lives. Many important lessons are learnt from school, and how to eat healthily and have an active lifestyle are two of these lessons. School canteens should be banned from selling junk food because it has no nutritional value, it cancels out the good work done when playing sport and it contributes to the ever-increasing weight problems that a quarter of all young Australians face.

The argument's equation is neatly outlined in this concluding sentence 'junk food has no nutritional value + it negates physical activity + it contributes to weight problems in young Australians = canteens should be banned from selling junk food'. Note here that the equation begins with the outcome rather than ending with it.

The conclusion repeats key ideas to re-emphasise the argument.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 What must be included in an argumentative essay?

Understanding

2 In your own words, explain the equation you can use to help write an argumentative essay.

Analysing

3 How does an argumentative essay compare with an expository essay? Compare and contrast the styles using a Venn diagram.

Evaluating

4 Do you think describing an argument as an equation works? Give reasons for your answer.

5 Predict what would happen if an argumentative essay's conclusion did not re-emphasise the argument. Give reasons for your prediction.

6 Discuss with a partner the structure of an argumentative essay. Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

Checklist

When revising and editing an argumentative essay, consider whether you have included the following:

- [✓] a consistent voice (third person)
- [✓] verbs in present tense
- [✓] formal language
- [✓] detailed explanations of your point of view with reasons and evidence
- [✓] linking words or phrases between paragraphs
- [✓] key words which are relevant to your topic
- [✓] correct spelling and grammar.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Key words in your essay act as signposts. They encourage the reader to follow your point of view and arrive at the same conclusion as you.

Template for an argumentative essay

Introduction
Provides the stance and context for the argument. It should include:
- a sentence or two that presents your claim on the issue (thesis statement)
- background information on the topic (context)
  - Why is this an issue? (be general)
  - What do we need to know in order to understand your claim?

Must have:
- A literary argument must state the author and title in the introduction.
- An argument about a film must state the title, director and year.
- An argument about an issue or theory must outline the reasons it is contentious.

Paragraph 1
This begins to prove your argument (support your claim). It should include:
- one important fact, item, detail or example that will help readers better understand your argument (topic sentence)
- an explanation of this information
- evidence (facts, examples, statistics, quotes) that prove, support or explain the topic sentence
- direction on how the evidence is to be interpreted (show how it proves, supports or explains the claim)
- a link between the paragraphs topic sentence and the overall claim of the paper.

Paragraph 2
This continues to prove your argument. It should include:
- an additional piece of information that will further explain your claim (topic sentence)
- an explanation of this information
- evidence to prove, support or explain the topic
- direction on interpretation of the evidence
- a link between the topic sentence and the overall claim of the paper.

Paragraph 3
This contains your counter-argument. In order to sound objective and reasonable, consider the opposing argument to your claim and refute this. To do this:
- Be fair and objective—state any reasonable arguments to your position clearly and logically.
- Carefully consider why this position is held.
- Show that the counter-argument is based on flawed assumptions. Show that either:
  - the facts are wrong
  - the analysis is incorrect
  - the values the argument is based on are not acceptable.
- End by re-stating the paper's position.

Conclusion
A conclusion is a summation of the argument. It should include:
- development from the initial general claim made in the introduction to a more detailed understanding of the issue (critical thinking)
- the importance of your claim (why should the reader care)
- what information the reader should glean from the issue
- evidence of a strong analytical argument.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Go online and find an example of an expository and an argumentative essay or article. Print them and paste them into your notebook. On each of the essays highlight and annotate the essential elements of the essay type. (Use the essay examples from this module as a guide.)

2 Turn one of the following argument equations into a 250-word essay on the topic. You may use both the internet and library research to help you.

P-platers who carry two passengers in the car are 160 per cent more likely to crash than when driving alone + the adolescent brain is not completely mature until the age of 25 = P-plate drivers should have passenger restrictions across Australia

Source: Steve Biddulph, 'Mentally, teens drive best alone', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 January 2007

Teenagers who complete 1–2 hours of homework per day have higher literacy rates + increased homework time results in higher grades for all students = teachers should provide students with more homework.

Source: Yvonne Eddy, 'Developing homework policies', *Eric Digest*, 1984

3 Using the argumentative essay template, research and develop an essay on one of the following statements:

- Parents who enter their pre-teen children in beauty pageants are sexualising their children.
- Fast food outlets should be closed after midnight due to unprovoked violent attacks from customers.
- As the adolescent brain does not reach full maturity until the age of twenty-five, humans should not be legally considered adults until then.

Extra tasks

1 Create a flowchart that outlines the key steps required when writing an expository essay. Provide an example for each step based on the topic: 'The benefits of social networking sites'.

2 Create the argument equation in each of the following famous quotes. You may need to decide the arguments' contention for yourself.

We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.

Source: Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

The supreme excellence is not to win a hundred victories in a hundred battles. The supreme excellence is to subdue the armies of your enemies without even having to fight them.

Source: Sun Tzu (c. third–fifth century BCE)

It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages.

Source: Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)

The genius of Einstein leads to Hiroshima.

Source: Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Powerful presentations

Another format with which you will be expected to become proficient is spoken text, more commonly known as public speaking or oral presentations.

What is public speaking?

Public speaking is the practice of delivering a prepared, structured speech in front of an audience. These speeches can take the form of a single person speaking before an audience, a group of speakers participating in a debate, or an actor delivering a soliloquy or a monologue. Regardless of its delivery, every speech is designed to communicate a message.

> **Writer's TOOLBOX**
>
> A **soliloquy** is when someone is talking to themselves as if alone.
>
> A **monologue** is a long speech by the same person.

When preparing and delivering a speech, there are five main steps to follow to ensure confident speaking.

Step 1—defining the purpose

Your purpose is the reason that you are giving a speech. If you are unsure of your purpose, this will come across to your audience.

There are four main purposes:

- to inform
- to entertain
- to persuade
- to motivate or inspire.

When planning your speech, you should write in one sentence your purpose, trying to keep it as clear as possible. The reason you are giving the speech needs to be clear to your audience and remain consistent throughout. It is a good idea to communicate your purpose at the very beginning of your speech. For example, in the extract below, even though the then Prime Minister Paul Keating has specifically stated his purpose for the speech (that is, to launch celebrations of the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People), he intimates that he is to deliver a motivational (and persuasive) speech about race relations in Australia, a particularly sensitive issue at the time due to 'Native Title' and the Mabo decision in June 1992.

DID YOU KNOW...

The 'Mabo decision' was a judgement made by the High Court of Australia. In 1992, Eddie Mabo led the Merriam people from his Torres Strait island to the High Court of Australia in an effort to have overturned the idea that Australia was *terra nullius*, or uncivilised and empty terrain, when Captain Cook landed. By acknowledging *terra nullius*, Indigenous Australians have their traditional claims to land recognised. The judges ruled six to one that under Australian law, Indigenous peoples have rights to land, therefore revoking *terra nullius*.

