How to use this document

This strategies handbook examines the literacy skills tested in this year’s English Language and Literacy Assessment. A brief explanation of each skill is given, along with a list of the questions in ELLA 2006 which test that particular skill. A range of appropriate teaching strategies to develop the literacy skills in Key Learning Areas has also been provided. Although the strategies accompanying each skill are written with particular KLAs in mind, most can be modified to suit any subject.

Explanation Sequence
Structure and language features ................................................................. 6
Teaching explanation sequence ................................................................. 8

Diary Entry – Recount
Structure and language features ............................................................... 10
Teaching recount ....................................................................................... 11

Connective Devices
Conjunctions and connectives ................................................................. 12
Teaching connective devices ..................................................................... 14

Descriptive and Figurative Language
Building noun groups ............................................................................... 17
Starting to use imagery ............................................................................... 17
Teaching descriptive and figurative language ............................................. 18

Sentence Structure
Simple, compound and complex sentences ............................................. 24
Teaching sentence structure ..................................................................... 26

Punctuation
Sentence, simple and complex punctuation .............................................. 28
Teaching punctuation ............................................................................... 30

Spelling
Spelling .................................................................................................... 32
Teaching spelling ..................................................................................... 34

Comprehension (literal)
Locating information ................................................................................ 36
Skimming and scanning ........................................................................... 36
Teaching locating information ................................................................. 36

Comprehension (interpretive)
Interpreting information .......................................................................... 38
Teaching interpreting information ........................................................... 38
Teaching sequencing information ............................................................ 43
Teaching interpreting images ................................................................... 46

Comprehension (inferential)
Inferring meaning .................................................................................... 50
Teaching inference .................................................................................. 50
Teaching vocabulary ................................................................................. 54
Purpose
Purpose ....................................................................................................................................................... 58
Teaching purpose ........................................................................................................................................ 58

Theme and Main Idea
Note-making, databases and skim reading .................................................................................................. 62
Teaching theme and main idea ......................................................................................................................... 64

Cohesion
Pronouns ...................................................................................................................................................... 66
Reference ...................................................................................................................................................... 66
Teaching cohesion .......................................................................................................................................... 67

Verbs
Common verb errors ........................................................................................................................................ 70
Verb form ...................................................................................................................................................... 70
Tense ............................................................................................................................................................ 71
Subject/verb agreement .................................................................................................................................. 71
Teaching verbs .............................................................................................................................................. 72

Point of View
First, second and third person ...................................................................................................................... 74
Teaching point of view .................................................................................................................................. 75

Tone
Tone ............................................................................................................................................................ 76
Teaching tone ............................................................................................................................................... 76

Text Conventions
Text conventions .............................................................................................................................................. 78
Teaching text conventions ............................................................................................................................... 78

GLOSSARY of additional literacy terms
Adjectives, Adverbs, Apostrophes, Articles, Brackets, Capital Letters, Clauses, Colons, Commas, Nouns, Noun Groups, Phrases, Prepositions, Pronouns, Question Marks, Quotation Marks, Semicolons ...................................................................................................................... 82

INDEX of teaching strategies by Key Learning Area
Speakers of Aboriginal English .................................................................................................................... 86
English ............................................................................................................................................................ 86
English as a Second Language ....................................................................................................................... 87
Creative Arts .................................................................................................................................................. 87
Human Society and its Environment ............................................................................................................. 88
Languages other than English ...................................................................................................................... 89
Mathematics .................................................................................................................................................. 89
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education .............................................................................. 90
Science .......................................................................................................................................................... 90
Technology ................................................................................................................................................... 91
The English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) assesses students’ literacy in the context of the key learning areas (KLAs). The outcomes of the English syllabus are achieved while engaging in learning activities and tasks throughout the school day. Using the content of other KLAs, students are provided with the opportunities to read and understand the structure and function of different types of texts and develop knowledge of language that can be readily applied when they write texts for themselves.

**Knowledge about Texts**

This language knowledge, from a teacher’s point of view, can be taught and assessed at the levels of words, sentences and whole texts. Skills and knowledge at the word and sentence level specifically deal with syntactical grammar, spelling and punctuation, which are assessed in both the language and writing sections of the test. At the level of the whole text, the focus is on function, purpose, structure and textual grammar, i.e., grammar required to interpret and create particular types of texts. Language processes at this level cover a range of skills that are typically used across KLAs. These are assessed in both the reading and writing sections of the test.

**Using Knowledge to Understand Texts**

In order to achieve the outcomes for other KLAs, students need to extract knowledge and information from a range of different texts. Therefore, they need to develop comprehension skills at many levels to fully engage with new learning across all subject areas. The items in the ELLA Reading section provide teachers with valuable information about students’ proficiency in comprehension at different levels.

**Literal Level**

When students understand texts at the literal level they are able to:

- locate information directly stated in a text
- locate information in titles, headings and captions
- connect information in a text and a labelled diagram
- make connections between information in consecutive sentences.

**Interpretive Level**

When students understand texts at the interpretive level they are able to:

- sequence events from a text
- identify a symbol by reading a key for a map
- extract information from maps, diagrams, and visual images
- make connections in a text by following a pronoun reference.

**Inferential Level**

When students understand texts at the inferential level they are able to:

- presume information implied in a text
- deduce the main idea from key words
- identify the meaning of words using context clues
- identify the meaning of figurative language, e.g., a metaphor.

**Critical Level**

When students understand texts at the critical level they are able to:

- identify the intended purpose of a part of a text
- infer a reason for an author’s use of persuasive language
- select an appropriate title by understanding the theme of a text
- analyse the use of layout features and text conventions.
**Using Knowledge to Construct Texts**

When constructing texts, students need to use all their knowledge about how texts work. They apply their learning about the conventions of written texts:

- at a whole text level, using their understanding of different genres and their purpose as well as the grammar required to create particular types of texts
- at sentence and word level, using their understanding of specific aspects of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

The items in the Language and Writing sections of ELLA provide teachers with valuable diagnostic information about what students know about aspects of texts and language and at what level they can apply this knowledge when editing or constructing texts for themselves.

