

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

P

Language explained

Parentheses, also referred to as round brackets, are used for three purposes.

- They enclose examples.

The modern plane (such as the Boeing) enables us to cross the world easily.

- They can indicate an aside.

Don't take too long to get dressed or you will miss your bus (as usual).

We learn from this additional information—that the person often misses their bus—but it isn't essential information. This is an aside, which is something a character says that they do not want the person to whom they are speaking to hear. An aside can also include information that isn't directly relevant to the sentence but is still too important to omit.

- They can be used to enclose letters or numbers in a list.

It's important that you understand that (a) I don't think this is a good idea, (b) you have been warned that it's not a good idea and (c) you shouldn't come crying to me when it all goes pear-shaped.

Punctuating sentences containing parentheses can cause confusion. Here are a couple of fairly simple rules to follow:

- Don't put commas before or after parentheses. Parentheses serve a similar function to commas if the commas are before and after information.
- Only punctuate within parentheses if they contain a major or main clause or sentence.

That's a massive mistake (the biggest she's ever made!) to try to fix up.

- If the parentheses contain a major or main clause and it concludes the sentence, it is more practical to make the major clause into a separate sentence.

Where are you off to tonight (same place you went last night, probably!)?

should read:

Where are you off to tonight? Same place you went last night, probably!

- Don't overuse parentheses; they will lose impact.
- The information within parentheses is generally not as important as the information in the rest of the sentence but it can give the reader some useful insights.

WRITER'S

TOOLBOX

Using asides can generate a very personal relationship between the speaker and the audience (readers as well as listeners) because the audience knows more than the character who is being spoken to does. This creates a sense of conspiracy and can be really useful in bringing the audience onside.

conspiracy (n.) a plot or scheme for a secret purpose

Language in use

- 1 Create two sentences that correctly use parentheses to enclose examples.

17 Parentheses and dramatic scripts

2 Create two sentences that correctly use parentheses to indicate additional information.

3 Create one sentence that correctly uses parentheses for list numbering.

4 Read this excerpt from a Fijian play and answer the questions that follow. Read the Hint (right) before you read the excerpt.

HINT

This excerpt from a Fijian play is about a mother, Mere, who is frustrated with her life, which revolves around cooking, cleaning and looking after her family. Her children come running into the room, arguing because they missed the bus. Mere sees this as an opportunity to get the children to help her with the work around the house. The children's grandmother enters, asking when her son (Mere's husband) is coming home, but no one knows. Mere replies in a bitter, sarcastic tone, and calls her home 'a mad house'.

Mere Oh, God, what a life. All I ever do is cook for other people. Scrub, sweep, wash ... the life of a woman! Why am I not a man, why do I feel trapped here, a bird that wants to be free ... to fly away. I am meant to fly ...

(pause)

I can never be alone ... never. If I want peace, where do I go? Everybody wants me to hold the family together, but I can't. I'm getting on ... and gone are the days when I feel I'm on top of everything. God knows I do try.

(pause)

Do I have a brain, you might well ask?

(imitating someone)

'Of course you haven't got a brain. What are you talking about, woman?'

(Pene and Lisi appear in the doorway.)

You missed the bus?

(They nod.)

Pene *(to Lisi)*

It's your fault. It's always you who eat last.

Lisi Mummy. He's blaming me.

Mere That's enough, Pene. Put your books away and change. There's plenty work to do.

Pene *(under his breath)*

No. I'm not working.

Lisi Mummy, Pene say he's not working.

Pene You informer! Come here!

(He chases her and she runs to her mother.)

Mere Stop it. Pene. Now take your bags to the room.

(Lisi and Pene exit. Baby cries offstage. Granny enters.)

Granny When is my son come back?

(pause)

Mere Today. Tomorrow. Who knows when your son will come back?

Granny But the baby crying and crying. You hear?

Mere Well, what do you expect me to do? Go and get credit from the shop? Wear a mask, ride a goat and raid Govind's supermarket?

(Granny exits.)

My God. This is a mad house.