PAUL KEATING'S REDFERN ADDRESS

Ladies and gentlemen

I am very pleased to be here today at the launch of Australia's celebration of the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

It will be a year of great significance for Australia.

Step 2—deciding on content

Once you have decided on the purpose of your speech, you can work out exactly what it will contain. Brainstorm the subject and write down all the relevant information that you know or can gather from other sources. Then ask the following three questions:

- What must the audience know at the end in order to have realised your purpose?
- What could they also know, but is not vital in achieving your purpose?
- What would be nice for them to know, but really does not matter in terms of achieving your purpose?

Source: *5 Steps to Confident Speaking*, Rostrum, Victoria 2002

This approach is known as the 'Must know, could know, nice to know' approach and is a great way to sort important facts from not-so-important information. Once you have written all your ideas down, go through the information and set apart the five most important ideas. A general rule is that for every two minutes of speaking, you can deliver one important idea. So, for a four-minute speech you will need two main ideas, for a ten-minute speech four to five main ideas, and so on.

The important aspect of this approach is to get rid of material that is not relevant to your purpose.

Step 3—structuring your speech

Your speech must have a clear, logical structure to lead your audience from one key idea to the next. If your speech lacks structure and jumps all over the place, none of your important ideas will flow logically and you will leave your audience confused about the purpose and aim of your presentation.

The most effective way of structuring your speech is known as an A to B structure. This allows you to develop your points progressively from one point to the next so that it can be easily followed. Look at more of Keating's speech.

Just a mile or two from the place where the first European settlers landed, in too many ways it tells us that their failure to bring much more than devastation and demoralisation to Aboriginal Australia continues to be our failure.

More I think than most Australians recognise, the plight of Aboriginal Australians affects us all.

In Redfern it might be tempting to think that the reality Aboriginal Australians face is somehow contained here, and that the rest of us are insulated from it.

But of course, while all the dilemmas may exist here, they are far from contained.

We know the same dilemmas and more are faced all over Australia.

That is perhaps the point of this Year of the World's Indigenous People: to bring the dispossessed out of the shadows, to recognise that they are part of us, and that we cannot give indigenous Australians up without giving up many of our own most deeply held values, much of our own identity—and our own humanity.

> Prime Minister Keating begins with a very brief description of historical treatment of Indigenous Australians and links it to the situation in modern-day Australia. (A)

> PM Keating's second point (B) is that denying our Aboriginal heritage means denying who we are as Australians.

A second structure that can be effectively used in debating and motivational or demonstrative speeches is known as the 'Tell, tell, tell' method. This structure is commonly used in business presentations as it repeats the main point of the speech again and again so that the audience is left with no doubt as to the intention of the speaker.

The structure you select will largely depend on the purpose of your speech and its content. Irrespective of structure, it is important to keep things simple and signpost to your audience when moving from one key point to the next. For example, as Keating continues below:

Here PM Keating reminds us that all 'Australians' were once immigrants. (A)

The repitition of the idea that non-Aboriginal Australians are blinded to the debate shows the 'tell, tell, tell' method.

We non-Aboriginal Australians should perhaps remind ourselves that Australia once reached out for us.

Didn't Australia provide opportunity and care for the dispossessed Irish? The poor of Britain? The refugees from war and famine and persecution in the countries of Europe and Asia?

Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first Australians—the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians.

Here Prime Minister Keating indicates to his audience that his topic remains challenging and relevant. (B)

Once you have decided on your structure and have all the relevant material you need, it is time to transfer your key points to cue cards.

What are cue cards?

Cue cards are a useful way to remind you what you want to say. Speeches should not be written out word for word as this can trap the presenter into reading their speech and not engaging with the audience.

Cue cards should contain brief notes that can be used as prompts for your main ideas and supporting details.

For example, Keating's speech continues:

It begins, I think, with that act of recognition.

Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing.

We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

We committed the murders.

We took the children from their mothers.

We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice.

And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds.

We failed to ask—how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us.

If we needed a reminder of this, we received it this year.

The Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody showed with devastating clarity that the past lives on in inequality, racism and injustice.

Source: Paul Keating, Prime Minister of Australia, 1992

As a cue card, this may look like:

It begins with that act of recognition.

- recognition that we did the dispossessing, i.e. — Main point
  - destroyed traditions
  - brought disease and alcohol
  - committed murders — Examples demonstrate the main point
  - took children from their mothers
  - discriminated and excluded
  - failed to imagine these things happening to us

We failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us. — Further expansion of the main point

Each cue card should contain your main point, a prompt for an example that demonstrates the point and further expansion or definition (often through a second example) where necessary.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 How do you define the purpose of a speech?

2 Explain the 'Must know, could know, nice to know' approach.

3 What are the four main purposes used in speeches?

Understanding

4 When deciding on the content of your speech, why do you need to take out material that is not relevant?

5 Why is it important to keep your speech simple?

6 Why is it important to signpost your speech?

Applying

7 Can you think of another use, apart from motivational speaking, for the A to B and 'Tell, tell, tell' speech structures?

Creating

8 Create a poster illustrating the difference between using cue cards and using a sheet of paper with the speech copied out in full. Show the benefits of using cue cards.

Step 4—varying your vocals

Varying your use of voice is essential when delivering a speech as your voice is what will primarily keep your audience's attention. There are several key factors that you should consider when delivering your speech.

Volume

This is how loudly or softly you speak. A loud voice demands attention, but only if it is varied with a normal speaking tone. Too loud and your audience will think you are shouting at them. Using a soft voice at times will ensure that your audience becomes attentive; however, it must be used in conjunction with other volumes. If your audience has to strain to hear you, they are more likely to lose concentration.

Pronunciation and diction

Clear diction (that is, speaking clearly, distinctly and accurately) ensures that your audience can understand your intended message. Speaking your words clearly and correctly is very important, so make sure you speak slowly and do not run your words together. Additionally, do not drop any sounds from the ends of words.

Pace

It is important to ensure that the speed of your presentation is not too quick. A good presentation is delivered at a comfortable pace, not hurried or spoken too slowly. Variation of pace should be used when aiming for a certain response in your audience. If you want to excite them, quicken your speech, but not so much that they do not understand you. If you wish to communicate the seriousness of what you are saying, slow down your speech so that your audience can listen attentively and absorb the information.

Pausing

Pauses are essential for a successful presentation. Important points should always be followed by a pause; the more important the point, the longer the pause. This allows the audience to digest what they are hearing. If your presentation is funny, pause while the audience laughs. Allow them to appreciate your humour before you continue.

