English-EALD
Focus on Writing Part 2 transcript

(Duration 29 minutes 14 seconds)

(upbeat music) Welcome to HSC hub student support session for English EAL/D. This is part two of the overall session. Our topic in this resource has been the Focus on Writing module. Let's consider again the learning intentions and success criteria for the resource as a whole. These were included in the part one student resource booklet, so if it has been a while since you completed that part, it would be worth having a look back through the learning intentions, success criteria, and materials in that resource. Specifically, in part two, we are intending for students to explore the skills needed to suit that language to the purpose and context of writing, then to analyse some student sample writing in relation to marker feedback. The success criteria for students in this part is to understand how language can be used to address purpose, audience, and context, as well as the type of text required, and write a stronger response to a focus on writing exam-style question.

This resource has been designed to run for approximately 40 minutes, excluding time for activities. If using this in a classroom setting, we suggest that the teacher stop the recording at key points and facilitate the set activities. Please feel free to supplement these with your own strategies. In this way, the two sections of this second part may work best if covered in two separate sessions. As suggested, this resource has been designed to run for approximately 40 minutes, excluding time for activities. We suggest you stop the recording when asked to, and complete all the activities. This includes thinking routines, reflection activities, and written responses in the student resource booklet. If using this resource at home independently, you will need access to some of your school classwork and assessment tasks, access to both this presentation and the student resource booklet, and time to explore the activities suggested here. This resource works best if you follow all instructions and complete the thinking routines, reflection activities and written tasks. Make sure you take adequate breaks.

Welcome to part two English EAL/D Focus on Writing sections three and four. After completing part one, focusing on the module statement and examination writing in general, it is time to focus in on language choices. In this part, we will be examining how language can be suited to purpose, context, and audience, then how this skill looks in sample student responses to an exam-style question. We will also be applying what the 2019 markers said about those student samples by developing a checklist which can then be used to help develop your own writing. This is the agenda for the second part of this HSC hub resource, Focus on Writing student sessions. Part two includes section three, suiting language to purpose and context, and part four, examining sample student writing. Each will take approximately 20 minutes, excluding working time on activities.

In section three, suiting language to purpose and context, we will practice making good choices about language devices to use in your writing based on the purpose and context of the piece you are asked to write. This section involves the analysis of a practice activity modelled on the exam.

We will explore this topic using a case study of an image that could be used as a stimulus for writing in this part of the examination. To give you more practice at suiting language to purpose and context, let's look at the types of questions you may be asked in connection with an image like this. [Image of print ad for Refuge week 2020. Image reproduced in student booklet]

Remember the four types of texts you may be asked to write in? You may be given a question that asks you to use any one of the four. In the following slides, we will give you an example question to suit each of the types of texts. In the student resource booklet, you will find the poster reproduced in resource five. Use the table under activity 10 to brainstorm your ideas and pinpoint any material from the stimulus that you could use as we read each potential question. Pause the recording after each question and fill in the table under activity 10.

Question one, imaginative. Write an imaginative text about starting a new life in a new country. Your imaginative piece will appear in a collection of short stories for Australian teenagers. Use ideas from the Refugee Week poster as a starting point. Remember, for an imaginative piece, you do not have to write the entire narrative. Which moments from a story about starting a new life could allow you to make best use of your creative writing skills?

Question two, discursive. Write a discursive blog post for your school's website. The topic is education in a multicultural school. Challenges and rewards. Use ideas from the Refugee Week poster as a starting point. Remember that the purpose of a discursive text is to explore an issue. What other ideas not in the stimulus might you refer to when exploring this issue?

Question three, persuasive. You've been asked to speak to your school community. The topic is why Refugee Week is an important time. Write a persuasive speech expressing your view on the topic. Use ideas from the Refugee Week poster as a starting point. Remember a persuasive piece needs to have a very clear line of argument or thesis. What will yours be? Remember to pause the recording so you can fill out the table.