Vilsoni Hereniko, *Hanisi Ofien (Love is gone)*, Mana Publications, 1989

17 Parentheses and dramatic scripts

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

a What words are missing that make the characters appear to be unschooled?

b Some parentheses have punctuation inside them. When is punctuation used and when is it not?

c Parentheses have three functions as seen in Language explained on page 65. Which function(s) are they fulfilling in this text? Find four examples to support your belief.

d What references are made to indicate village life rather than urban life?

e Of the two children, which is the elder? How do you know?

f What is implied by the sentence, 'Why am I not a man ...?'

HINT

In activity 4a, try to name the part of speech that each of the missing words belongs to. Is there a pattern? Is the same part of speech affected each time, or is it varied?

Vocabulary builder

5 Emotions are on continuums; that is, they 'continue' or vary from strong to weak (or positive to negative). Often a lack of vocabulary won't allow those distinctions to be made. Here are five continuums. Using your dictionary and thesaurus, fill in the gaps between these extremes. Be sure to keep the same part of speech (nouns-nouns, adjectives-adjectives) in each continuum.

a	b	c	d	e
love	independent	brilliant	working	sane
hatred	trapped	brainless	indolent	mad

17 Parentheses and dramatic scripts

6 Mere describes the life of a woman as cooking for other people: 'Scrub, sweep, wash ...' How do you see your life? Write a list of ten verbs that describe what you think your life will be.

7 'I'm getting on' is a way of Mere saying she is ageing. Challenge yourself to find ten other words or phrases that suggest ageing.

Building on language

Dramatic scripts

A play script is traditionally laid out in a similar way to the excerpt on page 66, with the names of the speakers in a column on the left and their lines on the right. Directions are italicised to differentiate them from spoken lines. While some plays have minimal direction (for example, Shakespeare's plays have almost no directions at all), others, like the excerpt, have a number of them. Many authors use parentheses because the directions clarify the lines. Some directions indicate:

italicised (v.) written in an italic or sloping font
differentiate (v.) identify how something is different

- a character's mood
- a character's actions
- a scene change
- lighting or sound changes.

The more control a playwright wants to have over their work, the more directions they will include. Some playwrights (Tennessee Williams, for example) almost narrate their work through their directions.

8 Re-read the play excerpt on page 66 and answer the questions.

a What do the directions indicate? Find examples to support your findings.

b Choose ten lines of the play. Insert stage directions for two other functions.

c In the first eight lines of the play there is only one speaker. What do we call a portion of a text where there is just one speaker talking to the audience?

d What function do the ellipses serve in the first eight lines? (See Unit 3.)

18 Brackets and analytical writing

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

P

Language explained

Using **square brackets** indicates that you are making some change or clarification to someone's work, particularly when you are quoting. Often, when you quote, the form of the word does not work with your own writing. For example, if you are writing an essay in the present tense but the text you are quoting is in the past tense, you need to change the quote to the present tense so it makes grammatical sense. When you change the form of the word, like going from past to present, you put the word in square brackets to indicate to your reader that you have made a change.

The original quote:

She was sitting down at the table, waiting for her mother to serve her.

becomes:

She [sat] down at the table, wait[ed] for her mother to serve her.

WRITER'S TOOLBOX

Don't get square brackets [] confused with curly brackets { } and angle brackets < >, which are mostly used by physicists, mathematicians and programmers. Angle brackets are also called chevrons and can be used in writing to show the internal thoughts of a character. For example, *I arrived at grandma's house to find we were having roast pork for dinner. <I hate pork!>*

Language in use

- 1 Use brackets to quote correctly from this sentence, changing the tense from present to past.

He is one of the most incredibly gifted young men in Australia, able to play six instruments and speak four languages.

- 2 Use brackets correctly to quote from this sentence, changing the tense from past to present.

It was impossible to consider all the factors when the fire struck; we just had to act and act fast.

- 3 Imagine these lines were to be quoted in the daily newspaper.

- a How would you quote this if you knew that 'he' was Rohan Kincaid?

No-one knew what he was doing here but they were very glad to see him.

- b How would you quote this (from an invitation) if you knew the hotel was in Sorrento?

I look forward to seeing you all there on our big day.