Step 5—body language

When we think of visuals in a speech we often think of overhead projections and handouts; however, body language is one of the most important visuals you can use. An audience can tell a lot from how we present ourselves—whether or not we are comfortable with public speaking and whether we are confident with the topic.

Body language can be broken into two essential parts: gestures and eye contact.

Gestures

Gestures are an important part of any speech as they can emphasise the parts you wish your audience to remember. Body gestures can be used to:

• indicate the size or breadth of something

• show an amount

• mimic a movement or rhythm

• highlight a change or difference (for example, the growth of a tree).

Facial gestures can:

- show the audience how you feel about something (enthusiasm, dislike, etc.)
- show you're confident with the topic—a smile helps
- retain an audience's interest by keeping them focused on you.

Gestures, like words, need planning as you will need to identify key points in your speech that you wish to emphasise. Additionally, gestures need to be appropriate to the size of your audience. Too small and not everyone will feel their impact, too large and you will appear theatrical and over the top.

Eye contact

Eye contact is looking at members of your audience long enough for them to be able to meet your eyes. This is the part of body language that adds most to your integrity and authority—not being able to meet the audience's eyes is a sure sign of a lack of confidence or insincerity. Maintain eye contact with your audience to ensure that they are engaged with you and the content of your speech; it helps to personalise the subject matter and make the audience feel as if your speech relates directly to them.

When delivering a speech, try to look at the audience as much as possible. This means that you may need to take brief, short pauses while you check your notes; however, this does not have to detract from your speech. Look down, glance at your notes, then look up and continue your delivery.

Breakaway tasks

Applying

1 Decide on a physical and facial gesture for the following key words:
   - significant
   - untimely
   - ridiculous
   - striking.

   Practise these facial gestures individually and then with a partner. Take turns to deliver your gestures, trying to identify your partner's gestures as you go.

2 Decide on a series of gestures for the following sentences:
   - It was with a heavy heart that I decided not to continue.
   - This is the most important aspect.
   - It was always going to be a difficult adventure.

   Practise delivering these gestures and sentences with your partner from the previous activity.

3 In pairs, practise saying the word 'confidently' in the following ways:
   - formally
   - irrationally
   - friendly
   - teasingly.

4 With your partner, practise delivering this extract from Paul Keating's Redfern address. Discuss where you believe gestures would and would not be relevant and where you can vary pitch, intonation and speed. As a pair, decide who has the best delivery.

> We have to give meaning to 'justice' and 'equity'—and, as I have said several times this year, we will only give them meaning when we commit ourselves to achieving concrete results.
>
> If we improve the living conditions in one town, they will improve in another. And another.
>
> If we raise the standard of health by 20 per cent one year, it will be raised more the next.
>
> If we open one door, others will follow.
>
> When we see improvement, when we see more dignity, more confidence, more happiness—we will know we are going to win.
>
> We need these practical building blocks of change.
> The Mabo Judgment should be seen as one of these.
>
> Source: Paul Keating, 1992

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Read the extract from Senator (now President) Barack Obama's speech given on 18 March 2008 in Pennsylvania called 'A More Perfect Union'. You can find the complete speech by searching this title and President Obama's name on **Pearson Reader**.

Web Destination

Rewrite the extract in the way you would deliver it, creating cue cards for each main point. While you can change some of the words and phrases to make it sound more like a speech of your own, you must keep the general contention Barrack Obama presents.

A MORE PERFECT UNION

By then Senator Barak Obama

'We the people, in order to form a more perfect union … '

Two hundred and twenty-one years ago, in a hall that still stands across the street, a group of men gathered and, with these simple words, launched America's improbable experiment in democracy. Farmers and scholars; statesmen and patriots who had traveled across an ocean to escape tyranny and persecution finally made real their declaration of independence at a Philadelphia convention that lasted through the spring of 1787.

The document they produced was eventually signed but ultimately unfinished. It was stained by this nation's original sin of slavery, a question that divided the colonies and brought the convention to a stalemate until the founders chose to allow the slave trade to continue for at least twenty more years, and to leave any final resolution to future generations.

Of course, the answer to the slavery question was already embedded within our Constitution—a Constitution that had at its very core the ideal of equal citizenship under the law; a Constitution that promised its people liberty, and justice, and a union that could be and should be perfected over time.

And yet words on a parchment would not be enough to deliver slaves from bondage, or provide men and women of every color and creed their full rights and obligations as citizens of the United States. What would be needed were Americans in successive generations who were willing to do their part—through protests and struggle, on the streets and in the courts, through a civil war and civil disobedience and always at great risk—to narrow that gap between the promise of our ideals and the reality of their time.

This was one of the tasks we set forth at the beginning of this campaign—to continue the long march of those who came before us, a march for a more just, more equal, more free, more caring and more prosperous America. I chose to run for the presidency at this moment in history because I believe deeply that we cannot solve the challenges of our time unless we solve them together—unless we perfect our union by understanding that we may have different stories, but we hold common hopes; that we may not look the same and we may not have come from the same place, but we all want to move in the same direction—towards a better future for our children and our grandchildren.

This belief comes from my unyielding faith in the decency and generosity of the American people. But it also comes from my own American story.

Source: Barak Obama, 2008

2 Go to **Pearson Reader**. Access the ABC website and select and view a speech from the speeches section. Watch the speaker closely and answer the following questions. You may need to view the speech more than once.

Web Destination

  a Who is the presenter and what is the topic they are speaking about?

  b What authority do they have on the topic?

  c How are they presenting their speech? Has it been memorised, is it unprepared, or given from cue cards?

  d How does the presentation of the speech affect you as the audience? For instance, do you believe the presenter has more credibility because they seem to be speaking effortlessly about a topic without any prompts?

  e What body language and gestures do they use?

  f How do the body language and gestures affect you as the audience?

  g What is successful about the presenter's speech?

  h How could the presenter improve their speech?

  i Overall, how effective was their speech?

{ Extra tasks }

1 In groups of five, create a three-minute role-play that shows a nervous presenter delivering a speech to an audience (your group members). Take turns performing for each other to show what could go wrong with the delivery.

2 In the same groups, add an extra three minutes to your role-play where someone comes in and gives the nervous presenter advice on how to better their delivery. Show the presenter practising these skills.

3 So that your role-play is no longer than ten minutes, rewrite your script to show the following elements:

  • a nervous presenter delivering a speech to their peers

  • the same presenter receiving advice on how to improve and then practising these skills

  • the final product—a polished and improved delivery.

4 Look at the image of Barack Obama and answer the following questions.

  a At what point in his 'A More Perfect Union' speech *could* the still have been taken from?

  b What effect would the raising of his hand have had on his speech and his audience?

  c What other gestures may have been used and at which point of his speech?