Question four, informative. Write an informative text for young people of refugee background who are school-aged and have recently arrived in Australia. The topic is how to adapt to life in a new school in Australia. Your text will appear in the Department of Education web magazine. Remember that an informative text should have a clear and well-organized structure with clear language. How will you organise your ideas and ideas from the stimulus in your informative piece?

[Slide reads:
‘This time we will be analysing the wording of the question by highlighting word groups. Here’s an example for the first question:

Write an imaginative text about starting a new life in a new country. Your imaginative piece will appear in a collection of short stories for Australian teenagers. Use ideas from the Refugee Week poster as a starting point.’]

[Words in red to indicate purpose are “imaginative”, “purpose”. Words in blue to indicate topic are “starting a new life”. Words in orange to indicate contexts are “collection of short stories”. Words in bold to indicate audience are “Australian teenagers”.]

Your first task in the examination is to analyse the question. You should read the question carefully and highlight word groups that give you key information in your planning time before you write. The imaginative one has been done for you as an example on this screen. Notice that the word groups have been colour coded. Purpose, red, topic, blue, context, orange, and audience, bold.

Now, pause the recording and return to activity 11 in the student resource booklet. Complete the activity there, coding each of the questions. Be aware, though, real examination questions are not always like these model ones. They may not give you a situation or audience, in which case, you may need to invent an appropriate one. Sometimes the information and instructions in the question are less clear than these ones. You'll need lots of practice and experience with a range of question types. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads:Write a discursive blog post for your school’s website. The topic is: Education in a multicultural school – challenges and rewards.

You have been asked to speak to your school **community**. The topic is Why Refugee Week is an important time. Write a persuasive speech expressing your view on the topic.

Write an informative text foryoung people of refugee background who are school-aged and have recently arrived in Australia. The topic is: How to adapt to life in a new school in Australia.  Your text will appear in a Department of Education web magazine.]

[Words in red to indicate purpose are “discursive blog post”, “speak”, “informative text”. Words in blue to indicate topic are “Education in a multicultural school – challenges and rewards”, “Why Refugee Week is an important time”, “How to adapt to life in a new school in Australia”. Words in orange to indicate context are “website”, “your school”, “expressing your view”, “Department of Education web magazine”. Words in bold to indicate audience are “your school’s”, “community”, “young people of refugee background who are school-aged and have recently arrived in Australia”.]

These are some possible answers. How did you go? Pause the recording for a moment to check against your answers. Remember the coding, purpose, red, topic, blue, context, orange, and audience, bold. Once you've done that, think for a moment. Which question are you most interested in? If you were using this for independent study, choose the question you are least confident with and plan and write a full response. Submit the response to your teacher for feedback. (upbeat music)

Let's explore the types of text further. How do we know which language devices to use for each? In the exam you will need to work quickly to plan language devices you can use that will suit the purpose of the given type of text. This is definitely something you can practice beforehand. We will now look at extracts from each type of text, focusing in on the language devices used to achieve the writer's purpose. What type of text is this sample paragraph from? Which language devices are used to achieve the main purpose of this type of text? Take a moment to read it, then look at activity 12 in the student resource booklet on page seven. Think about the language features that alerted you. Which ones can you identify by underlining them in the booklet? (upbeat music)

Well done, you were right. For this persuasive text, the writer uses at least four types of language device. First, we've colour-coded four. "Clearly", "invaluable", "think for a moment", "are", "we can all overcome". These are all examples of high modality, which conveys certainty or obviousness, persuading the responder that the evidence for the argument is strong and that the writer's voice is decisive. Now let's have a look at the second type of language device the writer has used. Here we have colour-coded four. "Our school community"," our student leaders", "we can all", "our goals". These are all examples of first person inclusive, which creates a sense of solidarity or connection between the composer and responder by pointing out shared values. Here is the third type of language device. Here we have put the key word into bold. "Think" is an example of the imperative voice. It emphasises that the argument, refugees make a contribution, is supported by evidence that is personally significant to the responder. It also sounds like a call to action that is intended to inspire the responder. And the fourth type of language device from this persuasive text. Here we have colour-coded four. "Inspiring", "motivation", "perseverance", "overcome challenges". These are all emotive words which create a positive tone, supporting the idea that we should celebrate the positive aspects of refugees' contributions to the community. Emotive language also heightens feelings connected to the topic in order to build the connection between writer and responder.

