



FSC MASTERING HANDBOOK

2023



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INTRODUCTION

"Our world is becoming more and more complex, and so higher and higher levels of educational achievement will be needed to be in control of one's own life, to understand one's culture, to participate meaningfully in democracy, and to find fulfilling work."

Dylan Wiliam

Welcome to Freshwater Senior Campus. *'Freshie'* has a positive learning culture that values independence, engagement and excellence. As a learning community we value our *"freedom to learn"* but we also recognise that freedom is earned through hard work, responsibility and participation.

We believe that dedication and engagement will lead to achievement. This handbook has been designed to help you take control of your learning and achieve your goals. Each section of the handbook includes positive strategies and skills that will support you as an independent learner focused on academic achievement.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDOUT

Students at Freshie typically face the same problems in their academic work. This resource has collected some practical solutions to the most common problems.

Typical problems:

- Time and task management
- Academic writing
- Study and learning strategies
- Researching and referencing
- Grammar and punctuation

This is a 'go to' for every student and should be kept in your school bag and on your desk at home in your study space. Every time you have a problem with your work – get your FSC Mastering Handbook out and with the support of your teacher, develop a solution. If you can master this resource, then you are on your way to academic mastery.





SYLLABUS VERBS

These **key terms** appear frequently in NSW Education Standards Authority syllabuses, performance descriptions and examinations. In classrooms, teachers of different subjects will use the verbs to **help students understand which questions in their subject require a response**. Students should recognise the consistent approach of teachers of different subjects and get **cues about how to approach questions**. It is important that the key words should not be interpreted in an overly prescriptive way. For example, a term like 'evaluate' requires a different kind of response in Mathematics from that required in History.

ACCOUNT	Account for: state reasons for, report on. Give an account of: narrate a series of events or transactions
ANALYSE	Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications
APPLY	Use, utilise, employ in a particular situation
APPRECIATE	Make a judgement about the value of
ASSESS	Make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes, results or size
CALCULATE	Ascertain/determine from given facts, figures or information
CLARIFY	Make clear or plain
CLASSIFY	Arrange or include in classes/categories
COMPARE	Show how things are similar or different
CONSTRUCT	Make; build; put together items or arguments
CONTRAST	Show how things are different or opposite
CRITICALLY ANALYSE	Add a level of accuracy depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to analyse/evaluate
DEDUCE	Draw conclusions
DEFINE	State meaning and identify essential qualities
DEMONSTRATE	Show by example
DESCRIBE	Provide characteristics and features
DISCUSS	Identify issues and provide points for and/or against
DISTINGUISH	Recognise or note/indicate as being distinct or different from; to note differences between
EVALUATE	Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of
EXAMINE	Inquire into
EXPLAIN	Relate cause and effect; make the relationships between things evident; provide why and/or how
EXTRACT	Choose relevant and/or appropriate details
EXTRAPOLATE	Infer from what is known
IDENTIFY	Recognise and name
INTERPRET	Draw meaning from
INVESTIGATE	Plan, inquire into and draw conclusions about
JUSTIFY	Support an argument or conclusion
OUTLINE	Sketch in general terms; indicate the main features of
PREDICT	Suggest what may happen based on available information
PROPOSE	Put forward (for example a point of view, idea, argument, suggestion) for consideration or action
RECALL	Present remembered ideas, facts or experiences
RECOMMEND	Provide reasons in favour
RECOUNT	Retell a series of events
SUMMARISE	Express, concisely, the relevant details
SYNTHESISE	Putting together various elements to make a whole



ALARM

A Learning And Responding Matrix

ALARM is a scaffold for how we can learn anything.
Every subject at FSC uses ALARM and you'll experience it
in different ways.

It helps you to:



Organise your reading and writing



Separate content retrieval and critical thinking



Clearly understand and unpack the question



Develop a structured response that clearly articulates what you've learnt



ALARM

THE SKILL LEVELS

THE LEARNING SYSTEM FOR LOGICAL SUBJECTS (subjects that deal with facts)

*PE, CAFS, Histories, Sciences, Music, Engineering Studies,
Hospitality, Textiles, Industrial Technology, Design & Technology,
Entertainment, SDD and Information Technology*

CONTENT



Name/Define

What are the main components/areas; steps/stages?



Describe

What are the features/ characteristics of each area?



Explain Significance

What is the purpose, role/function or importance of each feature?



Analyse

What is the impact of the area on other parts? How does it relate to another area/group?

CONCEPT



Critically Analyse

What are the positives/negatives of each feature?



Evaluate

What is your judgement on each feature?



Critically Evaluate

What is your judgement overall? To what extent?



Conceptualise Topic

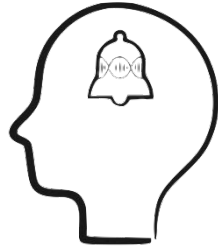
What is the overall idea of the topic? What is the overall message learned?



Lower Order Thinking Skills



Higher Order Thinking Skills



ALARM

THE SKILL LEVELS

THE LEARNING SYSTEM FOR CONNOTATIVE SUBJECTS (subjects that deal with emotions and perspectives)

English, Visual Arts, Dance, Drama

CONTENT



Name/Define

What are the main components/areas; steps/stages?



Describe

What are the features/ characteristics of each area?



Explain Significance

What is the mood/ tone/purpose of each technique?



Analyse

What is the impact of the area on other parts? How does it relate to another area/group?



Interpret Meaning

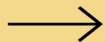
What is perceived/learned about each relationship?

CONCEPT



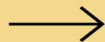
Critically Analyse

How does each technique help/hinder the intended meaning?



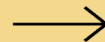
Evaluate

To what extent is each technique effective in achieving its purpose?



Critically Evaluate

To what extent overall do all of the techniques portray/shape meaning (including impact on audience)?



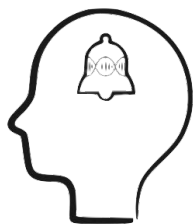
Conceptualise Topic

What is the overall idea of the topic? What is the overall message learned?



Lower Order Thinking Skills

Higher Order Thinking Skills



ALARM

DECODING QUESTIONS



Lower Order Thinking Skills



Higher Order Thinking Skills



Discuss how the quote explores tension



Analyse how this policy relates to objectives



Analyse how this policy relates to objectives



Describe the process of validation



Define evolution



Explain how structural components impact relocating



List the techniques used in the excerpt

Discuss how **successfully** the quote explores tension



Analyse how this policy **benefits** objectives



Assess the importance of packaging



How suitable is the validation process?



What are the **drawbacks** of evolution?



What are the structural **issues to consider prior** to relocating?



List the **best** techniques used in this excerpt



What else can I figure out if a question requires lower/higher order thinking?

What parts of ALARM are needed in the answer?

Mark Allocation



ALARM

BRIDGING THE GAPS

Levels of Difficulty		ALARM	Logical Interpretive Subject Level	Connotative Interpretive Subject Level
EASY	Name and Define Areas, Events, Story, Steps/Stages Components	What?	Literal Meaning	
	Describe Features, Characteristics	What?	Figurative Meaning	
MEDIUM	Explain Significance Purpose, Function, Role, What/Why it is trying to be achieved, What Impact	Why?	Analytical Reasoning	
	Analyse Explain How/Why Purpose/Function Achieved, Relational Aspects	How?		
MOMENT OF RISK IN LEARNING/RESPONDING				
MOMENT OF REFLECTION				
HARD	Critically Analyse Explain How/Why Concerning +/- Implications/Connotations	How Well?	Evaluative Reasoning	
	Evaluate/Critically Evaluate Make Judgements/Explain to What Extent +s/ -s outweigh each other			
VERY HARD	Interpret Meaning at Textual/Topic Level AND Conceptualise Topic Synthesise/Give the Big Picture/Big Idea (In a "nutshell")	What Learned or Is It Taught?	Thematic/Concept	
	Analyse Link Idea(s) to Life OR Link Idea(s) to Question	Why Important?	Life/Spiritual	

CONTENT

PERSONAL RESPONSE

ALARM, A Learning Aid And Responding Matrix (A Cellular Template) For Logical Interpretive Subjects

TOPIC NAME: What is the name of the topic, unit, subject or process of study?				
DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF TOPIC: Briefly, what is the topic, unit or process about (In one or two sentences)?				
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION (Upon which to base an Evaluation): What are some of the value judgement-type words that students could use to demonstrate that the impact or effect of the aspects or application of the topic or process is positive and/or negative, beneficial/harmful, advantageous and/or disadvantageous, valid/invalid etc. ?				