Go online and view either images or footage of 'A More Perfect Union' being delivered. Were you surprised by anything you saw? In fifty words, write whether you believe Barack Obama delivered an effective speech.
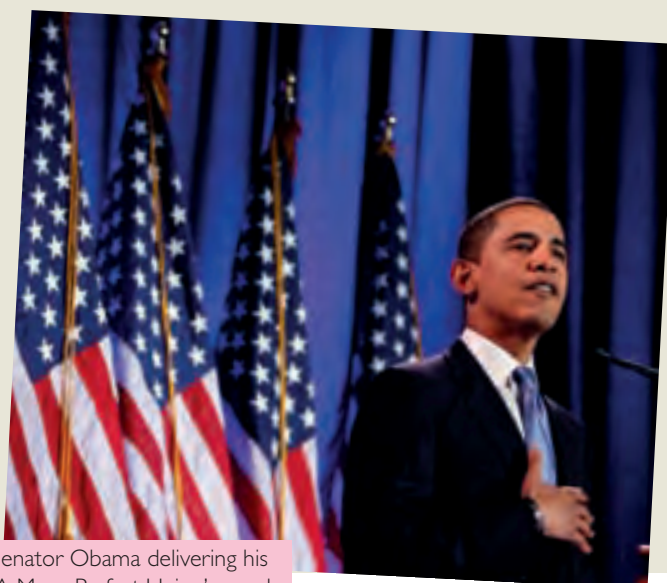
Senator Obama delivering his 'A More Perfect Union' speech

3

Revising and editing your work

A common mistake students make prior to submission is handing in work before they have thoroughly revised and edited it. Often this is because many consider revising and editing to be the same, when in fact they are quite different!

Revising and editing, while obviously connected, are two individual processes that should be carried out separately. The revision process needs to be finished before editing can begin.

Revising

Revision involves reconsidering, changing or modifying work that you have completed. Your purpose is to look at the overall structure of your written piece (whether it's an essay, a story or a speech), how well your argument or information flows and the quality of your writing. Then reorganise or rewrite passages that do not quite make sense. You need to tackle each of these aspects at every level.

First, begin by looking at the overall structure.

- Does your essay flow from one paragraph to the next, or does it jump from idea to idea without linking?
- Does your introduction serve its purpose and does your conclusion provide an adequate summary of your arguments and evidence?
- Do the paragraphs all relate to the same idea?
- Does your essay meet the needs of your target audience?

Next, look at each individual paragraph.

- Is the information in each paragraph relevant to the main idea?

- Are the paragraphs in a logical order?
- Do the transitions between paragraphs work?
- Can any paragraphs be deleted because they are unnecessary?
- Are the links between paragraphs clear?
- Is there any unnecessary repetition?

Finally, look at individual sentences.

- Does each topic sentence clearly define the paragraph it's in?
- Does each supporting sentence relate only to the topic sentence of that paragraph?
- Are there any unnecessary sentences that do not support or do not relate to the paragraph's idea?

If you answer yes to any of the questions above, then you will need to change that section of your essay and then look at how it works as a whole again.

A great tip when revising is to print out your essay and mark a hard copy. It's very difficult to keep track of changes that you have made on a computer screen.

Helpful questions to consider when revising:

- Is there any repetition of words or ideas that detract from the writing?
- Is there anything in the text that can be cut out without taking away from the meaning?
- Are there any clichés?
- Is there anything general that can be made more specific?

- Is the language used relevant to the topic and level expected?
- Is there a variety of sentences?
- Is the choice of words appropriate and interesting?
- Is any criteria addressed?
- Does the writing flow logically?
- Is the topic addressed?
- Is there anything that should be added to make the writing clearer?
- Does the essay meet your own expectations of what an essay should be?

Editing

Now that you have revised your essay and are happy with what you are saying and how it has been said, the next step is to edit it. Editing focuses on spelling, grammar, style and punctuation. It can be a slow and painful process; however, it is essential for achieving a high standard of writing.

Helpful questions to consider when editing:

- Are there any spelling errors?
- Is the writing correctly punctuated?
- Do the sentences make grammatical sense?
- Are apostrophes used correctly?
- Are there any incorrect homonyms? (For example, there, their, they're; to, too, two; threw, through)
- Are there any sentence fragments?
- Have all words been used in the correct context?
- Is there any incorrect use of jargon?
- Is the whole piece written in the same voice?
- Is the whole piece written in the correct tense?
- Is there a variation of sentence structure?

Revising and editing your work is actually a fairly simple step-by-step process, especially if you follow these revising and editing tips.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Jargon is language and terms used by a particular trade or profession that is not understood by most readers.

A **cliché** is an overused word or phrase.

General strategies

- Allow yourself sufficient time between finishing your writing and beginning the editing and revising process. Twenty minutes is generally enough, but if you can leave it overnight, then do so. The aim is to return to your work with fresh eyes so that you can easily see the errors you have made.
- Read your work aloud. This will ensure that you read every word. Sometimes your ear will pick up errors your eyes do not. Also, consider whether your work makes sense to you. If it does not, there's a good chance that it will not make sense to anyone else.
- Get others involved. Ask a friend or family member to read your work. They may spot errors that you have overlooked and can also give you a reader's perspective on your writing.

Personal strategies

A lot of us make the same mistakes in our writing. It may be repeatedly misspelling a word or the incorrect use of jargon or punctuation. It's a good idea to find out what mistakes you regularly make and work on fixing these errors.

- Speak with your teacher and ask them to go through your corrected essays with you. Do this as often as you need to in order to gain an understanding of what they are looking for in an essay.
- Learn how to fix those errors. Again, talk with your teacher who can help you understand why what you have written is incorrect and how to fix it.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering
1 What is one of the most common mistakes students make prior to submitting their work?
2 What is revising?
3 What is editing?

Understanding
4 Why are revising and editing important?

Analysing
5 How are the processes of revising and editing similar?

Strands in action

Core tasks

Spelling and grammatical mistakes have been added to this extract by George Orwell. Edit the extract. You can check your changes against the original through Pearson Reader.

Web Destination

WHY I WRITE

By George Orwell

From a Very Early Age, perhaps the age of five or six, I knew that when I grew up I should be a writer. Between the ages of about seventeen and twenty-four I tried to abandon this idea, but I did so with the consciousness that I was outraging my true nature and that sooner or later I should have to settle down and write books.