You will now have a chance to apply your learning to some other sample extracts. Turn to activity 13 on page seven of the student resource booklet. Here you will find similar extracts from three other types of text. Pause the recording and complete the activity there. One, decide on the type of text. Two, underline, highlight, or colour-code language devices that fit together and suit the purpose of each type of text. Three, complete the table below with your examples, and four, the first row is completed for you as an example with a persuasive text sample one we have just been working on. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads:
Shayma felt a surge of anxiety as she stood at the front door. For a moment, she felt frozen in place, her breath making small clouds in the crisp morning air.

She closed her eyes for a moment and thought of the words of her father: ‘Be brave. I will always be with you.’

* Imagery – vividly describes the setting, a cold day, and the character’s feelings, fear, which in this phase of the story is an internal conflict, problem, the character needs to overcome. Example “small clouds in the crisp morning air”
* Third person – imaginative texts often describe the actions of a character in third person Example “Shayma”, “she”, “her”
* Past tense verbs, action verbs and mental verbs, – describe the actions and thoughts of the character, focalising (showing) the story from their perspective. Example “stood”, “closed”, “thought”
* Direct speech – this is part of the character’s inner monologue, but it is given as direct speech, in other words the exact words her father said to her. This describes the character’s reaction to the problem, and presents a motivation for overcoming her fear. Example “Be brave. I will always be with you”]

Here are some possible annotations you may have made to sample text two, the imaginative one. Remember to pause the recording and go back to your booklet to add anything you missed. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads: If you have trouble with your homework, remember that teachers are there to help you. Understanding instructions in a new language can be hard, but you will find most schools have after-school homework centres where you can go for help. You should also consider asking your class teacher for help at lunch time or after school.

* High modality – to give polite, but clear advice on the actions the reader should take. Example “You should also consider asking your class teacher for help”
* Second person – to address the responder directly and give advice. Example: “your”, “you will”
* Conditional clause (using ‘if) – tells the reader what they should do in certain situations (if they need help). Example “If you have trouble”
* Imperative – to give advice. Example “remember”]

Here are some possible annotations you may have made to sample text three, the informative one. Remember to pause the recording and go back to your booklet to add anything you missed. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads:We all know how hard it can feel to learn in a second language. However, a recent study has shown that bilingual students have many advantages including advanced problem-solving, creativity and communication. So, when you’re having a hard time with a late-night study session, perhaps you will remember that your other languages are there in the background to give your mind a boost.

* Facts/ expert opinion/ attribution – this gives authority to the idea (it is good to have two languages) by indicating that it comes from a good source. Example “a recent study has shown”
* Connective (conjunctive adverb) – to introduce a contrasting idea (as a discursive text, this response needs to explore different ideas and encourage the reader to think about different perspectives. Example: “However”
* Informal register – to connect with the reader by describing a shared experience of having trouble studying. Notice how there is a balance of informal register (to create familiarity) and formal register (to create authority). Example “We all know how hard it can”, “you’re having a hard”
* Low modality – to speculate, showing that these are ideas are open for the responder to consider (a discursive text offers ideas for thought instead of trying to persuade the reader). Example “perhaps”]

And finally, here are some possible annotations you may have made to sample text four, the discursive one. Remember once again, to pause the recording and go back to your booklet to add anything you missed. (upbeat music)

Now, let's turn to the final concept in our exploration of language suited to types of text. Register. The EAL/D glossary defines register as the degree of formality or informality of language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting. There are other aspects of register, such as tenor and field that you may explore now independently, or in class with your teacher. For this resource, however, we will look at levels of formality which indicates something important to us about the relationship between composer and responder, especially considering the purpose and context. To explore this in practice, pause the recording and take a moment to write down the different ways you might greet your best friend, boss, principal, or religious leader. Do you say, "G'day," to an Imam or a priest? Of course not. This is because we automatically change the register of our language to suit the audience and the purpose of our communication. (upbeat music)

