English Standard – Module C

HSC hub student support session – Resource 1

**Re-engaging with the module statement for Module C, Standard and defining the discursive**

# Resource booklet

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## Advice to the teacher supporting students

If using in a classroom context you may like to: ​

* use this resource in a workshop setting with a group, whole class or an individual student to work through on their own ​
* pause the recording and ask students to read, reflect and write
* refer to school-based course work, texts pairing and assessments to do the activities.

## Advice to the independent student

If using this resource at home independently you will need: ​

* access to all your school-based coursework, assessment and or examination response for Module C and access to your prescribed texts
* a copy of the student booklet either hard copy or digital
* access to the 2019 HSC marker feedback, the 2019 HSC examination Paper 2 and the sample examination materials for Paper 2, all available within the [NESA English Standard webpage.](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017/modules)

You can use this resource to refine your understanding of discursive writing and expand your repertoire of writing skills. This will help you in your preparation for Module C.

## Resource 1 - Module statement – The Craft of Writing

In this module, students strengthen and extend their knowledge, skills and confidence as writers. They write for a range of authentic audiences and purposes to convey ideas with power and increasing precision.

Students appreciate, examine and analyse at least two challenging short prescribed texts as well as texts from their own wide reading, as models and stimulus for the development of their own ideas and written expression. They examine how writers of complex texts use language creatively and imaginatively for a range of purposes, to describe the world around them, evoke emotion, shape a perspective or to share a vision.

Through the study of texts drawn from enduring, quality texts of the past, as well as from recognised contemporary works, students appreciate, analyse and assess the importance and power of language. Through a considered appraisal of, and imaginative engagement with these texts, students reflect on the complex and recursive process of writing to further develop their ability to apply their knowledge of textual forms and features in their own sustained and cohesive compositions.

During the pre-writing stage, students generate and explore ideas through discussion and speculations. Throughout the stages of drafting and revising, students experiment with a range of language forms and features for example imagery, rhetoric, voice, characterisation, point of view, dialogue and tone. Students consider purpose and audience to carefully shape meaning. During the editing stages students apply the conventions of syntax, spelling, punctuation and grammar appropriately and effectively for publication.

Students have opportunities to work independently and collaboratively to reflect, refine and strengthen their own skills in producing crafted, imaginative, **discursive**, persuasive and informative texts.

**Note***:* Students may revisit prescribed texts from other modules to enhance their experiences of quality writing.

[English Standard Stage 6 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2017.

### Activity 1 – Identifying your definition of discursive

What is your definition of discursive writing? If you had to explain this type of writing to a Year 10 student, for example, what would you say??

I believe discursive writing is:

|  |
| --- |

## Resource 2 – Definitions

NESA definition:

Discursive texts are those whose primary focus is to explore an idea or variety of topics. These texts involve the discussion of an idea(s) or opinion(s) without the direct intention of persuading the reader, listener or viewer to adopt any single point of view. Discursive texts can be humorous or serious in tone and can have a formal or informal register. These texts include texts such as feature articles, creative nonfiction, blogs, personal essays, documentaries and speeches.

[Module C: The Craft of Writing, Frequently Asked Questions](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017/modules/module-c-the-craft-of-writing) © 2020 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

Keeping it simple definition:

Discursive writing is a style of writing rather than a set form. This style explores ideas, places, people – positively more often than negatively – without pushing a particular opinion or agenda. The writer leaves it open for the responder to decide on what they think, to add their own experiences and values.

There is no one scaffold that will support students to write discursively – the scaffold will depend on what form is chosen to write with a discursive style/approach.

### Activity 2 – Your own analogy

You have just listened to two analogies about discursive writing. Now it’s time to create your own analogy. Select or draw an appropriate image to represent your thinking.

1. What’s your analogy? Add as much space as you need to develop your idea.
2. Select or create an image to accompany your analogy. This could be done by hand (if you are skilled in that way!) or in a digital format. Use this activity as a brain-break, but also noting the way art can help you reflect and refine complex conceptual ideas.