I was the child middle of three, but there was a gap of five years on either side, and I barely saw my father before I was eight. For this and other reasons I was somewhat lonely; and I soon developed disagreeable mannerisms which made me un-popular throughout my schooldays. I had the lonely childs habit of making up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons, and I think from the very start my literary ambitions were mixed up with the feeling of being islated and undervalued. i knew that I had a facility with words and a power of fasing unpleasant farcts, and I felt that this created a sort of private world in which I could get my own back for my failure in everyday life nevertheless the volume of serious—i.e. seriously intended—writing which I produssed all through my childhood and boyhood would not amount to half a dozen pages.

I wrote my first poem at the age of four or five, my mother taking it down to dictation. I cannot remember anything about it except that it was about a tiger and the tiger had 'chair-like teeth' — a good enough phrase, but I fancy the poem was a plagarism of Blake's 'Tiger, Tiger'. At eleven, when the war or 1914-08 broke out, I wrote a patriotic poem which was printed in the locale newspaper, and was another, two

years later, on the death of Kitchener. From time to time, when I was a bit older, I wrote bad and usually unfinished 'nature poems' in the Georgian style. I also attempted a short story which was a ghastly failure. That was the total of the would-be serios work that I actually set down on paper during all those years. However, Throughout this time I did in a cents engage in literary activities. To begin with there waz the made-to-order stuff which I produced quickly, easily and without much pleshure to myself. Apart from school work, I wrote vers d'occasion, semi-comic poems which I could turn out at wat now seems to me astonishing speed—at fourteen I wrote a whole rhyming play, in imitation of Aristophanes, in about a week}and helped to edit a school magazines, both printed and in manuscript. These magazines were the most pityful burlesque stuff that you could imagine, and I took far-less trouble with them than I now would with the cheapest journalism. But side by side with all this, for fifteen years or more, I was carring out a literary exercise of a quite different kind: this was the making up of a continuous "story" about myself, a sort of diary existing only in the mind. I believe this is a common habit of children and adolescence. As a very small child I used to imajin that I was, say, Robin Hood, and picture myself as the hero of thrilling adventures, but quite soon my "story" seased to be narcissistic in a crude way and became more and more a mere description of what I was doing and the things I saw. For minutes at a time this kind of thing would be runing through my head: "He pushed the door open and entered the room. A yellow beme of sunlight, filtering through the muslin curtains, slanted on to the table, where a

match-box, half-open, lay beside the inkpot. With his right hand in his pocket he moved across to the window. Down in the street a tortoiseshell cat was chasing a dead leaf," etc. etc. This habit continued until i was about twenty-five, right through my non-literary years. Although I had to search, and did search, for the right words, I seemed to be making this descriptive effort almost against my will, under a kind of compulshun from outside. The "story" must, I suppose, have reflected the styles of the various writers I admired at different ages, but so far as I remember it always had the same metikulous descriptive quality.

Source: George Orwell, 1947

Extra tasks

1 Look at these three images and turn them into a plan for an exciting short story.

2 Swap your short story plan with a partner. Ask them to turn your plan into a 300-word story.

3 Once you have finished writing your partner's story, swap stories again and, using the editing and revising techniques discussed in this module, write a final copy of the story.

4

Research, revising and editing with technology

Have you ever stopped to imagine what life would be like if you didn't have access to a computer? Imagine communicating with friends or family on the other side of the world. How long would it take you to write your assignments by hand, or how long the night would be if you could not instantly tell your best friend the latest gossip?

Computers, when used properly, allow us to manage our time more effectively. We are able to multi-task, as we can rely on the computer to conduct an internet search while we continue to type in a document and receive instant messages from our friends. Unfortunately, multi-tasking also means that our attention is often divided and sometimes we make mistakes. This section aims to equip you with the skills you need to avoid making and repeating unconscious oversights.

Using computers for research

Most students nowadays forego the traditional method of researching in a library for the much more convenient option of researching on the internet. The 'net' can provide what seems to be a vast amount of informative material within a matter of seconds; but is researching this way really that easy?

The advantages and disadvantages of researching on the internet

The most significant advantages of online research is the wide variety of information that can be found quickly at any time and anywhere. Many scholars believe that conducting research on the internet is actually far more confusing than researching in a library. This is because there is no real structure to how information is supplied online and there is no one (such as a librarian) to guide you through the information. Scholars also argue that while students who research on the internet find more resources, they sometimes have too much information or the information that is used comes from an unreliable source. Information can be incorrect, biased, offensive or inappropriately opinionated and, unfortunately, students do not always have the skills to recognise this immediately.

Effective online research

When researching for a project, it is helpful to divide it into four basic stages:

* understanding the question
* finding information
* assessing information
* using information.

The internet is useful for finding information, but this can be a lengthy task. Additionally, the internet can make it hard for you to assess information as you can't always be sure who wrote it and where it has come from.

Understanding the question

You are already familiar with how to define a topic question; however, a brief recap is useful.

Step 1: Highlight the key words in the question.

Step 2: Look up these words in the dictionary and write out their meaning.

Step 3: Highlight the verb that asks you to do something, for example 'investigate', 'analyse' or 'describe', and what you need to do with it, for example, 'Describe the life cycle of the flying fox'.

Step 4: Rewrite the question in your own words to help you to understand what you are required to do.

This method is the same whether you are researching in a library or on the internet.

Finding information

Because the internet is so vast, it is easy to become confused by all the information. Another frustrating aspect of online research is that often the topic is so specialised it can feel like there are no websites out there and, when you do find something, the information you find is not really relevant. However, there are some clever strategies you can use to make the most of your online search.

- Use as many search engines as possible or, better still, use one search engine that trawls the other engines for you.
- Set a time limit for searching. It's easy to waste time on the internet, so set time limits and goals.
- Once you've identified your topic, narrow your search and formulate specific questions you want answered before you continue. This means that when you find information, you can easily assess whether it is relevant or not by how well it answers your questions.
- Make sure you write down or save the address of good sources so that you can return to them. Look to see if they have links to other sources of information as it is most likely that this information will also be relevant to your topic.
- Start with a website that directly deals with, or is related to your topic. For example, if you are researching cruelty to animals, then the RSPCA website is a good place to start.

Assessing the information

Because the world wide web is a relatively unregulated resource, not all the data you will find will be relevant or useable. There is a real risk that the information you find has been written by an untrustworthy source and is actually their opinion on the topic rather than fact.

Good websites have the following qualities in common:

- **Credibility**
  It is easy to find the author of the site and the organisation or institution they work for. There are contact details for the author (or organisation) and the site has been written using correct spelling and grammar.

- **Accuracy**
  The date that the web page was last updated is displayed as is the date when it was originally published.

- **Reasonableness**
  The author has been fair and neutral in the way they present the information.

- **Reliability**
  The purpose of the website (such as to inform, instruct, persuade or sell) is easily understood.