Students were asked to construct a factual and a literary text. With information about two different types of text, teachers can assess students’ specific strengths and areas of need. In effective writing, the words must be easily accessed and the message logically constructed. To do this, writers must have control over many of the conventions of writing. They must be able to expand their ideas into sentences by providing additional details and choosing appropriate words and phrases. Certain grammatical components give written texts cohesion and it is important that students use these to make the meaning of their writing clear.

**ELLA Data and the Action Plan Process**

The following steps provide a guide for using the ELLA results in planning whole-school, stage, class or individual programs for literacy.

**STEP 1**
Examination of the results
Examine the school report package and SMART data to gain an overview of student achievement in Year 7 and Year 8.

**STEP 2**
Placing the results in context
Refer to other assessment information and identify the main areas of need to be targeted.

**STEP 3**
English syllabus links
Identify relevant syllabus outcomes that link to the areas of need identified by the assessment results.

**STEP 4**
Teaching and learning activities
Identify the target skills for whole-school, stage, class or individual action. Refer to this document for possible teaching and learning strategies to use when programming. These can also be found linked to specific items in the SMART data package.

**STEP 5**
Stage and whole-school approach
Discuss implications for school planning, resources and staff development. Plan to address target areas systematically over two years of a stage.
In Writing Task One, *How Chocolate is Produced*, students were asked to write an explanation of the process chocolate goes through to reach consumers. They were instructed to explain the details of what happens in each part of the process.

Elaboration is the addition of details that make clear what occurs as certain events in the sequence take place. This requires students to provide clarifying information that can include details about:

- the materials and equipment used (what)
- the specific methods employed (how) or
- the reasons certain actions take place (why).

When learning about writing explanations, teachers can demonstrate how basic facts can be extended with added details. Students need to be encouraged to talk out the details of each stage by answering clarifying questions (when, where, who, why, how) until they can employ this strategy independently.

For example, the first stage is *The raw materials are collected*. Show how using clarifying questions can stimulate added detail.

- **when?** – *once the cocoa pods are ripe*
- **where?** – *in cocoa plantations*
- **who?** – *by the workers*
- **how?** – *pods are cut from cocoa trees and beans are removed*
- **why?** – *to collect the beans for packing and shipping*

Students who successfully included the critical stages of the process (which were pictured in the stimulus) and added elaborated details about some aspects of these stages demonstrated understanding of this feature of an explanation.

**WRITING TASK ONE STIMULUS MATERIAL**
The two texts below show how students responded for this criterion. The first text has all of the critical stages of the process identified in sequence and many details have been elaborated. The student describes when, how, and why the stages occur and gives further information about who and what is involved.

Chocolate goes through many stages before it appears on the shelves of your local supermarket.

Chocolate comes from the pods of the cocoa tree. Once the pods are ripe, workers get the cocoa beans from inside the pods and pack them into large sacks. The sacks are transported by truck and loaded onto ships using special cranes.

Then the sacks are taken to the factory so the beans can begin their transformation into chocolate. The beans are cleaned and then air roasted in an enormous circular oven. After the beans have been crushed, milk and sugar are added to the chocolate mixture.

The chocolate mixture is poured into moulds to create chocolates in a variety of shapes and sizes. The chocolates are put in different wrappers to keep them fresh. They are sent out to shops so that you will be able to buy your favourite chocolates.

The second student text identifies and sequences some events but gives little elaborated detail about what, how or why beyond words modelled in the stimulus or what is explicit in the pictures.

How Chocolate is Made

First the cocoa beans are picked from the pods of the cocoa tree. The beans are packed and shipped and are taken to a factory.

At the factory the beans are tipped from bags and cleaned, then air roasted in an oven. Next they are crushed by big rollers and mixed with milk and sugar and poured into moulds. The chocolates move along in rows and are put in wrappers and boxes.

Now people can buy the chocolate and eat it!

Explanation sequence was assessed in Writing Task One – Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4.
Researching the detail for a causal explanation

- “What is Reconciliation?” Brainstorm the students’ initial understandings about Reconciliation, recording their ideas in a suitable format, such as a mind map. Put away for later reference.
- Using Walking for Reconciliation by Beth Hall (Ashton Scholastic, 2003) as a reference, discuss why people were on the Sydney Harbour Bridge and clarify some of the students’ understandings about Reconciliation.
- Complete a matrix which provides note-taking experience on the topic. The first reason and justification can be teacher modelled and the next two reasons can be pair or individual constructions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explain why the Reconciliation Walk was necessary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(modelled by the teacher) Reason 1 plus justification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with a partner) Reason 2 plus justification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(write this yourself) Reason 3 plus justification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing a causal explanation with detail

Turn the summary notes created for the previous activity into a written text:

- Using the matrix on the Reconciliation Walk, model changing the notes for Reason 1 into complex sentences.
- Have students work with a partner to jointly construct Reason 2 text and then independently construct the text for Reason 3.
- Students write their own conclusion on why Reconciliation is important.
- Compare completed explanations to the original brainstorm/mind map. Identify and discuss what is the same and what is now different from initial responses. Suggest possible reasons for these changes.
Annotating a model explanation text

- Give students an explanation sequence from your subject area.
- Guide students to annotate the organisational and language features of the text. These features include:

### Explanation Sequence

**Text structure:**
- title
- general statement
- conclusion

**Language features:**
- subject of the explanation is usually an event, phenomenon or process
- clear, logical and precise sentences
- topic-specific language
- describing words
- action verbs
- technical language
- present tense

- Define the terms causal and sequential with students and discuss terms such as continuity, succession and chronological order.
- Provide students with a sequential explanation and deconstruct the text with them, discussing structure and language features. Sequential explanations may be in the form of newspaper articles, lectures or essays.
- Ask students to write a sequential explanation using a scaffold such as the one above. Geography topics could include a natural disaster, the formation of the Great Barrier Reef, the development of an urban area.

Reconstructing a jumbled explanation

- First show students a model of an explanation on a related topic and identify particular sentence patterns that are typical of explanations. For example, the information found at the end of a sentence is often used as the starting point for the next sentence.
- Next, find an explanation text relating to a simple mechanical device such as a rain gauge, barometer or thermometer. Give students the text already cut into single sentences and jumbled out of order.
- Ask students to work with a partner to reconstruct the text by ordering the sentences to form a complete cohesive text.
Recount

In Writing Task Two, *Diary Entry*, students were required to recount an experience of a dramatic rescue. As a recount involves the retelling of past events, past tense is commonly used as well as connectives and conjunctions showing time, sequence and causal relationships of the events being recounted. Students needed to use effective descriptive language to convey an account of the events in the order in which they happened and evaluate the significance of those events for the people involved.