Table 1 – my own analogy for discursive writing

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Analogy | Image (create your own image) |
| (feel free to make this section larger) |  |

### Activity 3 – Your updated personal definition

Now that you have explored the official definition of discursive texts as well as other ways of thinking about this style of writing and its key features, take a moment to update your personal definition of discursive writing.

1. I believe discursive writing is:

|  |
| --- |

1. How will you know one when you see it?

|  |
| --- |

1. What would it look like when you are writing one of your own?

|  |
| --- |

### Activity 4 – Identifying purpose, audience, context and register

To help you understand the similarities and differences between the persuasive and the discursive we would like you to read an example of both and then identify the purpose, audience, context and register for each text. This thinking will then frame how you approach the next activity.

Choose one discursive and one persuasive text to read:

* Discursive – Smith, Zadia (January 10, 2013) [‘Joy’](http://theessayexperiencefall2013.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/files/2013/09/Joy-by-Zadie-Smith.pdf), The New York Review of Books – this is a personal essay that explores Smith’s ideas and observations about the subtle differences of the experience of joy and pleasure. This essay does contain references to drug use.
* Discursive – Tuck, Jake (June 25, 2018) [‘I’ve quit writing personal essays about quitting – a personal essay’, by Jake Tuck](https://www.newyorker.com/humor/daily-shouts/ive-quit-writing-personal-essays-about-quitting-things-a-personal-essay), The New Yorker - this satirical personal essay comments on the current trend of people writing openly and publicly about their personal lives and behaviours. The essay is light hearted but explores some quite serious issues facing people in a time where people can become obsessed with social media and sharing their personal lives in very public forums.
* Persuasive – Eliasson, Jan (February 1, 2016) [‘Young people must be recognised as agents of change...’](https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/dsgsm933.doc.htm), United Nations – this press release includes a speech delivered by the UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum on “Youth Taking Action to Implement the 2030 Agenda”. It is a persuasive speech delivered to young people highlighting the value of the youth as change makers.
* Persuasive – Schwass, Wayne, (September 18, 2019) [‘Like Danny, there was a time when I thought I was fixed’](https://speakola.com/eulogy/for-danny-frawley-by-wayne-schwass-2019), Fox Footy – this eulogy was delivered at a funeral and was broadcast to the television via Fox Sports. The eulogy was for a respected and well-loved AFL footballer, who became a commentator, and champion of men’s mental health. The persuasive speech explores the importance of supporting men to look after their mental health. Mental health and suicide are explored within the speech.

#### Definitions

* Purpose: The purpose of a text, in very broad terms, is to entertain, to inform or to persuade different audiences in different contexts. Composers use a number of ways to achieve these purposes: persuading through emotive language, analysis or factual recount; entertaining through description, imaginative writing or humour, and so on.
* Context: The range of personal, social, historical, cultural and workplace conditions in which a text is responded to and composed.
* Audience: The intended group of readers, listeners or viewers that the writer, designer, filmmaker or speaker is addressing.
* Register: The degree of formality or informality of language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting.

[Glossary ©](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017/glossary) 2020 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

#### Activity 4 – Text 1: discursive

After you have read one of the discursive texts identify each of the following.

1. Purpose:

|  |
| --- |

1. Context:

|  |
| --- |

1. Audience:

|  |
| --- |

1. Register:

|  |
| --- |

#### Activity 4 – Text 2: persuasive

After you have read one of the persuasive texts identify each of the following.

1. Purpose:

|  |
| --- |

1. Context:

|  |
| --- |

1. Audience:

|  |
| --- |

1. Register:

|  |
| --- |

Table 2 focuses on the features of discursive as outlined by NESA and Table 3 focuses on the features of the persuasive. By completing this activity, you should notice that there are similarities between the two types of writing, however, the purpose of the text will often impact on the way the textual feature or device are used. This activity is not suggesting all discursive or persuasive pieces should have every aspect listed, these are some of the common features found in both texts.