- **Evidence based**
  Evidence has been provided to support the details given and the source of the evidence has been listed. Other sources (such as links and references) can be found easily that verify this information.
- **Designed well**
  The graphics are clear and the pictures are relevant and of a good quality resolution. The site is easy to move around and all the links work. The page loads relatively quickly (less than 30 seconds).

An excellent way to assess the strength of a website is to complete an evaluation sheet that allows you to score the different functions and come up with an overall total for the site. From this you can then judge for yourself whether the site is of any value. A good sample of an evaluation rubric can be found in the breakaway tasks that follow.

Using information

Now that you have found information that is relevant to your topic, it's time to put it to good use.

One of the worst things you can do with research found on the internet is to purely copy and paste slabs of information. Firstly, it's plagiarism (passing off someone else's words as your own, which is illegal) as the work is not your own; secondly, your teachers have a very good understanding of how you write and they will almost always be able to spot immediately a phrase or sentence that you have not written yourself. Finally, when you copy and paste your work it often becomes scrappy and confused as there is nothing holding it together. This is because, as the author, you have not analysed the information and interpreted it so that it is relevant to your topic. *Without your insight* the work is literally a melting pot of sentences slapped together.

If you find something that is relevant to your definition of the question, make sure you include it in your references or bibliography. That way, if you wish to quote it in your writing later on, you can locate it easily.

Breakaway tasks

Applying

1 Choose two separate websites that relate to one of the following topics. Once you have chosen your topic, complete a rubric for each of the sites and answer the questions that follow.

Source: Tammy Payton, 2010

- Global warming
- Animal cruelty
- Celebrity gossip
- Television Awards nights

a Which site had the higher score?
b In what areas did it score higher?
c Why do you think this is?
d Which site do you believe is more reliable? Why?
e Where do you think the problems are in the website that had the lower score? Why do you think this?
f In what areas did your lower scoring site do well? Why?
g Are there any problems with the website that had the higher score? What are these?
h In what areas did your higher scoring site do well? Why?
i Copy the following table into your notebook and recommend changes for both websites.

Website	Recommended changes	How it would improve the site

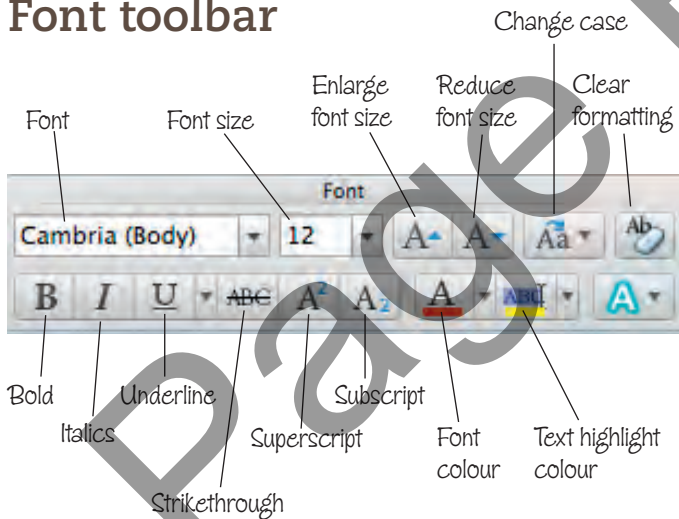2 Do you believe that both web pages are credible sites? Why or why not?

Revising and editing using technology

One of the benefits of having a computer is the ability to present your schoolwork in a professional-looking manner. Unfortunately, teachers often need to ask students to re-submit work because the documents they present are either difficult to read or incorrectly formatted. Part of your editing and revising routine should be making sure that your computer documents agree with accepted guidelines for word processing and, if they do not, then learning how to amend them.

Creating written documents using your computer

The buttons on the toolbar in a word-processing package each have a specific function Learning how to use the buttons related to a document's font and positioning of the paragraph will help you overcome formatting issues.

Font toolbar

Change case
Enlarge font size
Reduce font size
Clear formatting
Font
Font size
Bold
Italics
Underline
Strikethrough
Superscript
Subscript
Font colour
Text highlight colour

Font, font size and reducing and enlarging font

The different styles of text available for selection in a document are known as fonts. Fonts come in all different types, with well over one hundred available in Microsoft Word®. When choosing a font you should ask yourself the following questions.

- Can the font be easily read?
- Is the font appropriate to the topic? For example, a news feature article should never be written in script.

The size of the writing can be varied by the font size button on the toolbar. The smallest available font size is size 1; however, there would rarely be a need to use this as it is unreadable. The largest font size available is size 1638 and this may be used for creating banners. The standard, acceptable fonts and sizes for writing pieces are: Times New Roman, size 12; Calibri, size 11; Helvetica size 10 or 12. This is because these fonts and sizes are easy to read. When writing for a particular school subject, it is often a good idea to check the preferred font and font size with your teacher.

Clear formatting

The clear formatting button allows you to clear all the font changes you have made, and resets the font to the default setting on the computer. Use this if you change the font for a heading and want to change it back for the body of your work.

Bold, italics, underline and strikethrough

Bold, italics, underline and strikethrough are known as formatting commands. They are often heavily misused by students (and adults) who do not understand their purpose. Each of the formatting commands has a specific function and instance when it should be used.

Bold

Bold fonts are heavier and darker than regular fonts. They are commonly used for emphasis and to make certain words and phrases stand out from nearby text.

Bold should be used to:

- emphasise, that is, to highlight important points
- create contrast, that is, for headlines to create a contrast with the body text
- highlight key terms so that the reader's eye is drawn to them.

Make sure you use bold sparingly. Whole paragraphs that have been typed in bold are difficult to read as they are so much darker than regular text and distract the reader's eye.

Italics

Italics are a slanted version of regular text. They are used to create a subtle emphasis and to make a distinction between specific names and titles. Italics should be used:

- when referring to a book, magazine, film or newspaper, for example, 'Have you read *Edwina, Sparrow Girl of Destiny* by Carol Chataway?'
- when referring to the names of specific vehicles, for example, 'I travelled on the *Orient Express.*'

DID YOU KNOW...

The *Orient Express* is a famous long-distance passenger train that originally travelled from Paris to Istanbul. In 1934, famous author Agatha Christie, wrote *Murder on the Orient Express* which is arguably the most famous story relating to this train.

- to highlight foreign words or phrases, for example, 'We began with an *hors d'oeuvre* followed by an *entrée.*'
- to add a subtle emphasis to a word you wish to stand out, for example, 'I really do *not* like eating brussels sprouts.'
- to draw attention to onomatopoeia, for example, 'She hit the ball with a resounding *thwack!*'

Underline

Underlined text has been traditionally used when writing by hand and typewriting, as an alternative to italic text. When word processing began on computers, this slowly began to change as italic font became readily available. For this reason, there is no firm rule about when to use underlining except to say that it can be used in the same manner as italics. A note of caution—if you begin to use underlining in your document then you must be consistent; you cannot switch between italics and underlining.