NAME & DEFINE	DESCRIBE	EXPLAIN	ANALYSE	INTERPRET MEANING	CRITICALLY ANALYSE
Areas of Content What are the main components/ elements of the topic/unit/ subject or steps/ stages of the process under consideration? Give a name and definition of EACH of these areas.	Features/ Characteristics What are the Features/ Characteristics/ Properties pertaining to EACH component/ element in the topic/unit/ subject or step/ stage in the process under consideration?	Significance For EACH Area or Feature or step/ stage covered, what is its function or purpose? What problem is it addressing; or what is its impact/ effect? What is the cause/ effect of EACH Area or Feature covered?	<Each Area/Feature of Contents> Once the function/ purpose or impact/ effect is established, Explain How and/or Why the intention is carried out. How did it achieve its purpose or impact/ effect? What is the relationship between the various Components/Features/ Steps, Stages and/or their Impact/Effect?	<Each Area/Feature> Explain how Each Area/ Feature is beneficial or unbeneficial, even through implication or suggestion, in relation to the set criteria. Explain How and/or Why EACH Function/Step, Stage and/or Impact/Effect or Cause/Effect is positive and/or negative (in whatever sense is needed by the subject at hand).	<Each Area/Feature> To what extent is the Impact/Effect effective, its value/quality. To what extent has the object of consideration, the Feature or Impact served its purpose, carried out what it was intended to accomplish. To what extent, by how much, was the Impact/ Effect successful? By how much do the positives outweigh the negatives or vice versa?
AREA #1				+s - Advantages -s - Negatives	
AREA #2				+s - Advantages -s - Negatives	
AREA #3				+s - Advantages -s - Negatives	

CRITICALLY EVALUATE/CONCLUDE OVERALL EVALUATIONS <All Areas/Features Covered> After establishing the extent of Success/Effectiveness of Each individual Feature or Function/Purpose, compare and contrast **all** the Areas covered. To what extent is one more effective than another? Therefore, to what extent, come to a final judgement, were all of the Features/Impacts/Effects, the whole process, successful or effective?

CONCEPTUALISE TOPIC <Essential idea of topic or summation/judgement on the developmental process and/or its change of procedures in the process over time. The importance of the interrelationship amongst the Areas/Features> How are all of the various Features/Impacts/Effects interrelated to form the whole Topic/Unit/Subject/Process of study? And, why is this interrelationship important? Why is it important to be able to evaluate all of the aspects of the study or the process itself?

APPRECIATE TOPIC CONCEPT <Why is this understanding of the topic concept important for life? Or why should it be learned? Why is it important to be able to evaluate the situation? Or why is this of importance to a question? > Why is this understanding of the concept and all that it entails important to my life, or the lives of others? How does this help answer a question?

ALARM, A Learning Aid And Responding Matrix (A Cellular Template), Connotative Interpretive Subject (English, CAPA, LOTE)

<p>TOPIC NAME: Every Unit of Study is a Topic or is made up of individual topics. And each one has a Title or Name: What is the name of the topic, unit, subject, text or process of study?</p>						
<p>DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF TOPIC: Briefly, what is the topic, unit or process about (in one of two sentences)?</p>						
<p>CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION (Upon which to base an Evaluation): What are some of the value judgement type words that students could use to demonstrate that the impact or effect of the aspects or application of the topic or process is positive and/or negative?</p>						
NAME & DEFINE EACH AREA OF CONTENT	DESCRIBE FEATURE(S) CHARACTERISTICS	EXPLAIN SIGNIFICANCE.	ANALYSE AREAS OF CONTENT	INTERPRET MEANING or THEME	CRITICALLY ANALYSE AREA(S)/ FEATURE(S)	EVALUATE CONCLUDE ON EFFECTIVENESS
Name and Define the component parts of the topic for study (e.g Steps/ Stages in the process and/ or concept).	Describe the techniques used to represent a particular issue or perspective (e.g Techniques used by composers for EACH step/ stage/process(Use quotes, events).	Explain the function/purpose, cause/effect of each technique and What is revealed about the perspective > Explain the effect (mood, tone, the atmosphere of EACH technique for each step/ stage.	Explain How/Why each area achieves its purpose/function; and/ or Explain How each technique(s) create an effect to suit its purpose: Explain the relationship amongst texts and/or techniques > Explain how the mood/tone relates to the step/stages during the process as a whole.	Interpret the meaning of the text through the connotation> What the persona or responder learns from EACH experience/event during EACH step/ stage along the way and/or from the process as a whole at the universal level.	Explain in what way the area of content or technique(s) either + and/or - for the purpose/ meaning for which it is intended> Explain how/ why each mood/tone/ experience is + and/ or - for the persona; Explain how/why the mood/tone shaped by the technique(s) is beneficial and/or disadvantageous for understanding the impact on the persona.	Make a judgement on the extent to which EACH technique(s), was suitable or appropriate in achieving its purpose. Explain to what extent the use of the technique's effect was effective/successful in serving the composer's purpose for the meaning; Explain to what extent the experience was beneficial for process/ concept.
AREA #1						
AREA #2						
AREA #3						
<p>CRITICALLY EVALUATE/EVALUATE OVERALL A JUDGEMENT AS TO THE PROS AND CONS, USEFULNESS, SUITABILITY, ETC TO CRITERIA Make a judgement on the overall effectiveness of their use to achieve the purpose/intention for the meaning. This may involve the explanation of the extent to which all the Areas and/or techniques play a role in relation to each other. Measure the extent to which they are interrelated. Explain to what extent the overall experience was beneficial/unbeneficial for the persona. Explain to what extent one persona's experience was more or less beneficial than another's OR the extent that one text is more or less effective than another.</p>						
<p>CONCEPTUALISE TOPIC. THE ESSENTIAL MEANING/IDEA OF THE TOPIC Explain the essential idea of topic or summation/judgement on the developmental process and its change of procedures over time. Explain how EACH learning situation AND textual theme relates to the Topic Concept or Process as a whole.</p>						
<p>APPRECIATE TOPIC. CONCEPT THE VALUE/IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC CONCEPT Explain Why this understanding of the topic concept is important for life or How it is related to a question, or Explain Why the understanding should be learned. Explain how or what was learned from EACH learning situation and/or concept applies to life and/or the question asked.</p>						

ALARM IN ACTION

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY, MULTIMEDIA

WRITING A EXTENDED REPSONSE

Deconstructing a question

VERB

- Refers to the **directive** (instruction or direction for the structure of the response) and also referred to as **key words** from NESA
See Syllabus Verbs on Page 6.

SUBJECT

- Refers to the **focus** of the question and determines the **skill level** you will need to respond at. Please refer to skills levels outlined in the **ALARM framework** below.

LOWER ORDER THINKING (LOT)

1. Name and Define

What is it?
Identify, state, tell.

2. Describe

What features,
characteristics
or qualities?

3. Explain Significance

What is the purpose
and function?

4. Analyse

What is the impact/
relationship?
Examine, relate,
compare.

HIGHER ORDER THINKING (HOT)

1. Critically Analyse

What is the
advantages and
disadvantages?

2. Evaluate

To what extent?
Determine, justify,
assess.

3. Critically Evaluate

What is the overall
judgement?

4. Conceptualise

Essential idea of
topic within
the broader picture.

OBJECT

- Refers to the content knowledge, specific syllabus knowledge.