In structuring the recount, students needed to include a dramatic introduction which effectively engaged the reader by arousing curiosity, give detailed descriptions of the sequence of events from the perspective of the chosen participant, including how that person felt during and/or after the rescue, and provide information about the responses of other people involved. The recount needed to finish with a clear and effective conclusion that reflected on what had been learnt from the experience or evaluated the significance of the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEXT TYPE</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>LANGUAGE FEATURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Recount   | To retell a series of events | • orientation  
• sequence of events | • descriptive language  
• past tense  
• time words to connect events  
• words which tell us where, when, with whom, how |

Recount was assessed in Writing Task Two – Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4.

**WRITING TASK TWO STIMULUS MATERIAL**

![Diary Entry Image](image-url)
Writing a factual recount from a diagram

In mathematics, students write to explain how they solved a problem, to justify their reasoning or to consolidate their understanding. They use technical language and words such as “because” to establish a sequence of “cause and effect” in their reasoning. Interpretation of graphs involving time provides students with the opportunity to write a factual recount of a sequence of events using past tense and time reference words such as “then” and “next” to link the sequence of events together.

- Ask students to work in pairs to create a distance–time graph of a journey (such as the one shown below).
- Direct pairs of students to swap graphs and write a factual recount of the journey the graph represents.

Narrative recount in drama

Using existing knowledge of story recounts

- Have students listen to a relaxing piece of music and ask them to think of a place they know well, eg places they have visited on holidays or weekends with family or friends or places they go every day. Ask them to imagine themselves in that place when something unexpected happens.
- Form students into pairs or groups of four. As a story telling exercise, ask students to recount their story to their partner or group.

Using comprehension skills – interpreting information and predicting outcomes

- Direct students to choose one of the stories recounted to their group to improvise spontaneously. Ask them to prepare a rehearsed improvisation up to the point where there is a complication or some dramatic tension, eg in a scene about a beach holiday interrupted by a huge storm, the complication could be when the family realises that the brother and his friend are out fishing and have not returned when the storm hits.
- Have groups perform these scenes to the class and ask students to predict the conclusions of the scene. Students may write these predictions down as each scene is performed and report them to the group at the end of each performance.

Applying information – creating a storyboard

- Tell groups to draw on the information given by the class and decide on the ending that their group wants to use.
- Ask students to create a storyboard of the ending by writing a description of the events for each scene.

Using scriptwriting conventions

- Ask students to write the opening of their scene in script form. Provide a scaffold which allows students to include elements such as those in the following example:

  **SETTING:**
  The lounge room of a holiday cottage on the south coast of NSW.
  It is the afternoon of a hot summer’s day.

  **A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF EACH CHARACTER:**
  Ken Miller – 50 years old, fit and a keen fisherman; Janine Miller – 17 years old, in Year 12; Karen Miller – 49 years old, energetic and an amateur painter; Anthony Miller – 19 years old, mechanic.

  **DIALOGUE AND STAGE DIRECTIONS:**
  KEN: (walking into the room) I think there’s a storm coming from the south.
  KAREN: (looking up from the painting she is working on at the dining table) Yes, I think you’re right. I can smell the rain in the air.
Explanations of a process, such as *How Chocolate is Produced*, are organised to establish what stages occur and in what order. In Writing Task One, students needed to demonstrate a variety of connective devices to show time, sequential and causal relationship between stages in their explanation of the process of making chocolate.

### Time and sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connective Devices</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>connectives indicating time at the beginning of sentences</td>
<td>Next, the cocoa beans are loaded onto a truck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporal conjunctions at the beginning of sentences (starting a dependent clause in first position)</td>
<td>After the beans arrive at the factory they are cleaned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conjunctions used between clauses in a sentence</td>
<td>The beans are roasted and then they are ready to be crushed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanations can also link certain parts of the process to the **reasons** or **purposes** for them. Causal links are typically shown using:

### Reasons or purposes for parts of the process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connective Devices</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>connectives indicating cause at the beginning of sentences</td>
<td>Therefore any damaged chocolates will be removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conjunctions at the beginning of sentences</td>
<td>In case there is any germs dirt on the beans, they wash them to clean them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>causal conjunctions used between clauses in a sentence</td>
<td>They add sugar because they want the chocolate to taste sweet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Links can also be made to show **how** or **in what manner** certain events take place or what the **result** of particular actions will be. These can be shown using:

### How, in what manner or results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connective Devices</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>connectives at the beginning of sentences</td>
<td>As a result, the factory ensures only beans free of impurities are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conjunctions at the beginning of sentences</td>
<td>By using a conveyor belt, the chocolates can be wrapped very quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conjunctions used between clauses in a sentence</td>
<td>They pour the chocolate into moulds so that the different shapes can be made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who do not have a repertoire of connective devices to choose from, revert to inappropriate connectives, such as numericals (*firstly, secondly, fifthly, sixthly*) or overuse words common in spoken language (*and* or *then*).
Students who used a range of appropriate connectives and conjunctions to sequence the parts of the chocolate-making process and make links within the text demonstrated understanding of the need to use a variety of types of linking devices in their explanation.

**Connective Devices**

This is the process of how chocolate is made.

To begin with, cocoa beans grow inside cocoa tree pods. Once the beans are ripe, they are picked and transported to the chocolate factory.

The next stage of the process involves treating the beans to make them into chocolate. First, they are cleaned and then they are roasted. After this, the beans are crushed and milk and sugar are added in order to make the chocolate mixture sweeter. Finally the chocolate is poured into moulds and wrappers are put on the chocolates so that they won’t go stale.

At last the chocolates are ready to eat!