WRITER'S TOOLBOX

Too many square brackets would indicate that too many alterations had to be made and that the quote may not be the best one to use, or you need to rewrite your sentence so that it works the quote in more readily.

18 Brackets and analytical writing

- c How would you quote this if you knew the size was 30 square metres?
It's a great size for kids to play in.

4 Read this excerpt from a character analysis of Mrs Edwards from Oodgeroo Noonuccal's short story 'We Look After Our Own' and answer the questions that follow.

Oodgeroo Noonuccal was very sympathetic to her character, Mrs Edwards. We know that Mrs Edwards is a loving daughter; her father looks at her and 'He wishe[s] he could help her.' She has looked after her father since '... the spirit of death kindly but firmly ...' took her mother's life and it has made her '... older than she [is]'. She makes sure he has a bath and cares for him. When she finds him in 'a sort of coma' one morning she realises that '... her father [is] dying ...' and she '... [gives] way to a sudden burst of uncontrollable crying.' She loves her father. She is torn between what she should do as an Aborigine and what she wants to do as a daughter. As an Aborigine she should have '... look[ed] after [her] own ...' but as a daughter she '... [couldn't] bear to watch [her] father die.' But, finally, she does have to look after her father who we know by the end has died, but the picture of her as she '... lean[s] on the garden gate ...' makes her seem much more peaceful than she was before so it is reasonable to assume that she has found the strength to look after her own, her father. Noonuccal shows us her dilemma, her pain and in the end, her strength.

- a There are nine pairs of brackets in this piece. What do you think the original words were?

- b This text is a character analysis, which seeks to prove three things about Mrs Edwards. What are those three things? What evidence does the author use to prove those three things to be true?

- i

- ii

- iii

- c There is considerable use of ellipses in this excerpt. What is their function?

Vocabulary builder

In general, a persuasive text either promotes or denigrates a character, an idea or a point of view. In persuasive writing, an author will criticise those who disagree and promote those who agree. As an analyst of texts, your job is to work out what the author thinks—what the author promotes or denigrates. One of the challenges in writing analytically is to avoid sounding boring and repetitious—not to repeat 'promote' or 'denigrate' all the time. This requires a substantial word bank on the part of the author.

promotes (v) supports or encourages
denigrates (v) criticises or speaks badly of something

18 Brackets and analytical writing

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

- 5 Use a thesaurus, the internet and any other resources you can find to create a word bank for these two terms:

The author 'promotes' ...	The author 'denigrates' ...
<i>supports</i>	<i>criticises</i>

WRITER'S TOOLBOX

As an analyst you cannot use the term 'I', for example, 'I think the author uses ...' You can achieve this by using terms such as 'The author uses ...' or 'The writer's use of ...' or 'The reader views ...'

- 6 Choose a letter to the editor or use the one on page 3. Using a chart such as the one above, identify what the author promotes and list the words/phrases they used to do so. Then identify what the author denigrates and list all the words and phrases they used to do so.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Building on language

Analytical writing

The task of the analyst is to work out what the author is doing. It is not to judge the worth or merit of the endeavour or the outcome, just to demonstrate an awareness of the pursuit. Often the inexperienced analyst will lapse into judgement rather than stay with analysis. How do you avoid this pitfall? At the heart of the analysis are the following questions. How does the author want their audience to see a particular person, idea or thing? What language do they use to achieve that purpose? This relies on the reader's ability to infer what is being said. Drawing inferences is about becoming a text detective—you are looking for clues in the text to work out what is meant. For example:

It is a cold, wintery day. The umpire bounces the ball—and it's on! The 90 000-strong crowd are on their feet. This is the game they have all been waiting the whole season to see!

There are clues here. What do you know?

- It is a winter sport.
- The ball is bounced rather than thrown or challenged.
- The stadium holds 90 000 people. (There are only two in Australia that do, and one of them is a racecourse.)
- It is a sport because it has a 'season'.
- It has a keen and eager following.

All these lead you to conclude that it is an important game of _____.