LEGAL STUDIES

Common Law Systems of Trial

IDENTIFY and DEFINE	DESCRIBE and EXPLAIN	ANALYSE	EVALUATE/JUDGEMENT LINK TO KEY THEME/CONCEPT
<p>Identify area/aspect of the legal system, legal measure, non-legal measure. OR Identify key concept/theme related to the topic/question.</p>	<p>Describe and explain key features of the area/aspect and/or the role of it within the legal system. Use examples/evidence.</p>	<p>Analysis of effectiveness and/or impact. HOW and WHY is the area/aspect effective or ineffective? What are some benefits/advantages? What are some limitations/disadvantages? Use examples/evidence to support your analysis and link to different perspectives – e.g. individuals, society, over time</p>	<p>Judgment and critical analysis of overall effectiveness/impact. In doing so, make connections between the aspect/area and the operation of the law and justice. To what extent effective? Use criteria to support your judgement.</p>
<p>adversarial system of trial process of achieving justice</p>	<p>Describe: Process of a court hearing a case Explain key features: Involves two opposing parties, impartial decision maker who is presented with evidence, specific roles held by various personnel Case examples: R v Xie (2017), R v Gittany (2014)</p>	<p>Both parties have rights to present their case to the court which promotes equality and recognition of individual rights. For example, in a criminal trial, a defendant has a right to presumption of innocence and right to cross-examine evidence which facilitates the right to a fair trial. The adversarial system can be complex and lengthy and can lead to greater conflict between parties. For example, the complexity of evidence and involvement of juries can lead to delays and risk of mistrial and/or appeal. Both parties may incur high costs and use of individual and state resources can be high. <i>(Integrate case examples/evidence within your analysis to demonstrate further understanding)</i></p>	<p>The adversarial system is generally effective in recognising and protecting individual rights to achieve justice. Fairness in decision making is promoted through impartiality in decision making and adherence to principles of procedural fairness through the court process.</p>

TOPIC : Sports Policy and the Sports Environment

Evaluate how sports policy and the sport environment promote safe participation?

NAME/DEFINE	DESCRIBE	EXPLAIN SIGNIFICANCE	ANALYSE	ASSESS	EVALUATE
Syllabus terms	Features Characteristics	Purpose, impact, problem	Explain how or why	Advantages AND/OR disadvantages	How well does it do it? To what extent
Rules of sports and activities	Rules act to: Assist the flow of play, protect players from injury, promote safety within the game.	If rules are not followed, injury can occur. Injury can cause temporary or permanent disability, so rule infringement must be dealt with.	Rules can help to protect players, for example, in rugby; the spear tackle has been banned. This tackle is where the opposition lifts another player into the air and drops them such that they land on their back, head or neck.	This is positive as it restricts players when tackling and ensures the safety of the player when tackling. *If a player is convicted of completing a spear tackle, they can be sin binned and may be hit with a match ban.	The spear tackle is extremely effective as it ensures player safety and does not put the tackler player at risk of a spinal injury.
Modified rules for Children					
Matching of opponents					
Protective equipment					
Safe grounds, equipment and facilities					

LITERAL	FIGURATIVE	THEMATIC	CONCEPTUAL
<p>Quote / Example / story</p>	<p>Technique / Effect / Mood / Purpose</p>	<p>Meaning / Interpretation / Significance (inside the text)</p>	<p>Link to Ideas or concepts / Link to world or context / Link to reader or composer (outside the text)</p>
<p>"nature in her wildest mood" "Out past the shallows Dark water - black and cold and roaring ... silent cliffs ... nothing but water and sky." "There were things that no one could teach you - things about the water." "Miles knew the water. He could feel it. And he knew not to trust it."</p>	<p>Metaphor: water and the ocean as a representation of human experiences Setting and Australian Gothic genre / style Narrative point of view Characterisation and conflict</p>	<p>The opening mood... ominous, conveying the turbulent setting of Bruny The story begins... in a world dominated by the natural environment The character is... confined to a lifestyle of poverty and responsibility Parrett has... established a landscape that mirrors Miles' tumultuous lifestyle</p>	<p>Readers become aware of... how social context can imprison and individual The novel subverts our understanding of... the bildungsroman narrative Parrett questions the nature of... destiny and the way life circumstance can inhibit an individual's opportunities</p>

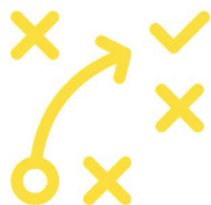
MAPS - Mathematics & Problem Solving Framework

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

STRATEGY	PROMPTS
<p>Making connections (make personal connections with the problem)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I already know about the problem? • Have I done a similar problem before?
<p>Predicting (use information from the problem to anticipate what will be read in the problem before you start reading, or solving)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What operation is the problem asking me to do? • Will my answer be bigger or smaller than the numbers in the problem? • Is the answer reasonable? Why or why not? • What words or visuals do I expect to see in this problem? • Were my predictions accurate? • What will the solution look like on the page? • How much space do these questions usually take? • How many marks is the question worth? • What could the marking criteria be?
<p>Questioning (pose and answer questions that clarify meaning and promote a deeper understanding of the problem)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information in the problem helps me know what to do? • When you read the problem did it remind you of anything you have done before? • Ask yourself or others questions about the problem to clarify your understanding.
<p>Monitoring (stop and think about the text and know what to do when meaning is disrupted)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the problem making sense? • Do I need to re-read the problem? • What can help me fill in the missing information?
<p>Visualising (Create a mental or physical image to represent the problem, use diagrams to discover meaning)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I represent this problem or these ideas visually? • Can I describe the visual I have made for the problem? • How did the visuals help me understand the problem?
<p>Summarising (identify and accumulate the most important ideas and restate them in your own words – list the key values or ideas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main ideas and significant details in the problem? • If you were to tell another person how you solved the problem, what would you tell them? • What information will help you solve the problem?

PROBLEM SOLVING HURDLES

HURDLE	DISCRIPTION	STRATEGIES
Decoding	This type of hurdle means you are having difficulty reading the problem and understanding the individual words, symbols or diagrams in the problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight/underline/circle any key words in the questions list the terminology, symbols, phrases or combinations that you did not understand; then, find their meaning by asking questions/discussing/researching them.
Comprehension	This type of hurdle means you are unsure of what the question is asking you to do, or what problem it is asking you to solve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies: Making connections, Predicting, Questioning, Monitoring, Visualising, Summarising (see table below).
Transformation	This type of hurdle means you have had difficulty determining what steps to take to find the solution, your solution was all over the place, or you found information that wasn't required to solve the problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> find a similar problem you have solved and/ or create a flow diagram or picture or list that describes the steps you will take and how each piece of information you find will connect to the next – then write the sequence of what you are going to do in your own words use a hierarchical concept map to backward map the question to determine the possible piece of information you need to find. Ask the question 'If only I had <blank> I could solve this problem', then focus on finding <blank>.
Process Skills	This type of hurdle means you knew what you had to do – the right plan, but several parts of the solution had hurdles, you may have had difficulties with one or more of the skills you needed to implement to complete the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> list the skills or processes you were unsuccessful using, find a worked example of each skill, then practice each process separately, finally create a new question similar to this problem and solve it.
Encoding	This type of hurdle is when you don't understand what the answer you have found means, you are not sure you have finished, or don't know if what you have found answers the question, if you did not round correctly, or did not include the correct units of measurement, if you did not write a concluding statement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> re-read the question and compare it to your answers make a list of the things you need to make sure of from the question check that you have completed the transformation and process skills completely and accurately before you answer rewrite the answer to the question and use words explaining what it is that you have found check your solution with your predictions from the comprehension step. Can you check if your solution is correct? Substitute values into an expression at each stage, find the mistake and work from there



10 HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

There is a growing body of research into how students learn that has implications for students studying a number of demanding HSC subjects. Here, listed on the following page, are 10 highly effective learning strategies that are **supported by cognitive science.**

1. PRACTICE TESTING

Take practice tests on the to-be-learned material. Simply reading over material or highlighting can give students a false sense of mastery. Write your own test, then test yourself or work with a partner.

2. DISTRIBUTED PRACTICE

This involves implementing a schedule that spreads out learning material. Cognitive load theory (a theory of how human brains learn and store knowledge) recognises that the human brain can only process a small amount of new information at once, but it can process very large amounts of stored information. This technique will help you avoid procrastination and cramming.