**Conjunctions** and **connectives** help to ensure the flow of ideas in a text is clear to the reader.

**CONJUNCTIONS** are cohesive devices that operate within sentences. They may join words, phrases or clauses. Different types of conjunctions are used to express different types of relationships between ideas in a sentence. For example:

- **Place** – where, wherever
- **Time** – after the cocoa beans are crushed..., once this is complete, the beans are cleaned before being roasted, since, whenever, as, before, just as, until, while
- **Manner** – as, like, by transporting them in sacks
- **Cause** – because, as, so that, in order to, since, in case, if, therefore, until
- **Condition** – if, unless, in case
- **Concession** – although, despite, while

**CONNECTIVES** contribute to the cohesion of a text by signalling the development of the text to the reader. They function to:

- **Clarify** – in other words, for example
- **Show cause/result** – so, therefore, as a result, accordingly, consequently, for that reason
- **Indicate time** – afterwards, at the same time, later, soon, once, everyday, each morning, eventually, after that, next, the mixture is then combined, previously, following this, in the end, finally
- **Sequence ideas** – firstly, first of all, to begin with, to start with, at this point, at this stage, then, next, at last, finally, to conclude, in summary
- **Add information** – furthermore, moreover
- **Indicate condition/concession** – in that case, however, despite this, otherwise

**Connective Devices were assessed in Writing Task One – Criterion 7.**
Cause and effect connectives in science

• Make a copy of an explanation text for class viewing (enlarged onto an A3 sheet or on an overhead transparency).

• Model for students how to identify and highlight words that show cause and effect (such as because, in order to, as a result and due to). Discuss the relevance of cause and effect relationships in science.

• Give pairs of students a similar text and ask them to highlight the cause and effect terms.

Identifying cause and effect in an explanation

• Select a range of written scientific explanations from a variety of sources to use as model texts.

• Invite students to examine the pattern of language in one model to identify that explanation texts contain causes, effects and cause and effect connectives. Ask students to bracket or highlight each cause and effect in the explanation and to label them “C” and “E” and to underline the connective used. The example below is about “How Water Changes”.

How Water Changes

Water can be a solid (ice), a liquid (water) or a gas (water vapour or steam). To change water from one state to another, it must be heated.

When ice is heated in a beaker it becomes warmer. As the warm ice continues to be heated it changes from a solid to a liquid. The ice melts and as a result, liquid water forms.

When the liquid water is heated further, it becomes hotter and eventually it begins to boil.

As the water boils, steam rises from its surface. This is because the boiling water changes to steam.

• As a joint activity compile a word list of common connectives used in explanation texts. Give small groups of students another model explanation and direct them to identify as many of the cause and effect and connective sets as they can within a set time limit.
Using connectives to link ideas in history

- **Combining Sentences**: Give pairs of students a range of simple sentences that can be combined using conjunctions and connectives. Ask students to match the sentence pairs and choose the most appropriate way to link the ideas.

- **Historical Recount**: Ask students to write a recount of an historical event or the life of an historical figure. Direct students to insert suitable conjunctions and connectives from a word bank to make the recount more cohesive.

- **Sequencing on a Timeline**: Develop a timeline then convert this graphical representation into written text, using connectives to indicate time relationships and cause and effect relationships.

Scaffolding the substitution of connectives

- Locate a topic-related text which contains a variety of connectives.

- With students, identify the connectives in the text (by circling, highlighting or underlining).

- Re-examine the connectives to classify them into their types: time, cause and effect, contrasting information or additional information and condition.

- Discuss how the connectives function in developing the meaning that emerges.

- Ask students to suggest synonyms and substitute them into the text. Discuss whether they retain the original meaning of the text.

  because of > for that reason > consequently
  at last > after this > from this moment
  for example > such as
  in contrast > on the other hand > alternatively
When students write narratives and recounts, they are required to represent people (themselves and others) and events in realistic or imagined worlds. The overarching purpose, of course, is to interest and entertain readers by drawing them into the unfolding events and by crafting appealing characters.

When writers represent people and experiences, the language choices they make can heighten the interest in the story for the reader. Point out to students the functions of different grammatical aspects and also what kinds of words are the most effective in carrying the description of characters and events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of meaning</th>
<th>Aspects of grammar</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who or what is involved: people, places, things, concepts, themes, emotions</td>
<td><strong>Noun groups:</strong> Factual and opinion adjectives Figurative language Whole clauses</td>
<td>flying shards of crystal with sharp edges; a courageous act; thunder rumbling like a drum; an indescribable wave of terror that sent shivers up my spine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is happening: events, activities, behaviours, states of being, relationships</td>
<td><strong>Verb groups</strong> Different types of verbs: – action verbs to describe events – saying verbs to express direct speech – thinking/feeling verbs to express the thoughts and emotional responses of the characters or narrator</td>
<td>tried to escape; began howling and growling; smashed; shattered; huddled; exploded; shrieked; complained; whimpered; thought; wondered; knew; expected; worried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the context: the circumstances surrounding the events – when (the time), where (the setting), how (manner) and why (reason)</td>
<td><strong>Adverbials:</strong> adverbs, adverbial phrases and prepositional phrases</td>
<td>fortunately; reluctantly; miserably; because of the terrible weather; A few moments later ...; During the night ...; into the basement; along the ridge; with an almighty heave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action verbs**

Using effective action verbs makes texts more interesting for readers. When reviewing texts, have students focus on improving their drafts by choosing more expressive verbs.

- **looked** – peered, stared, gazed, glanced, glared, scanned
- **ran** – dashed, rushed, hurried, scampered, scurried
- **came down** – fell, dripped, dropped, pelted or bucketed down

**Effective adverbs**

Details about the action in a story are provided by adverbs and adverbial phrases that tell more about how and where actions take place. Provide students with simple sentences and ask them to provide words or phrases that tell more about how.

- He opened the door quietly.
- My brother and I hid nervously.
- I rushed frantically.

This can be repeated with students adding phrases that tell about where actions occur.

- He opened the door of the study quietly.
- My brother and I hid nervously under our beds.
- I rushed frantically out onto the verandah.
Thinking and feeling verbs

Readers can be given insight into what characters are experiencing emotionally using thinking and feeling verbs. They are also used to show characters’ reflections on the events that they are experiencing. Assist students to identify thinking and feeling verbs from texts and make word banks of effective choices (in past tense) for them to use in their own writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking verbs</th>
<th>Feeling verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thought, wondered, knew, wished, remembered, considered, imagined, realised, believed, decided, expected</td>
<td>loved, disliked, hated, scared, hurt, enjoyed, frightened, worried, amazed, shocked, delighted, disgusted, cherished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building noun groups

A simple but effective method to enhance the descriptiveness of writing is to show students how to build noun groups. This can be easily done by adding two adjectives before a noun and a prepositional phrase after a noun.