But register can be very complex. Yes, you have to think about the context, audience, and purpose, but register can also shift or change within a text to suit the different needs of the composer or the audience at different points in the text. In order to explore what you need to know about register, let's have a look at two situations. In the first situation here, a parent and child conversation, the register of this conversation would be informal because of the parent-child relationship, and because the speaker and listener are close in time and space. In the second situation, a graduation speech, the speaker and the audience are also close in time and space, but the context is more formal, so the language would need to be, too. However, the speaker at the graduation would still need to connect with her audience to maintain their interest. How could she do that? Take a moment to think of a way a speaker in a formal context could still engage with their audience. If you've been thinking about the other aspects of register, purpose, field, tenor, and mode, pause the recording and read resource seven, more on register, in the student booklet for a brief rundown for these two situations. (upbeat music)

Let's explore the situation of speeches a little further so that we can see the way a register is created, and the way it can shift within a speech text. Take a moment to look again at our persuasive sample from earlier. In your student resource booklet this is included as resource eight, on page nine. Which words and phrases give this text its more formal register? Pause the recording for a moment and underline your choices in the student booklet. (upbeat music)

Did you pick vocabulary such as "invaluable"? The speaker could have said, "Great contribution," but the more technical vocabulary adds to the formal register. But the formal register is not only about vocabulary. If you're asked to deliver this persuasive speech at your school assembly, how would you begin? "Dear honoured fellow students." This wouldn't sound right because the register is wrong. Perhaps, "Good morning, fellow students." Do you see how the context, a school assembly, and the audience, your peers and school community affects the words and phrases, and anecdotes, you choose?

Our job is not only to get the register right for a particular situation and type of text, but also to be able to shift the register within a text, if required. You may need to do this with a persuasive text, depending on the context, and it is especially relevant if you are writing a discursive text. Here we have the discursive sample from earlier. As I read it, notice how the writer tries to connect with his audience, but also tries to be informative, and even a touch persuasive. It's a blog post, remember, but could work well as an assembly speech, too. Here it is. "We all know how hard it can feel to learn in a second language. However, a recent study has shown that bilingual students have many advantages, including an advanced problem-solving, creativity, and communication. So, when you're having a hard time with a late-night study session, perhaps you will remember that your other languages are there in the background to give your mind a boost." The shift between formal and informal register is done quite nimbly. This means being quick and flexible. Remember that shifting register can mean better connecting with the audience. Which words are used in this paragraph to shift register? Pause the recording now and use the copy of this paragraph in activity 14 on page 10 of the student booklet to underline the words you think help the writer to shift register. (upbeat music)

Discursive texts often have an interesting range of phrases when it comes to register. In the one we have been exploring you will find one, "we all know". The first person inclusive which implies closeness, connection, personal knowledge. As well as two, "a recent study has shown". Academic language which implies professional knowledge, technical language, and a distance between composer and responder. And three, "give your mind a boost". A colloquial expression. Is it a metaphor? That is an attempt to put energy and a little drama into the text.

Here are two creative activities you might like to try with a partner, if you can, or at least share your work with one and get some feedback. Creative challenge one. In activity 15 in the student resource booklet, can you totally shift the register to very formal? You will need to get rid of some key words and phrases. To start, you will need something like, "It has been shown that learning a second language "is very challenging." Then, after you've finished this session, try creative challenge two and share it with a partner and your teacher. Pause the recording now to complete the shifting register activity in the box in activity 15, then take a moment to plan which piece of writing you will use for creative challenge two. (upbeat music)

Time to reflect on learning in order to complete this third section. What are the key points you will remember from this section about suiting language to the purpose, context, and audience? To complete this reflection, you have two options. If working with your class or a group of peers, try the Harvard thinking routine in resource nine on page 11 of the resource booklet. It is called generate, sort, connect, elaborate, and it will help you reflect on your learning about register. If you're working independently, you may reflect on your learning in this last section by attempting a true or false activity, also under resource nine on page 11. (upbeat music)

Section four, examining sample student writing. In this final section, we will examine the markers' comments from the 2019 exam question. The one about reading habits. Then we look at some student sample responses and then apply that learning to your writing. Our focus is what can we learn from how real students have written in this section of the exam?