3. INTERLEAVED PRACTICE

Interleaving is quite counterintuitive – it means mixing up your subjects and not studying all your material at once. A bit like distributed practice it means avoiding mass practice, but adds a degree of difficulty by mixing the types of problems or subjects to be studied. Mass practice (like reading and highlighting) can lead to the illusion of mastery.

4. ELABORATION & INTERROGATION

Once you have learned new material, elaboration and interrogation will help you discover connections between the things that you learn as well as develop your problem-solving skills.

5. SELF-EXPLANATION

This technique is similar to elaboration and interrogation in the way it helps students make connections with their learning and understand their own cognitive processes. At its simplest, this strategy involves asking the question 'Why?' For example, 'Why do I think the answer is A and not B?' might elicit important problem-solving insights. Self-explanation is a metacognitive strategy and can help students develop a self-image of themselves as a learner.

6. IMAGERY & VISUALISATION

In this technique, students develop mental images of the content they are learning, for example, a student might develop a series of mental images representing the processes in photosynthesis or the rise of Nazism in Europe in the twentieth century.

7. KEYWORD MNEMONICS

Mnemonics are a commonly used technique for aiding memorisation. In this way something concrete (easy to remember) is associated with something abstract (hard to remember). For example, 'Roy G. Biv' is a name used to remember the colour spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Another example might be the prompt used to remember a paragraph structure or scaffold: TEAL – topic, example, analysis, link.

8. DUAL CODING

This powerful technique involves using visuals, such as graphs, diagrams, symbols and timelines to support verbal or written explanations. For more examples, see 'Visual Organisers'.

9. SUMMARIES

One of the most common learning techniques used by students is to develop a topic summary. Students must make their own summaries because part of their effectiveness comes from the process of selecting and condensing the material to be learned. Use headings, sub-headings, colour coding and anything else that helps you organise and personalise your knowledge.

10. CONCRETE EXAMPLES

A real-life application that is suitable for an abstract concept to be learned is a powerful technique that can stimulate critical thinking and lead to mastery. The concrete example should be used to develop links, stimulate questions and lead to more complex thinking about the abstract concept.



LEARNING & STUDY STRATEGIES IN ACTION

1. Getting organised

- File organisation – backup major work and reorganise file system on laptop, including backups.
- Check assessment schedules, calendars and update my task to-do lists.
- Start planning for the half-yearly exam period.
- Shop for resources: flash cards, stationary, post-its and new black pens.

2. Note taking and summaries

- Convert Modern History class notes on Stalin's USSR into summary notes.
- Make summary notes on Biology text, Chapter 3.
- Update and colour code annotations on Ted Hughes' poetry for Advanced English.
- Share and compare notes on Buddhism with my Society & Culture study group.

3. Mind maps, visualisation and dual coding

- Create a timeline for Ancient History based on the BBC Sparta documentary.
- Create character maps for Advanced English, Prince Hal and Falstaff from King Henry IV, Part 1.
- Update concept maps for Earth and Environmental Science – Climate Science.

4. Flash cards

- Legal Studies – consumer legislation. Learn and consolidate.
- PDHPE – Factors Affecting Performance. Create and learn.
- Advanced English – *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Practice with an essay question.

5. Practice tests and quizzing

- Engineering Studies – write quiz questions and answers on Aeronautical Engineering. Share with my study group.
- Mathematics Advanced – re-do test on Trigonometric Functions

6. Study groups

- Share notes on Advanced English critical readings with my Monday group
- Aeronautical engineering quiz with my Thursday group

7. Rehearse and repeat

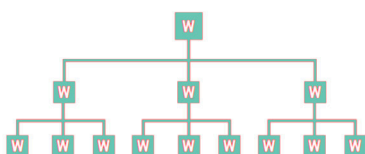
- Mathematics Advanced – study worked examples on Trigonometric Functions and attempt past exam papers.
- Advanced English – self-test flash card sets on *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and attempt HSC essay question from the 2020 HSC exam paper.



VISUAL ORGANISERS

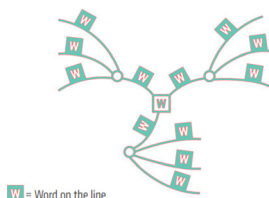
CHUNK

TREE DIAGRAM



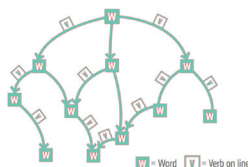
The quintessential hierarchical structure, used for everything from management to animal taxonomies. It's only problem is the space it needs at its base as it broadens.

MIND MAP



Once the hippies' map of choice, its organic aesthetic disguises the fact that it is merely a tree diagram radiantly emanating from a central point. This solves the space issue.

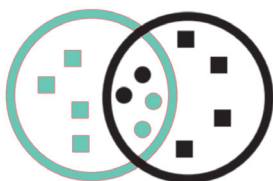
CONCEPT MAP



Hierarchical, connected mini-sentences, of subject-verb-object structure, form the basis of concept maps. They are very precise and, therefore, quite difficult to create.

COMPARE

VENN DIAGRAM



The visual depiction of set theory. Agreed attributes determine inclusion in a set. An overlap of circles highlights the similarities.

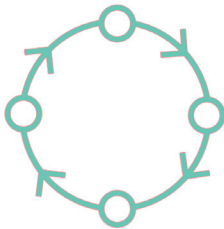
SEQUENCE

FLOW CHART



The simplest way to show the flow of a process by a series of factors or events joined by arrows. Too many such nodes makes understanding more difficult.

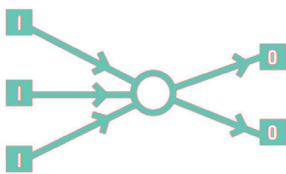
CYCLE



The same as a flow chart but instead of a one-way direction, a cycle is established.

CAUSE & EFFECT

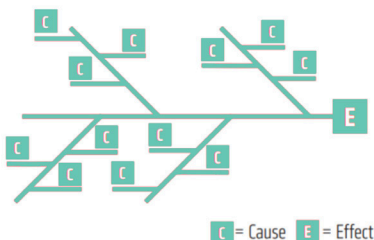
INPUT-OUTPUT DIAGRAM



I = Input O = Output

Multiple factors are involved in a cause and effect dynamic. This diagram allows you to show them centered around a catalyst.

FISHBONE DIAGRAM



C = Cause E = Effect

Situations are rarely explained by a simple line of causes. In such cases, causes are chunked into similar themes to indicate a more subtle sphere of influence.



READING & COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

To become a confident writer students will have to become **active, engaged and critical readers**. Students will need to get used to re-reading texts and having a critical conversation with them - **asking questions of texts, probing assumptions, linking back to previous sources**. To support this, students can improve their reading and comprehension skills.

READING STRATEGIES

- Read actively:** read with a pen in your hand. Ask questions of the text as you go. Identify problematic or complex words.
- Preview text:** look for features and structure. Identify the author, audience, purpose and context of the text. Try to link the text to any prior knowledge you may possess that will help you decode it.
- Resources:** check in with the resources around the school and talk to your teacher or librarian.
- Tools:** online tools can help students decode texts and even translate them. Microsoft Word has a tool called Immersive Reader that can support students with their reading.
- Annotate text:** as you read, use your pen to record first impressions or write down questions or link to other texts or ideas. Annotating texts is an important first step with much of your note taking.