- A dark, threatening sky with thick, leaden clouds ...

Starting to use imagery

Imagery refers to descriptive techniques used to help construct images in readers’ minds. Imagery includes:

**Figurative language**

- Simile – makes a comparison between one thing and another, usually in a phrase using like or as ... as.
  
  The pine trees stood as straight as soldiers on parade.

- Metaphor – likens one thing to another by stating that one thing is another.
  
  The narrow creek was a snake slithering its way across the fields.

- Personification – ascribes human characteristics to non-human things.
  
  The water licked her toes.
  
  Fire so greedy it cannot be satisfied ...

Other literary devices which enhance description include:

- Alliteration – repeating of consonant sounds in word strings.
  
  The wind whistled wildly through the trees.

- Assonance – repeating vowel sounds in word strings.
  
  He stayed and played all day.

- Onomatopoeia – forming words from sounds that suggest qualities of the object or action being described.
  
  The trolley crashed and banged down the stairs.
  
  Petros could hear the hiss and sizzle of the cooking sausages.

- Repetition – repeating focal words or phrases for effect.
  
  The walls shuddered; the doors shuddered; even the floors shuddered.

- Pun – a play on words.
  
  Have a whale of a time on Walter’s Whale Watching Tours.

Descriptive and Figurative Language was assessed in Writing Task One – Criterion 5, Writing Task Two – Criteria 5 and 6, Reading Questions 9 and 29 and Language Question 47.
Order of adjectives in noun groups

Adjectives describe or give information about nouns or pronouns and are used to make texts more interesting and precise. Generally speaking, there is a set sequence for adjectives in English – moving from the general to the specific. The conventional order for descriptive adjectives is as follows:

number, opinion, size, age, shape, appearance, colour, material, origin, type

Note that English is flexible and variations in this order will occur according to context and emphasis. While native speakers possess an intuitive understanding of the accepted order, many ESL learners will not.

• Ask students to brainstorm adjective category names and fill in the gaps for each of the following extended phrases from a sample text (in this case a dreaming story).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>size</th>
<th>opinion</th>
<th>appearance</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>big,</td>
<td>scary,</td>
<td>hairy,</td>
<td>hungry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>age</th>
<th>appearance</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>an</td>
<td>old,</td>
<td>dusty, jumping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>colour</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>big, fat, golden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Ask students to complete the following three noun groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>opinion</th>
<th>size</th>
<th>colour</th>
<th>type</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>beautiful,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>singing</td>
<td>canaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>size (height)</th>
<th>colour</th>
<th>place</th>
<th>type</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>office</td>
<td></td>
<td>building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>size</th>
<th>shape</th>
<th>colour</th>
<th>type</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>coins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Ask students to add adjectives to describe each of the following nouns. Encourage them to use their bilingual/English dictionaries.

1. a _____, _____, _____ car
2. the pair of __________, _____ koalas
3. my __________, _____, _____ schoolbag
4. the __________, _____, _____ river
5. many _____, _____, _____ students
Descriptive language cline

- Explain how choice of descriptive language can influence readers’ emotional responses because of implicit positive or negative connotations.
- Ask students to create a word cline using topic-related vocabulary. A cline involves ordering words on a continuum or scale from one extreme to another such as loudest to softest or most negative to most positive. The example below is a word cline on the topic of SMELL, where associated words such as fragrance or stench are positioned on a continuum of pleasant – unpleasant:

![Word Cline Image]

- Explain how the use of modality can affect the objectivity of a text. For example, the language of authority and certainty in a text can be developed through the use of modal verbs (should, must, might), adverbs (maybe, surely, certainly) and adjectives (essential, advisable, important, recommended). Provide students with a list of modal words and ask students to place them on a continuum.

Identifying the effect of descriptive language

- Provide students with a literary stimulus text. The examples below use an extract describing a swimming race from Alex – the Making of a Champion by Tessa Duder (Penguin Books, 1987).
- Identify action verbs from the text, for example slice, juddering and rasping. Discuss why such words are more effective than their more common synonyms, such as cut, shaking and rubbing.
- Identify adjectives from the text, for example physical blow, false start, dead trouble and fair fight. Compare these with synonyms such as body, wrong, big and even.
- Select another text and ask students to identify some effective verbs and adjectives. Ask students to justify their selections by giving examples of less effective word choices and to comment on the impact achieved by the author’s choices.

The impact of figurative language

- Use a literary text to examine the metaphors (mental images) used by the author. The examples below draw on an extract describing a swimming race from Alex – the Making of a Champion by Tessa Duder (Penguin Books, 1987).
- The text begins: My fingertips slice open the water. Brainstorm a list of the mental images associated with the word slice, for example knife, meat, sharp, edge. Discuss why the author might have chosen this word to describe the movement of fingertips through water.
- Take another word from the text, such as Briefly I’m an arrow. Ask students to represent the images that the word arrow evokes on a wall chart, for example sharp, piercing, pointed, puncturing.
- Introduce the concept of metaphor as a type of comparative description which creates an image in the reader’s mind. Ask students to compose their own metaphors and evaluate their effectiveness.
Constructing complex noun groups

- Explain that texts such as film reviews require brevity so the descriptive language used will be quite concentrated or dense. The use of complex noun groups allows a writer to communicate considerable information in a more concise manner and to intensify the descriptive nature of the text.

- Explain the structure of a complex noun group. A complex noun group is made up of describing and classifying adjectives which add more precise meaning to the thing they are describing. The describing adjectives always go before the classifying adjective. Describers can be intensified using words like ‘very’. The examples below use the following review of the movie Shrek as a stimulus text.

**SHREK – AN OLD TALE WITH A NEW LOOK**

Did you have a loveable olive green furrrrry monster? Did you listen to all those enchanting fairy tales? Then Shrek is the movie for you. Shrek is hardly huggable but within that ugly green, swamp-dwelling ogre beats a heart of gold. This character, believe me, is the real deal.