Re-examine the sample character analysis of Mrs Edwards on page 70. We can draw conclusions about Mrs Edwards from what she does and says. After all, what can anyone tell about us except what we say and do? You need to take the text, infer from its details and analyse what those details tell you.

infer (v.) work out something based on evidence
inference (n.) a conclusion or an assumption based on evidence

HINT

Do not get confused between an inference and a prediction. An inference allows you to ask 'what conclusions can I draw?'; a prediction asks 'what happens next?'

7 Re-read the excerpt from *Frankenstein* on page 15. How would you describe Dr Victor Frankenstein's personality? What does he do or say that leads you to believe this?

8 Re-read the letter to the editor on page 3. Would the author own a mobile phone? What evidence can you find to support your position?

19 Tone and editorials

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

P

Language explained

Tone is best described as how the reader thinks the author is feeling at particular moments of a text. Tone rarely stays the same because, if it did, the reader would probably disengage after a time. Tone is particularly conspicuous in persuasive texts. In these texts, the author promotes who and what they agree with, resulting in positive tones, but they may equally denigrate who and what they disagree with, resulting in negative tones. For example:

conspicuous (adj.) visible and easy to see
earnest (adj.) serious and sincere

Upbeat, enthusiastic tone when speaking of the solution to the problem

Disgusted tone when referring to the drag-racers

These new speed humps are a lifesaver for us residents who are sick and tired of the 'hoon' element who use our quiet and respectable street as a drag-racing track and put all our lives at risk with their antisocial behaviour.

Earnest tone when speaking of the residents

DID YOU KNOW...

Some authors who try to persuade become bombastic in their tone. Find out what that means and discover why it isn't always persuasive at all.

In this sentence there are three tones. If this were expanded to a full text, these three tones would most likely remain the same because the writer's attitude to those three aspects of the issue—the residents, the problem (drag-racers) and the solution (speed humps)—would not change.

Language in use

1 What tones can you identify in these sentences and to what do they refer?

- a Some ignorant city dwellers might think it is unfair for hardworking farmers to shoot dogs that stray onto their farms, but any dog is a menace if it trespasses onto the property into which you have poured your blood, sweat and tears, and must be exterminated.

exterminated (v.) killed, put to death
trespasses (v.) to go onto property without permission

- b Is it even possible for the average person to understand how difficult it is for the children of Hollywood? These children spend their tragic lives in the lens of a camera held by some mercenary member of the paparazzi who must have, at some stage, had an emotional bypass to be so relentless in the pursuit of the innocent.

mercenary (adj.) money-making, motivated by money
paparazzi (n.) photographers who take photographs of celebrities while they are living their everyday lives
relentless (adj.) persistent and never-ending

19 Tone and editorials

c It is a perverse world in which we live when those who can put balls inside hoops, cups and nets are paid obscene amounts of money and are revered as gods. Meanwhile, the quiet workers who create artificial skin for burns victims, bionic ears for the deaf or vaccines for some of the world's worst diseases need to beg and borrow for their research money.

obscene (adj.) far beyond what is considered normal
revered (v.) thought very highly of

2 Read the editorial below and answer the questions that follow.

The community sympathises with those protesting against the compulsory acquisition of their houses along Burndy Avenue. It is probably most difficult for 76-year-old resident Myra Banks, who has been very vocal in her opposition to the proposed city bypass. However, the few here must yield for the sake of all.

The bypass will enable those who are heading for the beach to skirt the city rather than clogging up the CBD unnecessarily. This has resulted in the downgrading of the city centre as fewer funds are spent there than at other centres such as Highgate and Turndale. Bringing back shoppers to the city centre will encourage a refurbishment of those historic streetscapes and buildings, and could lead to an upturn in tourism to our city rather than through it to the burgeoning coastal resorts.

The bypass will reduce the smog around the city because traffic, chugging out tonnes of toxic gases, will not be idling in the streets but moving swiftly past. The bypass will also enable our residents to get to and from the capital for 84 kilometres down the freeway without the seven sets of lights one must negotiate to get to it.