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

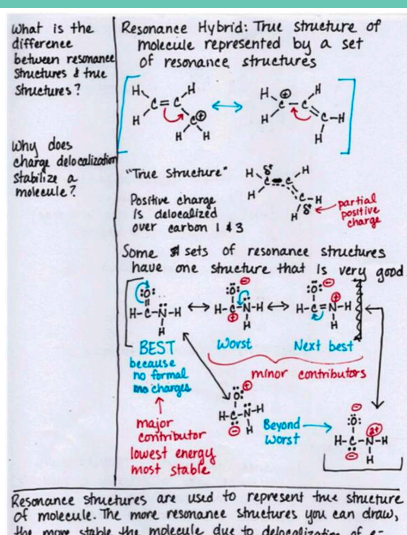
- Activate prior knowledge:** activate the knowledge you already have by reflecting on the literal information in the text and calling on your experience and long-term memory.
- Identify literal information stated explicitly in the text:** gather all the literal and explicitly stated material in the text without making inferences. Put the information into some form using a note-taking strategy (see Note-Taking Strategies).
- Make inferences and interpret meaning:** texts can be quite complex and can lead readers from what is explicitly stated to what may be implied or inferred.
- Visualise the text and create mental images:** as you read, visualise what is happening. Identify the visuals as 'happenings'.
- Make predictions:** as you read, make some predictions about what *might* happen.
- Summarise information and organise in texts:** take notes, make notes, review notes.
- Synthesising ideas and information:** try to make links and connections between ideas in the text.
- Critically reflect:** think about your own reading and reflect on how you have reached the conclusions that you have reached. Try to be rational and honest with yourself about your own reading strategy and be open to trying new approaches.



NOTE TAKING STRATEGIES

There are some excellent **Note-taking apps** available for students; however, research suggests that paper systems are more effective for retaining information. There are **three main systems used for note taking** that are worth considering: the outline method, the Cornell method and mind mapping. Also, students need to engage with all of the stages of note taking, that is: note taking, note making, note interacting and note reflecting.

<p>Cues/Questions</p> <p>List the questions that your teachers ask in class</p> <p>Write questions that you have</p> <p>Write questions that are answered by your notes</p>	<p>Creative Notes</p> <p>Main Notes (Abbreviated)</p> <p>Consider 'Dual Code Theory' and 'Sketch notes' to add more meaning to your notes</p>
<p>Summary</p> <p>A conceptual overview of the pagetopic. You can quickly flick through your notes to see main idea of the page.</p>	



RECORD

During the lecture, record in the main column as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can. Write legibly.

REDUCE

As soon after as possible, summarise these facts and ideas concisely in the Cue Column. Summarising clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory.

RECITE

Cover the Note-taking Area, using only your jottings in the Cue Column, say over the facts and ideas of the lecture as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words. Then, verify what you have said.

REFLECT

Draw out opinions from your notes and use them as a starting point for your own reflections on the course and how it relates to your other courses. Reflection will help prevent ideas from being inert and soon forgotten.

REVIEW

Spend 10 minutes every week in quick review of your notes, and you will retain most of what you have learned.

The Cornell Method:

While there is a range of ways you can take notes. Research shows us that the Cornell Method of note taking is the most efficient and beneficial way of taking notes. It's fairly simple - all you need to do is create three sections.

The Outline Method:

Simply create a hierarchy with a series of indented bullet lists:

- Heading
- Subheading
- Bullet point
- Heading

The Mind-Mapping Method

- (see Visual Organisers)



GOAL SETTING

Goal setting is a powerful way to **focus the mind and overcome obstacles and setbacks**. Goals should be motivated by desire and powered by discipline. Below are some tips and strategies that will make your goal setting more effective.

- Create** a personalised vision of where you would like to be in 5–10 years and work backwards.
- Chunk** your goals – break big goals down into smaller, more achievable units.
- Write** your goals down and communicate them to someone you trust. That will help them become more realistic.
- Problems** – see them as opportunities for growth.
- Understand** your internal narrative – take time to reflect and detect any negative self-talk and change it to a more positive internal narrative.
- Dedication** – perseverance, grit and dedication should be your HSC values. Never give up!

Smart Goals

Specific – be clear and concrete about what you want to achieve. For example, instead of 'study more for my Biology', make the goal more specific by saying 'spend one hour every Thursday afternoon revising my Biology notes.'

Measureable – being able to measure progress will go a long way towards building academic esteem and motivation. For example, instead of 'read Chapter 4 of my Modern History text', a student could say, 'write a dot point summary of Chapter 4 with 3 x focus questions that I will develop my own answers to in preparation for my next Modern History class.'

Achievable – students should chunk larger goals into more manageable units so they can move through goals and build on success. Making them smaller units should help them to be more achievable. For example, instead of a student saying 'I need an ATAR of 95', the student could see it as a series of steps and gradual improvement, such as 'I want +2 marks on my essay submission in Advanced English between the trial HSC and HSC exam.'

Relevant – students should reflect on the skills that will contribute to their academic achievement in their subjects. Making goals relevant and linking them to that shift from current state to a future (more desirable) state will contribute to a concrete goal that is measurable and achievable.

Time bound – managing time is a skill students will need to master at some point (see Time & Task Management). Having a goal that is bound with a time frame will focus the mind and help students develop successful habits.

SMARTER Goals

Evaluate – at some point, students will have to evaluate the impact of the work they are doing. If a goal is not achieved and their study is not effective, find out why and make a change.

Reflect – the organisational psychologist Tasha Eurich in a *Harvard Business Review* article, noted that people with good self-awareness are more confident and creative, communicate more effectively and build stronger relationships. Reflection can take honesty and courage, but the rewards far outweigh the temporary discomfort that honest reflection can bring.



TIME & TASK MANAGEMENT

As a senior student, only part of your week and year will be formally timetabled. You will be responsible for managing your study time for yourself. There are plenty of **strategies, resources, approaches and tools** that can help you manage your study.



Aloha.

Check in with your Librarian

Strategies, Resources, Approaches & Tools

- 1. Use a system:** some students prefer to use digital calendars and organisers, some prefer a large wall calendar. There are many examples and resources available, from priority lists, alerts, to-do lists, timelines, to study timetables and wall planners. Use a system and stick to it!
- 2. Plan and prioritise:** students will need to constantly monitor their time and energy. Priority lists, to-do lists, timelines and other systems will support your workload and help you meet important deadlines.
- 3. Manage distractions:** multitasking does not work and there is plenty of academic research that supports this view. In particular, research suggests that learning relies on a limited working memory before learning can be stored in long-term memory. Learning can be slowed down or even stopped if we are overloaded with too much new information at once.
- 4. Save time:** good students make the most of classroom time. Another way of explaining this tip is to say, 'Don't waste time!' Organise your week so that you have time to exercise and socialise and use class time for your learning.
- 5. Use the resources around you:** the best resources you will have to support your academic study are the people around you. Talk to people – past students, your classmates, your teachers. Go to the library and talk to the Librarian or book a time to see one of our Learning Support Officers.

TIME & TASK MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

ENGLISH

- Identify weaknesses
- Construct ALARM table - Mod A
- Construct ALARM table - Mod B
- Construct ALARM table - Mod C
- Construct ALARM table - Discovery
- Finish Mod B essay
- Finish new creative writing
- Adjust essays
- Flash cards - Mod A
- Flash cards - Mod B
- Flash cards - Mod C
- Past papers

MATHEMATICS

- Identify weaknesses
- Flash cards - topic by topic
- Online quizzes - student portal
- Edrolo
- Textbook review exercises
- Past Papers

MATHEMATICS EXT. 1

- Identify weaknesses
- Flash cards - topic by topic
- Online quizzes - student portal
- Edrolo
- Textbook review exercises
- Past Papers

CHEMISTRY

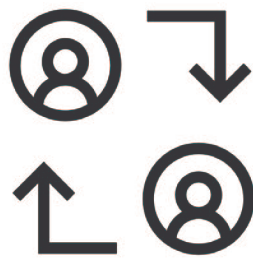
- ALARM booklet
- Summary notes
- Posters/mind maps
- Flashcards
- Online quizzes
- Past papers

ECONOMICS

- Summary notes
- Posters/mind maps
- Online quizzes
- Past papers

GERMAN EXT.

- Watch film
- Review film analysis
- Edit film analysis
- Past papers



FEEDBACK IN ACTION

#FEEDBACK is ...

A mark, a comment, an exemplar piece of work, a discussion, reflection on a goal, a set of guidelines, a set of instructions, a way forward

#FEEDBACK comes from ...

Your teacher, other students, yourself, an exemplar piece of work, marking criteria, a rubric, a whole class discussion, a discussion with peers, a mark you received

#FEEDBACK works when you ...**1. Do something**

Feedback should move the learner and the learning forward and support progress and growth in academic subjects. Feedback will come from a range of sources and students must act on it. The key is to do something with the materials, whether they are individual comments on a piece of work, whole class feedback given verbally by a teacher, reflections on an exemplar piece of work or peer feedback supplied by another student.