This is the modern day fairy tale, which delightfully transforms many of the fairy tale stereotypes. The heart-throb hero is far from handsome and the damsel in distress is far from helpless. Shrek, played with the voice of Mike Myers embarks on a quest to rescue Princess Fiona, locked high up in an impregnable tower, guarded by a pink fire-breathing dragon. Lord Farquaad, a vertically challenged knight in shining armour sends Shrek on this quest for himself, for only by marrying a princess can he become king. But in the true spirit of all traditional fairy tales, Shrek falls hopelessly in love and tries to win her for himself. A kaleidoscope of familiar fairytale characters along with karaoke singing, modern day figures who would be at home on reality TV, people this hugely entertaining, often side-splittingly funny movie.

Don’t think you’ll only be grabbed by the story! The computer generated 3D animation is awesome! The characters, tear-inducing Gingerbread Man (Conrad Vernon) and simpering, exasperating but endearing Donkey (Eddie Murphy), are superbly designed examples of 3D animation. The singalong music will have you pounding your feet and humming in your seat.

This a movie that appeals to all and spans the generations with its age-old message to never judge people by appearances. This revamp of those old familiar fairytales will pull on the heartstrings, evoke deliciously comforting childhood memories and leave you with that warm inner glow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Describing adjective</th>
<th>Classifying adjective</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>fire-breathing</td>
<td>dragon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the</td>
<td>swamp-dwelling</td>
<td>ogre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Give students the following simple descriptive sentences (a, b and c) about the Gingerbread Man and ask them to use this information to create a sentence with complex noun groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive phrase</th>
<th>Compound adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Gingerbread Man is tortured by Lord Farquaad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) In the story he is defenceless.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) He is an engaging character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Explain that reviews also use compound adjectives in the noun groups to intensify the description. Ask students to complete the table below to create compound adjectives about characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive phrase</th>
<th>Compound adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ogre who was living in a swamp</td>
<td>swamp-dwelling ogre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairytale characters who sing karaoke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A dragon which breathes fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gingerbread Man who induces tears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Divide students into four groups. Ask students in each group to write descriptive sentences about one of the characters (Lord Farquaad, Donkey, Princess Fiona or the dragon) using complex noun groups as shown.
Descriptive language in mathematics

Using patterns as writing prompts is one way to build confidence in writing descriptively in mathematics. Encourage students to use descriptive summaries of concepts for specific purposes.

- **Design Change Rooms** to be built at a beach in a pattern of rows using common walls (see below). Describe the pattern selected and the features of each row. Outline the advantages of building the change rooms this way to convince a local council to adopt your plan. Your reasoning should explain how many walls are shared in any given number of change rooms.

- **Design a Pavers Pamphlet** to persuade people to use pavers in a particular design around a square pool. Describe the features of the paving pattern (shown below) and the advantages of using it. Your reasoning should explain how many pavers would be used with any given sized square pool.
Understanding the purpose of imagery

- Highlight for students how successful writers craft descriptions using a variety of techniques. Imagery is an essential component of effective writing as it assists readers to imagine what is in the writer’s mind.

- Following explicit teaching of imagery in shared and guided reading sessions, select a descriptive passage rich in comparative devices. Texts rich in imagery suitable for early Stage 3 include: *The Twits* by Roald Dahl; *Blueback* by Tim Winton; *Storm Boy* by Colin Thiele; *Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Graham and *Fox* by Margaret Wild. Present this text to students as a cloze passage with the imagery removed and provided as options below. The example below is an extract from *Rain Dance* by Cathy Applegate:

Beyond our desolate farm I can see the horizon where a few dark clouds _____________ _______. It never comes, and now our dam is a patch of dry cracked mud surrounded by brown land. The cicadas have been shrilling, ________________. This morning they are quiet. The silence ________________. It spreads and suffocates everything, ________________.

- *steals into corners, nooks and crannies*  
- *cruelly taunt us with promises of rain*
- *like a hot dry blanket*  
- *calling impatiently for rain*

Using similes to intensify actions

- Explain to students that similes are frequently used to expand noun groups. However, they are also an important device to intensify actions. Demonstrate some examples.

  (The fox) *flickers* through the forest like a tongue of fire.
  
  He *burst* through the door as forcefully as a surging wave.

- From a variety of effective narrative texts, select passages that convey events through strong action verbs. Have pairs of students annotate the text by inserting innovative similes following some of the verbs to create more striking scenes.

Grindol and Ziggy raced through the forest. They could hear the drone of hundreds of voices in the distance like ______________________________. The path through the trees was narrow and overgrown so it was hard going. They had to duck and weave and leap over fallen branches that lay strewn on the ground like ______________________________.

They were grateful for the moon ______________ through the ________ of leaves. They could soon see the flickering of other lights as they neared _________________________.

- *steals into corners, nooks and crannies*  
- *cruelly taunt us with promises of rain*
- *like a hot dry blanket*  
- *calling impatiently for rain*
In ELLA Writing Tasks the criteria which assess sentence structure consider whether students demonstrate correctly structured sentences and whether students use a variety of types of sentence structures.

A sentence is a group of words that makes complete sense. In writing, it is marked at its beginning with a capital letter and at its ending with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

Sentences serve the following purposes:

- To make **statements** (declaratives): The girl played basketball.
- To ask **questions** (interrogatives): When does the game begin?
- To utter **commands** (imperatives): Aim the ball higher.
- To deliver **exclamations** (exclamatives): What a goal!

**Simple, compound and complex sentences**

Sentences are categorised into three types – simple, compound and complex – according to the number and types of clauses they contain.

**Simple sentences**

A simple sentence consists of a single independent or main clause. It does not have another clause functioning as one of its elements. A simple sentence may also include one or more phrases. For example:

```
main clause  prepositional phrase
Kim walked along the track.
```

```
adverbial phrase  main clause
At exactly 9 pm every night, David turned off the lights.
```

**Compound sentences**

In compound sentences, there are two or more independent clauses that are linked. Each independent or main clause is able to stand on its own and the meanings of all clauses are of equal importance.

Because compound sentences coordinate independent clauses equally, they tend to use the additive conjunctions **and** and **or**, or the contrastive conjunction **but**. For example:

```
John was getting tired but he was determined to finish his bushwalk.
```

```
John ate his lunch and then he continued on his way.
```
**Complex sentences**

In assessing student responses in ELLA and BST Writing, both the number and variety of complex sentence structures demonstrated in the writing are considered.