#### Table 2

Table 2 – features of the discursive activity

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Features of discursive writing | Text 1 - evident  (Y or N) and evidence? | Explanation – how does this support the composer’s purpose? | Text 2 - evident  (Y or N) and evidence? | Explanation – how does this support the composer’s purpose? |
| Explores an issue or an idea and may suggest a position or perspective |  |  |  |  |
| Approaches a topic from different angles and explores themes and issues in a style that balances personal observations with different perspectives |  |  |  |  |
| Uses personal anecdotes and may have a conversational tone |  |  |  |  |
| Primarily uses first person although third person can also be used |  |  |  |  |
| Uses figurative language or may be more factual |  |  |  |  |
| Draws upon real life experiences and/or draws from wide reading |  |  |  |  |
| Uses engaging imagery and language features |  |  |  |  |
| Uses low modality language to avoid persuasive punch |  |  |  |  |
| Begins with an event, an anecdote or relevant quote that is then used to explore an idea |  |  |  |  |
| Resolution may be reflective or open-ended |  |  |  |  |

#### Table 3

Table 3 – features of the persuasive activity

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Features of persuasive writing | Text 1 - evident  (Y or N) and evidence? | Explanation – how does this support the composer’s purpose? | Text 2 - evident  (Y or N) and evidence? | Explanation – how does this support the composer’s purpose? |
| Explores an issue or an idea and focuses on a clear position, stance or perspective |  |  |  |  |
| Begins with a question, an event, anecdote or relevant quote on topic to be argued |  |  |  |  |
| Utilise a particular register to reflect, audience, purpose and context |  |  |  |  |
| Organises paragraphs to present the for and or against argument of a chosen topic |  |  |  |  |
| Uses personal anecdotes and a conversational tone |  |  |  |  |
| Uses present tense |  |  |  |  |
| Uses first person singular and plural personal pronouns (I, you, they, us, we) |  |  |  |  |
| Uses conjunctions to link cause and effect |  |  |  |  |
| Uses connectives to link the points of the argument |  |  |  |  |
| Uses facts, statistics and opinion to support argument |  |  |  |  |
| Draws upon real life experiences and/or draws from wide reading |  |  |  |  |
| Uses rhetorical devices, hyperbole, powerful verbs and adjectives, repetition, imagery and emotive language features |  |  |  |  |
| Concluding statement sums up the argument |  |  |  |  |

### Activity 5 – Module statement activity

Utilising the table below and the information provided from the module statement, identify evidence from one of the discursive texts that showcases why this is an effective text to examine as part of your study. We have given you an example, to demonstrate what you need to do.

You could then begin transforming this understanding into your own writing ideas.

Table 4 – module statement annotation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Module statement | Evidence from the text | Your own writing ideas or areas of inspiration |
| “write for a range of authentic audiences and purposes to convey ideas with power and increasing precision” | “The male mantra harden up, suck it up, man up has been handed down from generation to generation, like it’s some sort of badge of honour, that teaches us from a very early age that to be a man, a real man, you need to be tough, you don’t cry, talk or show your emotions.” (‘Like Danny’) | Choose a specific audience, use colloquial language, cliches to make a point |
| (add the module extract) |  |  |
| (add extra rows as you need them) |  |  |
| (try to make as many connections as possible) |  |  |

### Activity 6 – Your turn to write

Topic: Where I live

Purpose: to explore the place I live

Form: personal blog or a feature article

Context: 2020 pre or post Covid 19

Audience: your choice

Planning your discursive text:

* Ideas: the open spaces, entertainment, the people, things you like, things you don’t, what others think about it, ??
* Planning: Anecdotes/ Analogies/Extended metaphor/symbol? Other people/publications you could refer to?
* Order of paragraphs – where are the swings and roundabouts?
* Final thoughts/reflection:

Once you have completed your planning, write your response. Once you are finished, use the discursive checklist and identify the features you use.

Self-reflection:

* What worked well?
* What else could you have used to make it a more effective text?

### Activity 7 – Let’s reflect

**Thinking routine**

Complete this table to reflect on your learning from this section of the resource.

Table 4 – I used to think…Now, I think…

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I used to think… | Now, I think… |
| I used to think | Now, I think |