2. Reflect on your SMART and SMARTER goals

Your own self-analysis and evaluation can be the most powerful catalyst for growth and progress in your studies. Goal setting works when you take the time to reflect on your successes and areas for improvement. You should translate the feedback (whether it is a number or a comment) into something concrete that you can then incorporate into your body of work. If you are not sure how to progress, ask your teacher.

3. Identify strengths and areas for improvement

First, identify your strengths and reinforce them through spaced repetition. Then, identify the areas you need to develop and rehearse the process of improvement. If you need your teacher to re-teach a skill that you find challenging – ask them.

4. Revisit and repeat

Improve your confidence and fluency through a spaced process of revisiting areas for improvement and repeating the process of improvement.

5. Rehearse, refine, rework

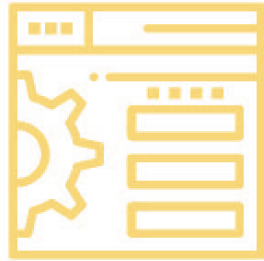
Do it again – better. Improvement will take cycles of performance and repetition. Eventually, the improvement will become automatic.

6. A resource for others

When you share your work with others, you are challenging yourself to think hard about the quality of your own work. The study group is a powerful resource that can lead to improvement in your own work and those around you, building a strong academic culture where everyone is supported and everyone strives to achieve their best possible academic outcomes.

7. Research and record

Your work can often be improved by making reference to a wider range of ideas, texts, case studies or examples. Research, record and reference these new ideas in a new improved version of your work.



DOCUMENT DESIGN & FORMATTING

To communicate information effectively, documents and papers should focus on the purpose and audience, rather than the preferences of the writer. Clarity and consistency of design is an essential part of effective communication.

CONTENT



You should have a clear understanding of the requirements of the documents and reports you are creating. Your teachers will communicate and model what is required in each of your subjects. Students need to plan their work with an audience and purpose in mind.

CLARITY



Working from a plan and developing a consistent approach will contribute to more effective communication. Consistent use of headings, margins, fonts and line spacing will help readers interpret content.

LAYOUT



Different subjects will have different preferences for how a document should look; however, there are some conventions that will assist a reader. Margins create a visual frame and should not be too narrow. Most academic writing is double spaced and fonts should be professional looking fonts that are appropriate for a Stage 6 HSC subject. Fonts that are easy to read and appropriate include the following: **Arial**, **Georgia**, **Times New Roman** and **Verdana**.

READABILITY



The readability of a document will depend on your subject and specific requirements set out by your teacher. All of your design choices – formatting, lists, headings, visuals, charts, tables – should be made with the writing purpose in mind.

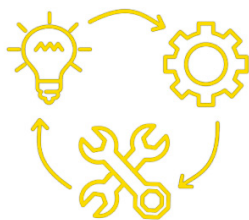
FORMATTING



Italics: should be used for titles of books, publications, reports, songs, films, etc.

Bold: should be used sparingly.

Avoid underlining unless explicitly stated as part of the task requirements.



STAGES OF WRITING PROCESS

PRE-WRITING

Pre-writing may involve:

- Reading, clarifying, questioning
- Discussing, researching, mind mapping
- Writing, hypothesising, seeking feedback
- Planning, refining, rehearsing
- Note-taking
- Finding evidence, exploring perspectives, exploring resources

WRITING - DRAFTING AND REVISING

- Structuring, outlining, composing
- Writing, imitating, emulating
- Scaffolding, modelling, rehearsing
- Experimenting, controlling, refining
- Seeking feedback, rewriting, reworking
- Reading, adding, omitting
- Teaching, helping, listening
- Acting on feedback



EDITING & PROOFREADING

Submitting academic work for assessment will require students to develop good editing and proofreading skills. As well as **reviewing your own work**, you might like to **collaborate with others** and share your knowledge and understanding of your subjects and develop a culture of collaboration and academic success.

EDITING MAY INVOLVE

- Removing or adding text to meet the word limit.
- Restructuring a whole text or paragraph level to make the writing more purposeful and clear.
- Checking for clarity and making sure ideas flow in a coherent way.
- Checking that the evidence you have used is valid, factual and reliable.
- Making sure sentences are clear and concise.
- Addressing the question or criteria

PROOFREADING MAY INVOLVE

- Checking spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Checking references are formatted correctly.
- Signposting is logical, for example: page numbers, headings, sub-headings, diagrams or tables are labelled.

SCIENTIFIC REPORT WRITING

Experiments (practicals) are assessed so it is important to learn and understand how to write a scientific report. NO personal terms (I, we, you, your, us) are used in the report.

Write the appropriate title of the experiment including the independent and dependent variables.

SUB-HEADING**AIM / INQUIRY QUESTION**

A question or statement outlining the purpose of the experiment.

Eg: To determine the effect of (independent variable) on the (dependent variable)

Eg: To investigate the process of -----

HYPOTHESIS

A **brief** statement to what you assume will happen (based on your research)

If the ----- then the ----- will -----.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

The variable that is **changed** deliberately / in a regular way.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The variable that is measured/observed (the outcome/ results) of change in independent variable.

CONTROLLED VARIABLES

The variables that are kept the **SAME** throughout the whole experiment.

- Same size...
- Same amount...
- Same type...

EQUIPMENT LIST

- Dot point list of ALL the materials needed to complete the whole experiment (including the repeats).
- Measurements of amounts/sizes of equipment is needed.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- What is the hazard/risk? Eg Bunsen burner flame
- What harm could happen? Eg Hair catching on fire and burning scalp
- What to do to avoid this? Eg Tie back long hair so it cannot be in contact with the flame
- NOTE: Safety glasses may be used

METHOD

- Write a numbered list of sequential instructions. It is like a recipe with no personal words.
- Start each step with a verb (doing word)
- Can be written in 3rd person, past tense, passive voice
- Keep one action/step to one numbered point
- List exactly what to do and the quantities needed for that step
- Include 'observe and record results in a table' as one of the last steps

RESULTS

- Rule a fully enclosed table showing all measurements. This is the raw data. Tables must have a title and units in the row/column headings.
- Draw a labelled graph if appropriate
- Gradient of graph may be significant

DISCUSSION

This is where the bulk of the information will be written. Discuss and link results.

- An explanation of results (reason why something happened)
- An interpretation of the graph
- Explaining any trends in the results / graph
- % error may be calculated
- Problems encountered and how to overcome them
- Modifications to improve the experiment if it were to be repeated
- Further related areas to investigate
- Any interesting information related to the experiment
- Answer any questions linked to the experiment

CONCLUSION

- Brief statement addressing the aim.
- A statement whether your results support or do not support the hypothesis.
- Do NOT just repeat your results.
- Do NOT explain here
- This is the closing summary statement about your whole experiment.

IS IT A VALID EXPERIMENT?

- A valid investigation is a fair test.
- Does it test the stated hypothesis?
- Are the variables controlled?
- Is there a suitable control?
- Is it reliable?
- Does it use appropriate equipment?
- Is it accurate? (Note: Measurements can be reliable without being valid Eg: A faulty device (or not zeroed) can give similar results but it is not accurate and therefore not valid)

IS IT A RELIABLE EXPERIMENT?

- Has the experiment been tested with repetition?
- Are the results similar/consistent?

FIRST-HAND vs SECONDARY INFORMATION & DATA

RELIABILITY, VALIDITY and ACCURACY

	FIRST-HAND INFORMATION & DATA	SECONDARY-HAND INFORMATION & DATA
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have I tested with repetition? • Are the results similar / consistent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How consistent is the information with information from other reputable sources? • Is the data presented based on repeatable processes?
Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does my experimental procedure/design actually test the hypothesis that I want it to? • Have all variables been identified and controlled? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the findings relate to the hypothesis or problem?
Accuracy	<p>The exactness or precision of a measurement; relating to the degree of refinement in measurement or specification.</p>	





PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

When researching and completing your classwork and assessment tasks your goal should be academic integrity. We encourage you to access external ideas, sources and conduct thorough research but to also **develop your own ideas and reach your own conclusions.**



Aloha.