A complex sentence consists of one (or more) main clause/s and one (or more) dependent clause/s.

A dependent clause provides a separate piece of information to the main clause but is dependent on the main clause to make meaning or sense. For example, consider the dependent clauses in bold type below. Neither could stand on its own. Each depends on ideas in the main clause for its meaning.

\[ I \text{ sat down on a cardboard box that promptly collapsed under my weight.} \]
\[ For \text{ as long as she could remember, Olivia had enjoyed playing piano.} \]

Complex sentences can have dependent clauses in a range of logical relationships with the main clause. Conjunctions such as *when, because, although* and *if* indicate the nature of the relationship between some dependent clauses and the main clause.

Complex sentences can include both complex and compound elements. Consider the example below.

\[ Jill \text{ opened the map and studied it carefully so that she knew exactly where to go.} \]

The coordinating conjunction *and* links the compound elements of this sentence, while the subordinating conjunction *so that* links the complex element.

---

Sentence Structure was assessed in Writing Task One – Criterion 8, Writing Task Two – Criterion 9 and Language Question 14.
Sentence structure in instructional texts

So students can follow or write instructions, they need to know how to recognise and incorporate the structure and language features of these texts in writing or speech. Texts that instruct are designed to explain how to do something through a series of steps. They have similar structure and language features. They commonly:

– have a goal to achieve as a main heading or title
– list the materials needed to achieve the goal
– provide the steps necessary to accomplish the goal, usually in a specific order
– show steps or commands with the action or verb placed first
– include words which tell us how, when, where and with whom

• Locate a text on a relevant topic. The example below uses a PDHPE text that familiarises students with the individual components of the catch. This text combines photographs and writing to make the action clear.

• Use the example, *Eyes focused on the object throughout the catch*. Explain that five of the statements have placed the body part as the first word of the sentence. This is because the writer wants to emphasise the body part involved in the action.

• Ask the students to change these sentences to a set of instructions that will assist students to perform the catch proficiently. To do this, students should place the action verb at the front of the sentence, for example *Focus eyes on the object throughout the catch*.

• Have students repeat this sentence structure for the remaining components of the catch.

• Read the rewritten texts aloud and discuss whether the new sentences provide clearer instructions for readers.
Complex sentence structure in news reports

Class Brainstorm – writing the lead paragraph of a news report
Ask students to look at the headline, photograph and caption of any newspaper report and describe what is happening.

- Write all responses on the board. Categorise under the headings WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE.
- Ask students to work in pairs to ask and answer questions which elicit information about the event depicted in the news report.
- Write the students’ questions and answers on the board. Use this information to jointly construct a lead paragraph for the news report.

Writing Complex Sentences
Provide a worksheet with the same category headings as the previous activity and information under each heading, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two girls</td>
<td>went bushwalking</td>
<td>yesterday</td>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>got lost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a puppy</td>
<td>rescued</td>
<td>Tuesday afternoon</td>
<td>the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firefighters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Model verbally how to combine information in one sentence, for example:
  
  *Two girls became lost while bushwalking yesterday in the Blue Mountains.*
  
  *A puppy was rescued by firefighters on Tuesday afternoon in the city.*

- Demonstrate varying sentence organisations, for example:
  
  *Yesterday, while bushwalking in the Blue Mountains, two girls became lost.*

- Direct students to write sentences using the information in the table. This task can be further scaffolded, if necessary, by providing students with partially completed sentences with one of the elements from the table missing and then increasing the number of missing elements until students write the sentence independently.

- Ask students to write a lead paragraph for their newspaper report.
PUNCTUATION

For the purpose of enhancing consistent judgement of this criterion, punctuation has been organised into the following categories.

**Sentence punctuation is not evident**
Students at this level are unable to demonstrate sentence punctuation or are inconsistent in using capitals following full stops when marking where sentences begin and end.

*eg 1. the dog sat on the bed he went to sleep he was dreaming*

*eg 2. the dog sat on the bed He went to sleep. he was dreaming*

**Sentence punctuation is evident**
Students who demonstrate all sentence level punctuation are able to:

- use capital letters for all their sentence beginnings
- use full stops or exclamation marks to indicate the end of their sentences.

*eg 1. The dog sat on the. Bed he went. To sleep he was dreaming.*

The student is beginning to show awareness of the convention of sentence punctuation even though the sentence punctuation does not mark correct sentences.

*eg 2. The dog sat on the bed he went to sleep. He was dreaming.*

The student demonstrates the convention of sentence punctuation and has consistently used capitals and full stops to mark what the student believes to be sentences even if the sentence boundaries are not correct in every instance.

*eg 3. The dog sat on the bed. He went to sleep. It wasn’t a restful sleep! He twitched shook and snored in his sleep.*

The student is aware of the convention of sentence punctuation and has placed the sentence punctuation marks in the appropriate places. However, simple punctuation has not been demonstrated. (There is a missing apostrophe of contraction and a missing list comma.)
Simple punctuation is evident
Students use sentence level punctuation consistently and additionally demonstrate:

• use of capital letters for proper nouns
• use of lower case letters where necessary (ie no misplaced capitals)
• use of question marks, commas in lists, apostrophes of contraction (misplaced apostrophes in plurals eg table’s or verbs eg get’s are errors of simple punctuation).

eg The dog named Manfred sat on the bed, on the couch, on the rug or wherever he wanted. His owner wasn’t happy.

The student has used sentence punctuation and has placed simple punctuation marks in the appropriate places – correct capital for a name, commas used in a list and an apostrophe used in a contraction.

Complex punctuation is evident
Students have control over sentence punctuation, use simple punctuation and additionally demonstrate:

• use of apostrophes to denote possession (and omit the apostrophe in possessive its)
• use of commas appropriately between phrases and clauses
• use of colons and semi-colons
• use of parentheses
• correct use of dashes
• correct use of direct speech marks.

eg This dog’s name is Manfred. Because he is very spoilt, Manfred sits on the bed, on the couch, on the rug or wherever he wants. Manny’s owner, Darren, isn’t happy.

The student has used sentence and simple punctuation and has placed some complex punctuation marks appropriately – possessive apostrophes and a clause comma.