Here is what the markers said about the 2019 student responses to the Focus on Writing module. In better responses, students were able to provide a highly persuasive speech on their view of how technology has changed teen reading habits. We will explore what makes something highly persuasive in a moment. Demonstrate an ability to support their view by effectively and selectively using the stimulus provided, and their own examples and/or ideas. Notice the effective use of both the stimulus and their own ideas. You definitely need to do both. Address the target audience by adopting an appropriate register to suit the context. We have been working on the audience and register so you know what this means. And here is what the marker said students could do to improve. Reading the question carefully and engaging with all aspects of the question. If you write a fantastic response, but miss some parts of the question, you will not get the marks you deserve. Organizing, developing, and sustaining ideas. Think about what we've been saying about the structure of types of texts. Using 30 minutes of working time to complete their response. In this final section of this resource we'll be looking at some actual student writing samples. We will be applying what we have learnt across these two parts, and what we can learn from the markers in order to judge what an effective piece of writing is like for this part of the exam.

Let's try to apply the markers' feedback now. So, what makes a speech highly persuasive in the eyes of the markers? Let's take this example from a response to the 2019 exam question about reading habits that we explored earlier. We will be looking at other extracts from this piece later, but let's start with a body paragraph. Take a moment to read it and consider the techniques used here to make the speech persuasive. Now, find the paragraph in resource 10 in your booklet. Underline the words and phrases that can make it persuasive. Can you name the techniques being used for everything you underlined? Pause the recording for a moment to work on that. (upbeat music)

How did you go? Here are some possible words and phrases that you could've underlined. First person inclusive language to connect with the audience. This is in red. Emotive language to engage the audience's feelings. This is in blue. The use of short, sharp sentences for variety, and a variation on a tri-colon, look it up, for dramatic effect. This is in bold. So, how else does this same writer make his speech effective? We are now going to look at three more extracts from the same speech and ask you to mark them using the checklist provided in the student resource booklet. Here's the introduction. How would you rate it from the criteria of engaging and interesting start? Not evident, needs to be developed, good attempt, or highly developed? Take a moment to read it carefully, then pause the recording and give it a tick in the appropriate column for engaging an interesting start. See if you can underline three different techniques this writer uses to make it engaging. The checklist is activity 16 on page 13. (upbeat music)

[ Slide reads: There are three language devices that do actually make this highly effective.

1. First the uses of phrases like ‘Good afternoon…” and “I want to start off tonight” clearly make it a speech with an appropriate register.
2. Then the rhetorical questions and clever use of emotive language in “Sadly...” engage the audience.
3. Finally there is an attempt to connect with the audience using the first person “I” and the inclusive “you” and “us”.]

Here's three ways that the writer made an engaging start to the speech. Did you find these three techniques? Pause the recording for a moment, read the information on this slide, and add it to your work in resource 11, if you need to. (upbeat music)

Here you have a section of the checklist in activity 16 in your student resource booklet. We have given that sample text highly developed for both criteria. The use of the persuasive type of text, and how appropriate it is to the context. Now, pause the recording and look at all the extracts from this speech in resource 11 in your booklet. Highlight or underline the important techniques in each, then use the checklist tables in activity 16 to mark it like we have here. Notice that there are three categories. Overall effectiveness, structure, and language devices. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads: But why do I need to read books outside of school anyway you may ask? Well I’m here to tell you. A recent study done by Professor Williams at Sydney University revealed that reading for pleasure resulted in many mental benefits from mental health to an increased brain capacity for study and learning. His study took two groups of teenagers, one group read for an hour everyday for a month and the other group did not read for pleasure outside school at all and the results are as follows…]

Let's explore the way this writer uses the stimulus in a body paragraph. What did you think of it? Notice the use of the stimulus, and not just mentioning it, but properly using it. Now consider what information could you add to this that comes from your experience? Remember, you have to add to the material from the stimulus, as well as use it effectively.