Check in with your Librarian

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism occurs when a person takes someone else's ideas and uses them as their own and/or uses them without acknowledgement/proper referencing. Plagiarism can also occur if a student copies another student's work or submits work prepared in whole or in part by another person such as a parent or tutor.

NESA has stated

"plagiarism is when you pretend that you have written or created a piece of work that someone else originated. It is cheating, it is dishonest, and it could jeopardise your HSC exam results."

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-all-my-own-work/plagiarism/what-is-plagiarism>, accessed December 2019.

CONSIDER YOUR SITUATION

Your best friend rang you last night. She is really upset because she hasn't done her assessment task. She doesn't know what the question means. She can't do it in time. She asks you to email your finished assessment task.

If you give your friend your assessment task, she could be accused of plagiarism if she uses it.

The big issue is your academic honesty and her academic honesty.

You should tell her, 'Just do it.' Otherwise it is cheating and you are part of it.

HOW DO I ENSURE MY OWN ACADEMIC INTEGRITY?

- Always do your best to submit work that reflects your own ideas
- Acknowledge your sources
- Ensure you are being ethical and honest
- Use Turnitin
- Access advice and speak to your teachers, our School Librarian and members of the Wellbeing team if you need



RESEARCH

WHEN RESEARCHING, HAVE YOU DONE THE FOLLOWING?

Have you considered where you can access useful information?

Have you considered what information you need? For example, academic research, journal articles, opinion pieces, reviews, etc.

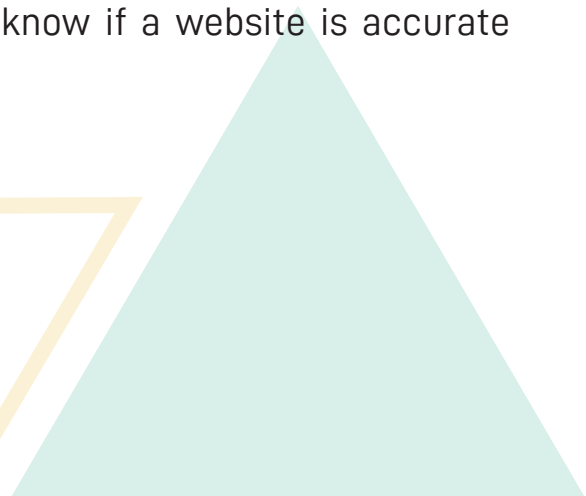
Have you considered where you can access useful information?

Ensure you use credible sources

Ensure you have an organisational system in place for your information

Ensure you develop a personal point of view and express it clearly. Use your own words and ideas.

If you are researching online, what search terms are useful? How can I keep a record of my searches? How do I know if a website is accurate and/or useful?



WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN I AM RESEARCHING?

IS THE SOURCE/ INFORMATION CURRENT?

This tells you about the timeliness of the resources, so you should ask yourself:

1. When was it published or posted online?
2. Has it been revised or updated?
3. Is what you are looking at the most up-to-date version?
4. Does your topic require very current information?

IS THE SOURCE/ INFORMATION RELEVANT?

This assesses the importance of the information for your needs:

1. Does the information directly relate to your topic or answer your question?
2. Who is the intended audience?
3. Is it at an appropriate level? (i.e. not too simple or advanced for your needs)
4. Would you feel comfortable using it as an academic resource?

WHO IS THE AUTHOR? WHAT IS THEIR AUTHORITY?

This tells you about the source of the information:

1. Who is the author/publisher/source?
2. What is their status? (Are they an academic? Researcher? Lecturer?)
3. Are they qualified to write on that particular topic?

IS IT RELIABLE?

This allows you to assess how reliable, truthful and correct the content is:

1. Where does the information come from?
2. Is it backed up with evidence?
3. Can you verify any of the information from another source?
4. Does the language and tone seem unbiased and free from emotion?
5. Are there spelling or grammatical errors?

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

This allows you to assess the reasons why the information exists:

1. Is the information intended to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
2. Does the author make their purpose clear?
3. Is the information fact or opinion?
4. Does the point of view appear objective?

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING RESOURCES

Who is the author?

When was it written? (context/time)

Who is the source aimed at? (audience)

What are the key points/central theme of the source?

What is the purpose of publication? (reasons for publication)

What perspective is provided? (e.g balanced, positive/negative, critical, is there subjectivity or objectivity?)

SO OVERALL, CONSIDER...

Is the source reliable and useful?

Is the information accurate?

How do you know this?



USEFULNESS OF SOURCES

RELIABILITY OF INTERNET RESEARCH

- Who is the author?
- What is the purpose of the site?
- Is there any obvious reason for bias?
- Is contact information provided?
- Can you verify the information?
- Is the information current?

WHAT ARE SCHOLARLY RESOURCES?

- Written by experts
 - Focus on a particular field, topic, or discipline
 - Intended for others in that field or career
 - 'Proper' language, technical vocabulary
 - Often these sources are reviewed by other experts (peer reviewed)
 - No ads
 - RESEARCH ORIENTED
- Journals are scholarly*

POPULAR RESOURCES ARE THE OPPOSITE

- Written by journalists
- Usually cover broad topics, fields, issues, or disciplines
- Usually appeal to a wide audience
- Everyday language, slang, even profanity
- LOTS of ads
- NOT RESEARCH ORIENTED

USE OTHER SEARCH ENGINES

- Google Scholar
- State Library of NSW <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/>
- Northern Beaches Library- connects all the libraries in the Northern Beaches area <https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/library>



WEBSITE

How can you determine whether the information you've found is accurate and reliable?

To know this, you need to establish the site's credibility. The first thing to look for is the site's publisher. You can usually find this by checking the domain name. Another easy way to determine a website's credibility is by looking at the suffix:

e.g.

- .edu = educational
- .com = commercial
- .gov = government
- .org = non-profit

These suffixes can help you determine the site's main purpose and intended audience. Commercial sites, for example, vary in their credibility, while education and governmental websites are nearly always authoritative resources. However, be cautious, as websites may obtain misleading suffixes.

EVALUATING WEBSITES FOR RESEARCH

- **Authority** – who created the web page? Are they experts? What are their credentials? Do they provide contact information?
- **Accuracy** – where did they get their information? Are the facts verifiable through another source? Do they list a bibliography of citations from where they obtained their information?
- **Objectivity** – does the site have biases? Is the information presented in such a way to allow the viewer to make his/her own judgement, or does the site try to persuade you to adopt its viewpoint? What is the purpose of the site?
- **Currency** – when was the site last updated? Are the facts on the site up to date? Is the information current?
- **Coverage** – how much of the topic does the resource cover? Does it attempt to cover all or most of the aspects, or is it vague?



REFERENCING

Referencing is the **process of acknowledging and recording the sources from which you obtain your information.** Referencing is important because it enables you to acknowledge the various sources that have helped you develop understanding. Ensuring that you **reference your work correctly will avoid any allegations of plagiarism.**

To clearly and simply enable another person (or perhaps even yourself) to relocate the information or item referred to (via your **Bibliography/Reference List**).

The four most common referencing styles are:

Harvard (author-date)

American Psychological Association (APA)

Modern Language Association (MLA)

Oxford (documentary-note or footnote referencing).

There are **different styles and systems** of referencing. At Freshie, the main one you will be asked to use is the **Harvard Referencing System.**

COMMON QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO REFERENCING

HOW DO I REFERENCE?

There are **two main ways** that you are required to reference the sources that you use:

1. At the end of your project as a Bibliography/Reference List

and/or

2. Within your project:

(a) using in-text referencing

or

(b) using footnotes (mainly only for Society & Culture PIP)

WHAT IS A BIBLIOGRAPHY/ REFERENCE LIST?

A Bibliography or Reference List shows the details of the resource you have used including author, title, publication, source date etc.

Using the Harvard System, a Bibliography lists the sources in alphabetical order.

Your Bibliography could be used by the reader to locate and verify the information if necessary.