Punctuation was assessed in Writing Task One – Criterion 12, Writing Task Two – Criterion 11 and Language Questions 4, 5, 13, 15–24, 28, 29, 35 and 40.
Purpose of punctuation

Explain how writers use punctuation as a powerful tool in shaping meaning. Discuss the purpose of punctuation as a system designed to help readers to understand a story without stumbling and its importance in communicating meaning effectively. Give some examples on the board, eg the negative No swimming allowed! can be transformed into a positive with the movement of the explanation mark. No! Swimming allowed. Other examples can be found in Eats Shoots and Leaves by Lynne Truss (Profile Books, 2003) as to how miscommunication can occur and how using the correct punctuation makes one’s writing clearer to the reader.

Direct speech – identifying the rules

- Provide students with samples of texts which demonstrate the use of direct speech. Use the samples to formulate the “rules” for punctuating direct speech.
- Write the rules on the board and have students copy rules into their workbooks. Ask students to illustrate each rule with sample sentences.
- Using a photocopy of a recent news report or an extract from a novel, ask students to highlight the use of direct speech in the sample text.
- Provide students with a series of unpunctuated sentences containing direct speech. Ask students to punctuate these correctly by applying the rules of direct speech.

Indirect (reported) speech punctuation

- Provide students with examples of direct speech that has been transformed into reported speech. Highlight the changes that have been made. For example, the changes in tense:
  
  “I am worried that my husband is still inside,” said a witness.

  becomes

  A witness stated that she was worried that her husband was still inside.

- Brainstorm verbs which can be used to introduce reported speech, eg announce, declare, explain, remark, state.
- Model the transformation of direct speech to reported speech. Provide students with sentences to transform into reported speech. Ask students working in pairs to first highlight the words that will be changed, then write the transformed sentences into their workbooks.

Transcribe a conversation

- Explicitly teach students the use of direct speech by transcribing a short conversation between two speakers using a segment recorded from television or radio.
- Ask students to include speech marks and other relevant punctuation to indicate tone and expression.
- Check that the conversation has been accurately transcribed by having students perform the transcripts.
Reader’s theatre

- Revise the recognition of indirect speech and the conventions for punctuating direct speech with the verb in three positions: beginning, middle and end of sentence.
- Ask students to find an extract from a class novel which contains indirect speech. Using the conventions of reader’s theatre, direct students to bring their extracts to the front of the class and take on the role of a person in their text. Ask them to say the exact words implied in the statement using the appropriate tone. Model examples on the board, showing how direct speech sentences can be constructed from indirect speech.
- Using a selection of newspaper articles, ask students to highlight quotations and indirect speech. Tell them to transform direct speech into indirect and vice versa. Ask them to consider why reporters use a mixture of both.

Jumbled sentence – simple punctuation

- Select several sentences from a recently examined newspaper article showing strong tone. Using a marker pen, write the words on separate sheets of paper. Also write each of the punctuation marks on separate sheets.
- Jumble the sheets in groups of sentences and ask class members to come forward and take one sheet from each sentence collection.
- Ask participants to face the class and hold up their sheets. Tell the class to direct the sheet holders into correct order (including punctuation) so that a sensible sentence is made.

There may be various ways in which some of the sentences can be constructed. Select a humorous sentence that can have different constructions based on its punctuation and repeat the exercise.

Barrier game

- Direct students to work in pairs. Ask each student to choose a passage from a familiar text containing examples of targeted punctuation (e.g., apostrophes for contractions and possession, commas in a list and commas to separate clauses). Ask each student to write out their passage, omitting the identified punctuation marks but leaving all other punctuation. Ask each student to then complete the task scaffold sheet by filling in how many examples of each punctuation mark should be found in their passage. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identified punctuation marks</th>
<th>number missing from passage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apostrophes in contractions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apostrophes of possession</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commas between clauses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commas in a list</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Tell students they will be taking turns to punctuate each other’s passages. Tell student A to give student B the passage with identified punctuation marks omitted and the scaffold sheet.
- Direct student A to read their passage aloud to student B. Tell student B to listen carefully and put the punctuation marks back correctly. On completion, tell student B to return the passage to student A for marking.
- Repeat the process with student B reading their chosen passage to student A and asking student A to correctly punctuate.
In ELLA writing tasks the criteria assessing spelling provide information about correct spelling at different levels of achievement. They assess spelling knowledge demonstrated by students. This knowledge includes phonological, visual, morphemic and etymological knowledge.

**Phonological knowledge – how words and letter combinations sound**

Strategies to develop phonological knowledge include:

- pronouncing new words out loud in class while reading them
- changing the beginnings and endings of words and noting how the sound changes.

**Visual knowledge – the way words and letter combinations look**

Strategies to develop visual knowledge include:

- developing and displaying lists of new words at the beginning of and during units of work
- practising writing technical words using word games such as crosswords and matching a word with its meaning.

**Morphemic knowledge – the meaning of words and how they take different spellings when they change form**

- Students learn to spell many new words correctly by playing with prefixes (word segments added to the beginning of a word, eg *un, mis, pre, de, re*) and suffixes (word segments added to the end of a word, eg *ment, tion, ly, able, ful, less*).
- Investigate spelling patterns or predictable letter sequences such as *ation, eigh, ough, ace, inter, dis*.

**Etymological knowledge – the derivations of words**

Knowledge of word origins can help students with both spelling and meaning. Strategies to develop etymological knowledge include:

- Connecting words with their “extended families”. If students remember how one “family member” is spelt, they will soon remember how to spell its “relatives”. For example, *sign, signature, signing, signifier, design*.
- Constructing a table to which students add new words encountered during a unit of work. Include columns for the word root, its origin and meaning. The table below gives examples of etymological information about words from a unit of work on road safety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
<th>WORD ROOT</th>
<th>ORIGIN AND MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pedestrian</td>
<td>a person who travels by foot</td>
<td>ped</td>
<td>Latin, foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transportation</td>
<td>the act of being carried across or over, eg from one place to another</td>
<td>trans port</td>
<td>Latin, across, over or beyond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range of correctly spelt words demonstrated by students was assessed in both Writing Tasks – Criterion 13. Student spelling was also assessed in Language Questions 6–10, 32, 33, 38, 39 and 41–45.