[Slide reads: Two key sentences Using vocabulary choice for a more dramatic feel activity 16 continued

1. Swap an hour of screen of time for an hour reading a book…

2. With our everyday lives being devoured by our smartphones…]

And finally, the two key sentences from later in this same piece of writing. What technique in each gives it a more dramatic feeling? The first sentence has a pleasing structure to it, sometimes referred to as parallel structure. The phrase, "An hour of screen time," balances nicely with the phrase, "an hour reading a book." That balance creates some intensity that provokes us to consider the idea. Then we have that wonderful metaphoric verb in the second sentence. Smartphones cannot truly devour our lives, even though it may feel like that sometimes.

How did you go marking? Yes, it's a strong and effective piece, but nothing that you can't do with some preparation. And a checklist like this is something you can use to develop your own writing and to work with a friend to help each other make your writing stronger.

[Slide reads: “Today I chose to speak about how technology has changed teen reading habit and its impact. I am pretty sure that almost all of us here have used their devices for reading purposes. As we all know that almost every student uses their devices daily whether it is for reading or researching. Now this could be beneficial because it is much easier than reading the whole book which it might take a longer time.”]

Now, let's see how you could use that checklist to help improve your writing. Take a moment to read this paragraph from a different student's response. Pause the recording and use a different colour pen in the checklist to note where improvements could take place. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads: How many differences can you spot?
Version 1. Today I chose to speak about how technology has changed teen reading habit and its impact. I am pretty sure that almost all of us here have used their devices for reading purposes. As we all know that almost every student uses their devices daily whether it is for reading or researching. Now this could be beneficial because it is much easier than reading the whole book which it might take a longer time.

Version 2. Today I am asking you to consider how technology has undoubtedly transformed teen reading habits for the better. Are you surprised that I would say “better”? Almost every student uses their device every day for reading, research and study. Our electronic devices provide a wealth of information at our fingertips, empowering us to educate ourselves and engage with our world.”]

Here's an improved version of that paragraph. How many differences can you spot? Pause the recording here to give you a chance to read and think about the improved version two. It's not just how many differences you can notice, but the specific changes in technique the writer has made to improve her work. (upbeat music)

[Slide reads: “Today I am speaking about how technology has undoubtedly transformed teen reading habits for the better. Are you surprised that I would say “better”? Almost every student uses their device every day for reading, research and study. Our electronic devices provide a wealth of information at our fingertips, empowering us to educate ourselves and engage with our world.”]

The original paragraph had a lot of good features. It was clearly a speech, and it was starting to make good use of information from the stimulus. With a couple of small changes, however, it can be improved a lot. Pause the recording for a moment to check the colour coding of improved language choices. Here's what makes it stronger. (upbeat music)

Better audience engagement through speech text. "Today I'm asking you", "are you surprised", higher modality, certainty, "undoubtedly". More emotive language, "wealth of information"," empowering". And a tricolon for dramatic effect. "Reading, research, and study".

Now, you try. To put all of this work together, choose one of the sample questions from activity 11 on page seven of the student booklet, and when you've finished this resource, write it in 30 minutes. When you've finished writing, swap your work with a partner, if you can. You should both use the checklist from activity 16 to give each other feedback. When you've both finished giving feedback and improved your first drafts, give your work to your teacher as a practice for the exam. (upbeat music)

Time to reflect on learning for one last time. What are the key points you will remember from this section on student sample scripts and the markers' feedback? Again, you have two options. A thinking routine for if you are working with your class, or some peers, or a checklist table if you are working independently. The thinking routine is, "I used to think, "now I think," that you used in part one. Take a moment now to complete one of the options on page 15 of the student resource booklet before you finish this session.

Thank you for joining us for this HSC hub EAL/D student support session, and good luck for the months ahead. (upbeat music)

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