The needs of this population of 188 000 must outweigh the objections of the eight residents affected by the decision. The compulsory acquisition of their houses must proceed.

acquisition (n.) purchase or possession
vocal (adj.) expressing one's opinion freely, outspoken
bypass (n.) a highway or road that passes around the outside of a town or city instead of going through the centre
yield (v.) give in to pressure
skirt (v.) travel around the outside
refurbishment (n.) renovation to make something look clean or new
burgeoning (adj.) growing, rapidly developing
idling (v.) moving at a slow speed

a What tones can you identify in this editorial? To whom are those tones attributable?

b Who writes an editorial? How does the narrative perspective of this text demonstrate this?

c What words or phrases does the author use to avoid sounding aggressive?

19 Tone and editorials

Name _____

Class _____

Due date _____

d To whom is the author most sympathetic? How do you know?

e Discuss what three points you would raise to either defend or argue against this author's point of view on the issue.

Vocabulary builder

The editorial in activity 2 uses muted or soft tones in an attempt to persuade. This means no extreme language choices, no hyperbole (over-the-top language) or hysteria. This can be most effective, particularly for an editorial, which is meant to reflect community attitudes rather than individual concerns.

3 Complete the table, giving a hyperbolic, hysterical or extreme word or phrase for each of the more moderate terms taken from the editorial. Be careful to keep the meaning the same—just turn up the emotional heat.

HINT

'Just turn up the emotional heat' is an idiom that has a figurative meaning. It means to use words that make an emotion feel much stronger than before.

	Moderate term	Emotive replacements
a	sympathises with	<i>stands solidly with, links arms with, weeps for, shares the devastation felt by</i>
b	difficult	
c	downgrading	
d	encourage	
e	outweigh	

4 In your notebook, rewrite this highly emotive piece in more moderate language.

This threat to steal our homes is absolute crap! These government morons who just waltz in here and tell us we have to move can get bent! I'm not going anywhere and neither are my neighbours who have become allies in this war against the city. They'll have to drag me out kicking and screaming. I'm not going anywhere, any time—over my dead body!

5 Complete these emotional ladders. Under each heading, list words on a continuum from the strongest to the most moderate in each emotional category—the first and last of which are indicated.

a	b	c	d	e	f
ecstatic	irate	terrified	bombastic	effusive	condemning
<i>excited</i>	<i>resentful</i>		<i>pompous</i>		
<i>happy</i>		<i>troubled</i>			<i>disparaging</i>
<i>pleased</i>				<i>confident</i>	
contented	irritated	concerned	aware	positive	negative

Building on language

Editorials

The third most widely analysed persuasive texts, after letters to the editor (Unit 2) and opinion or comment pieces (Unit 13), are **editorials**. The editorial has distinctive features.

- It presents the publication’s position on a given issue. It can be written by any number of people on a given day. Therefore, an editorial doesn’t use personal pronouns such as ‘I’ or ‘my’ because it is not a single person’s argument.
- It is the outward face of the publication itself and, therefore, it cannot afford to be as emotional or subjective as letters to the editor and opinion or comment pieces often are. Its tone should be more moderate and neutral, and the persuasion more subtle.
- Because the publication knows the profile of its average reader, an editorial is unlikely to present an opinion that would aggravate the readership. Therefore, an editorial tends to be predictable in its stance on issues (for example, a right-wing newspaper editorial is unlikely to argue for an increase in unemployment benefits).

6 Which of these opening lines would you consider most appropriate for an editorial and why?

- a We should not allow people to trample on our dreams and thwart our desires!
- b It is unlikely that the authorities were aware of the full extent of the danger that day and it is only with hindsight that the community now sees it.
- c Every time a particularly heinous crime is committed, there are those who call for the reinstatement of the death penalty.
- d It is impossible for me to fathom what some people are thinking—or even that they are thinking—when they behave so stupidly and irresponsibly!
- e It is human nature to want to blame something or someone when terrible things happen, but sometimes there simply is chance and misfortune, not negligence.

thwart (v.) prevent something from happening
hindsight (n.) understanding of the significance of something after an event has occurred
heinous (adj.) extremely evil and wicked
fathom (v.) comprehend, understand
negligence (n.) lack of care resulting in injury or loss