Strikethrough

The strikethrough button creates text that appears as if it has been crossed out. This is particularly useful when you are editing your own work on the computer and need to provide a copy of your edited draft to your teacher. Rather than deleting the word or phrase, use the strikethrough button to cross out your change and then type the alteration you wish to make. Strikethrough should not be used for emphasis. The 'track changes' function also allows you to show your changes, but you may need to practise using it before you submit work using track changes.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 What are the different formatting commands available to enhance a document's font?

2 What must you be aware of when using italics?

3 When should bold be used?

Applying

4 Name each of the fonts and formats used in the paragraph below and identify why they have been used.

> *Bang!* Alex exited for what I suspect will be the last time. I couldn't be more happy about the prospect of ~~neva~~ never seeing him again. He's such a pain. All that fussing and fawning around—*blech!* It's enough to make you sick.

5 What formatting commands would you use in the following situations?

   a The title of a book
   b Editing your work
   c The sound of a dog barking
   d Emphasising the title of an essay

Subscripts and superscripts

Subscript text is text that has been made smaller and lower than the body text and superscript text is text made smaller and higher. Both these functions are used for typing mathematical or scientific formulae and generally not much else, for example $a^2+b^2 = c^2$ or H_2O.

Change case

The change case button allows you to change letters, words, sentences and paragraphs into any desired case. This is particularly useful when you wish to add headings to your essay, or you have accidentally left the caps lock key on and need to make a quick change.

It is poor punctuation to type an essay in capitals as capital letters are used at the beginning of a sentence or to name proper nouns or acronyms. Sometimes capital letters can be used to emphasise headings; however, bold is the preferred method. You should never submit any work solely in capitals. Use the changing case key to modify your work into sentence case, for example, MRS MANYPENNY'S DAY OFF to Mrs Manypenny's day off.

Text highlight and font colour

Text highlight allows you to draw attention to a word, sentence or paragraph by changing the background colour surrounding the text. This is particularly useful when you want to emphasise a point (a name, subject, number, etc.) in a list, or if you are researching online and wish to highlight an important detail.

For example:

Shopping list

Eggs

Bacon

Bananas

Tim Tams

Mandarins

Unless you are submitting a list that you wish to draw attention to, text highlight should not be used in an essay.

Font colour

Changing the font colour is one of the more enjoyable parts of word processing. No longer do we have to look at plain black text; instead, we can type in pink, purple, orange and green. Have you ever noticed, though, that at the end of the day we tend to go back to plain old black? Have you ever wondered why? It is because black typing on a white background is easiest for the eye to read.

While it is generally acceptable to colour the main heading of your work, you should only submit your assignments in black and white to ensure that your teacher can read your work easily. You should also check with them before submission that it's acceptable if you want to have a colour heading.

DID YOU KNOW...

Use colour font when you see something that you wish to change; it is so much easier to find if you colour it or highlight it. This will stop you having to search through the whole document again.

So, a document in Times New Roman 12 point with headings in bold, book names in italics and super and subscript will look like this.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Ocean, S *High on O²* A Publishing Company, Somewhere, 2009

Queen, E *Does E really = MC²?* Another Publishing Company, Elsewhere, 2009

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1 Name the following toolbar buttons.

Creating

2 Approximately how many different types of font are there? Use the internet to help you research the answer.

Creating

3 Make a chart that lists the facts about changing case, highlighting and font colour, to display in your classroom.

Analysing

4 Group the font toolbar buttons by characteristics. For example, you may choose to group all the buttons that relate to editing together.

5 Would the information in this section be useful if you only had a manual typewriter or pen and paper? Why or why not?

Paragraphs and lines

Align text left · Centre text · Line spacing · Align text right · Justify
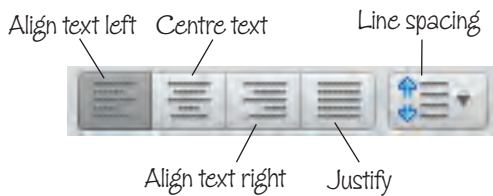
Align text left

The align text left button arranges the text so that it is lined up on the left-hand side of the page. This is the standard paragraph format that English-speaking countries use, as our text is read from left to right. For example:

> When I got back to Market Square I stopped by the star in the centre and looked down at the pearls in my hand. I could not keep them. What would I do with them? I could not tell Pieter how I came to have them—it would mean explaining everything that had happened so long ago. I could not wear the earrings anyway—a butcher's wife did not wear such things, no more than a maid did.
>
> Source: Tracy Chevalier, *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*, HarperCollins, 2003

The paragraph is perfectly in line on the left-hand side of the page, whereas the right-hand side has been left ragged.

Centre text

Students often like to use the centre text button, which drives teachers crazy! As explained above, English speakers read from left to right. When text is centred, it makes it difficult for the eye to know where to begin the next line. For example:

> When I got back to Market Square I stopped by the star in the centre and looked down at the pearls in my hand. I could not keep them. What would I do with them? I could not tell Pieter how I came to have them—it would mean explaining everything that had happened so long ago. I could not wear the earrings anyway—a butcher's wife did not wear such things, no more than a maid did.

Centre alignment is great for creating posters and flyers where only key words are used. If you wish to use it for an essay or assignment, limit its use to your main heading.

Right align text

Right align text does just as it suggests—it lines the text up from the right-hand side of the page.

Traditionally, this button would have been used to align your personal name and address in a formal letter, but these days it is more usual for all addresses to be lined up on the left-hand side of the page.

Some languages, such as Arabic, are read from right to left and therefore this key is a useful tool. Right alignment is also often used in advertisements. For example:

> When I got back to Market Square I stopped by the star in the centre and looked down at the pearls in my hand. I could not keep them. What would I do with them? I could not tell Pieter how I came to have them—it would mean explaining everything that had happened so long ago. I could not wear the earrings anyway—a butcher's wife did not wear such things, no more than a maid did.

Justify

Justification is the neatest of all the text alignments. It lines the text so that it produces straight lines on both the left- and right-hand sides of the page and does this by inserting space, as needed, between the words. Justification is often used in professional publications such as books, newspapers and magazines and is therefore recommended for a professional-looking finish. For example:

> When I got back to Market Square I stopped by the star in the centre and looked down at the pearls in my hand. I could not keep them. What would I do with them? I could not tell Pieter how I came to have them—it would mean explaining everything that had happened so long ago. I could not wear the earrings anyway—a butcher's wife did not wear such things, no more than a maid did.

Be aware that if you use justified text with a narrow column the spaces between words can make the text difficult to read.

Writer's TOOLBOX

Commands that relate to the alignment and spacing of paragraphs relate to the whole paragraph. This means that you cannot align or space sentences differently.

Line spacing

The line spacing key allows you to create more space between sentences. More space between lines makes

the document easier to read so it is easier to review and edit. Line spacing is a personal choice; however, essays that are over 500 words are much easier to read when spaced at 1.5 or double spacing, and your teachers may ask you to do this so they can correct your work easily.

Breakaway tasks

Understanding

1   Explain the difference between left, right, centred and justified text.

Remembering

2   When and why should justified text be used?

3   When and why should left and right alignment be used?

4   What is significant about the line spacing of documents over 500 words?

Two useful editing buttons

Spelling and grammar   Thesaurus

Spelling and grammar

If you think of your assignment as a solid wall built brick by brick from the ground up, then the spelling and grammar is the mortar that holds the wall together. If your work does not have correct spelling and grammar, than the whole piece will collapse.

The spelling and grammar function on the computer highlights the mistakes you have made. These may be as simple as typing errors and incorrect spelling, or more complex such as sentence fragments and incorrect tense. The spelling and grammar function even suggests correct spelling and sentence construction; however, you should be aware that this function is not foolproof. A spelling and grammar check will not necessarily pick up the following:

- homophones, for example, 'She had groan at least 3 centimetres.' (should be 'grown')

- malapropisms, for example, 'It's a tacky subject.' (should be 'tricky')

Thesaurus

When you can't find the right word, the thesaurus function can be a lifesaver. The thesaurus will list all the synonyms (different spelling, same meaning) of a word that you want to change. This can be particularly useful to avoid repeating yourself. The thesaurus function should not be used randomly. If you look up the thesaurus but are not sure of, or have never heard of, a synonym it lists then do not use it. You run the risk of missing a subtlety in the word that makes it look out of place if you use it.

Breakaway tasks

Remembering

1   Finish the following sentences using the words from the box below.

a   Learning how to correctly _____ documents is part of the editing and revising process.

b   The different styles of writing in a computer document are known as _____.

c   Bold fonts are _____ and _____ than regular font.

d   _____ should be used when writing names of books, magazines and _____.

e   In _____ speaking countries standard alignment is _____.

darker	English	italics	left alignment
fonts	vehicles	format	heavier

Understanding

2   What is your computer spell check unlikely to pick up?

Analysing

3   Why is it not always a good idea to use words from a thesaurus?

Evaluating

4   How would you feel if there were no rules about word processing? Would it be more practical? Why?

Creating

5   Create a poster that tells students how to use colour highlight and colour font.

Strands in action

Core tasks

1 Look at the word processing document. Circle the font and paragraph formatting, and write out which commands have been used to do this.

2 What alternative ways could the document be presented? For every formatting command identified in question 1, write down two possible alternatives.

3 What problems could you foresee with using an English (Australian) dictionary command on this document and how could you overcome this?

4 Write a 3–5-minute speech explaining to your audience how computers help with producing word documents.

Organizing Your Home

Reduce And Organize The Clutter

- **For Book Lover's** – go through your books and get rid of duplicates or one you no longer need and donate them to your local library. For the rest, shelve them properly, making the books you use/read most often easily accessible.

- **CD's** – Sort them and decide if you are going to keep everything. Go through your car and gym bag to make sure you have all your music in front of you. Catalog them and group them into categories, then store them where they are safe and accessible. Remember, you can always save the contents of the disck to your computer as well so that you can eliminate the clutter.

- **Magazines** – Only subscribe to the magazines you really need. If you realize you are not reading the magazines, cancel the subscription. Read them and recycle. You can also donate them to local businesses or your doctor's office. For those who keep magazines, catalog them and file them away instead of letting them sit around cluttering your home. Also, don't keep the whole magazine; you can always keep the articles you want to reference in the future in your filing cabinet.

- **In General** – Use the space within your home. Use ottomans for storage; keep your baking baskets under a table so it is easy to access, but still out of the way from door traffic. Keep a filing cabinet for bills, articles, etc.

- **In Closets** – First off, the closet is for your clothes, so organize with that in mind. It should be its main function. To fill in extra space, at the top of the closet, build a shelf. This will be good for extra storage, CD totes, photo albums, etc. At the bottom of the closet, leave that for shoes or clothing accessories.

- **Bedroom(s)** – Bedrooms get filled with all kinds of items in that house that you just don't know what to do with. a simple solution, make sure everything has a place. If it doesn't have a "spot" in the room, it doesn't need to be in there. Find a different place for it or ask yourself, "Do I really need this?" Also, get rid of decorations and general decoration adds to clutter. Theme or special memories are okay, but personal flowers and knick knacks have no real necessity.

- **Bathroom** – To organize the bathroom, the best way to start is by taking everything out of the room. Once you have taken all of the toiletries, medications, etc. out of the room, go through them. Get rid of stuff that you no longer use to the stuff that has no expiration date. Once you go through it all, put everything away in its place. It may be best to put some shelves/bins under the sink to help organize.

- **Kitchen** – This room can be hard to organize. There are so many little pieces and parts, but it can be done. Go through your recipes and recipe books and clean out what you don't use and then organize them into categories so each recipe is easily found. Clean out the cupboards by taking everything out, and cleaning the shelves and then putting everything back where it is easy, accessible and functional. In the pantry, take everything out, get rid of old food and put it back so you can see what you have and everything is easy to find.

- **Garage** – Clean it out! Remove everything and go through it. Recycle what you can, throw away others, donate to shelters and you can even make a pile for a garage sale. For the rest, put up a shelf system. Make sure whatever you choose allows room for your vehicles to still fit in the garage, after all, that IS what it is for. Make sure the floor are clean, clean out all spider webs and make sure all outlets are cleaned off, no dust, wires and so on.

Source: XXXX

Extra tasks

1 In groups of two or three, write a short play about a person who does not know how to correctly format a document. Detail what happens to them when they try to give their document to someone to read and how they solve this problem. Present your play to the class.

2 Is there a better solution to using the computer's thesaurus to find synonyms? What is it? In groups, come up with a possible solution to the problem of a computer spelling and grammar check not picking up homophones and malapropisms.

3 Now it's your turn to get creative. Imagine that you are the head of a global corporation that sells one of the following:
- fruit roll-ups with added vitamins and minerals
- skateboards and scooters for under fifteens
- reusable coloured ink pens that never run out.

As part of your role as General Manager, you need to create the following set of documents:
- a guide for parents on the benefits of your product
- a flyer that advertises your product.