WHEN DO I HAVE TO REFERENCE SOURCES AND WHAT DO I REFERENCE?

If you are **researching a topic** or completing a large project or a hand-in task (for example, your PIP, IRP, SGP or Historical Investigation), you are required to **keep a record of the resources you have used.**

These resources should be provided in correct format and submitted with your project.

Your referencing should show the details of the source you used including **author, title, publication, source etc.**

In your written work, you need to acknowledge:

- 1. Direct references / direct quotes** from any source you have used
- 2. Indirect references** - if you have referred to and used ideas from someone else. This is required even if you are using your own words and paraphrasing the information.

IN WHAT ORDER SHOULD I RECORD THE DETAILS OF MY SOURCES?

Please see the table on the next page – but the most common order is:

Author Surname, Date, Title, Source, Publisher/URL accessed, date accessed.

WHAT IS IN-TEXT REFERENCING?

'In-text referencing' is a referencing system where you **provide brief details of the source within the sentence or at the end of your paragraph.**

For in-text referencing you will need to provide the **surname of the author** and **date published in brackets**. For example: (Jones, 2019)

WHAT ARE FOOTNOTES?

'Footnotes' are a referencing system **using numbers which appear at the bottom of each relevant page.**



HOW TO PREPARE A BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCE LIST

Please note that punctuation, correct order and formatting is important when presenting bibliographical details.

TYPE OF SOURCE	ORDER TO PRESENT DETAILS IN	EXAMPLE
BOOK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUTHOR (surname first), Initial, • YEAR OF PUBLICATION, • TITLE OF BOOK, (in italics) • PUBLISHER, • PLACE OF PUBLICATION, • PAGE NUMBERS (if relevant/known). 	<p>McCrindle, M., 2014, <i>The ABC of XYZ: Understanding the Global Generations</i>, McCrindle Research Pty Ltd, Australia.</p>
REFERENCE BOOK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TITLE, (in italics) • DATE, • PUBLISHER, • PLACE OF PUBLICATION. 	<p><i>The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Human Evolution</i>, 2009, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.</p>
NEWSPAPER/ JOURNAL ARTICLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUTHOR (surname first), Initial, • YEAR OF PUBLICATION, • TITLE, • NEWSPAPER/JOURNAL TITLE, (in italics) • ISSUE DATE • PAGE NUMBERS, (if applicable) • ONLINE WEBSITE DETAILS (if applicable). 	<p>Berry, S., 2016, <i>How Your Body Changes Your Brain</i>, Sydney Morning Herald, 19 April 2016.</p>
WEBSITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUTHOR (surname first), Initial (in italics) OR ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE, • YEAR MATERIAL PUBLISHED/REVISED, • TITLE OF WEBSITE, (in italics) • PLACE OF PUBLICATION IF KNOWN • URL • DATE OF VIEWING/ACCESS 	<p>Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, <i>The Value of Sport</i>, http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/mf/4156.0.55.002, accessed 29 April 2016.</p>
FILM/ DOCUMENTARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TITLE OF FILM (in italics) • YEAR RELEASED • FORMAT (e.g. film, documentary) • STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR • PLACE OF RECORDING 	<p><i>Kung Fu Panda</i>, 2008, Film, Dreamworks, USA.</p>
YOUTUBE CLIP or TED TALK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUTHOR (surname first), <i>Initial</i> • YEAR BROADCASTED • TITLE (in italics) • HOSTING SITE (e.g. YouTube, TED) • URL • DATE OF VIEWING/ACCESS 	<p>Grant, A., 2016, <i>The Surprising Habits of Original Thinkers</i>, TED, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxhCHn6gE3U viewed 29 April 2016</p>
TV or RADIO PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TITLE (in italics) • YEAR BROADCASTED • SERIES TITLE (if appropriate) • STUDIO/DISTRIBUTOR • DATE BROADCASTED 	<p><i>Digital Dissidents</i>, 2015, television program, <i>Four Corners</i>, ABC TV, Sydney, 26 October 2015.</p>
PRIMARY SOURCE e.g PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PERSON INTERVIEWED • DATE • PLACE OF INTERVIEW 	<p>John Smith, 10 March 2016, Sydney.</p>



PUNCTUATION

Correct and consistent punctuation is **essential to clear, precise communication in your writing.** Punctuation interacts with the grammar of sentences, marking off separate grammatical units within them and always marks the end of the sentence.



COMMA

A **comma (,)** marks the smallest break in a sentence. As a general rule, use commas to aid comprehension and clarity. A comma may indicate a 'soft pause' in a sentence and function to separate words, clauses or ideas within sentences.

Example:

- She required a ruler, a pencil and paper.
- Dead valleys, all nature in them reduced to waste, came alive with the sound of rain.



SEMICOLON

Semicolons separate related independent clauses. They have a similar function to a full stop and may be chosen instead of a full stop when a less forceful pause is desired. A semicolon can also be used in place of a conjunction in what would otherwise be a compound sentence. You should not use a semicolon alongside a conjunction.

Example:

- **Correct:** The man drove the car; he parked it carefully in the garage.
- **Incorrect:** The man drove the car; and he parked it carefully in the garage.



COLON

Colons may be used in several ways. The most common are:

- To introduce a list of items;
- To separate two independent clauses when the second explains or illustrates the first;
- For emphasis in a similar manner to an en dash.



BRACKETS

Brackets (parentheses) can enclose definitions, comments or extra information. Punctuation should be within the brackets.

e.g. *(This applies to all Year 12 students.)*

The hyphen and dashes can be an important device that can avoid ambiguity.

HYPHEN & DASHES

- **Prefixes**

anti- , auto- , bi- , counter- , sub- , un- , pro-

- **Doubled up vowels**

De-emphasise, pre-eminent, re-enter

- **Clarifying meaning**

- Re-cover (cover again) but recover (retrieve)
- Re-creation (creation anew) but recreation (leisure)
- Also, co-author, ex-president.

- **There are two main types of dashes, or rules: the em (—) rule and the en (–) rule.**

The em (—) rule, or dash, has three main uses:

- To signify an abrupt change
- To introduce an explanation
- To set apart parenthetical elements

e.g. *Daniel Kahneman authored a number of psychological theories – the Theory of Cognitive Bias being one of the most famous – which has changed our understanding of perception and cognition.*

The en dash (–) is slightly wider than the hyphen (-) but narrower than the em dash (—). In contrast to the em rule, the main function of which is to separate, the en rule is a linking device:

- It represents a span or range of numbers, dates or time. In this usage the en dash serves the same function as the word "to"

e.g. *You will need to review the content in chapters 8-10.*

- It represents scores or results of contests, e.g. Freshwater beat Manly 28-13 in the last game of the season.
- It represents conflict, connection or direction.

e.g. *The liberal-conservative debate never ends; the Perth-Dubai-Boston flight takes more than a day.*



Ellipses (...) for omitted text with a space either side.

e.g. *"Money gives you freedom ... in your lifestyle," she said.*

ELLIPSES



Forward slash, also known as an oblique or solidus, is used to indicate alternatives.

e.g.
yes/no
male/female

FORWARD SLASH



Use **double quotation marks** for quoted speech, except in headings and in quotes within quotes which take single quotation marks.

e.g. *"When people ask 'Is this important?', I tell them it's vital," he said.*

Use double quotation marks for quoted words:

QUOTATIONS

e.g. *She described the new technique as "a winner".*



PLURALS & APOSTROPHES

Apostrophes are used for **indicating the omission of a letter or possession.**

PLURAL NOUN

Plural nouns are formed by adding “s” at the end of the singular noun. Some nouns require “es”, but an apostrophe is never used. **Example:**

- photo
- photos

POSSESSIVE NOUNS

Apostrophes are added to indicate the possessive case.

For singular nouns, the apostrophe appears before the “s”:

- Jim's car.

For plural nouns that end in “s”, insert the apostrophe after the “s”:

- The students' essays.

For personal names ending in “s”, put the apostrophe after the final “s” or add “s”:

- Keats' poem.
- Jones's bread.

CONTRACTIONS

Apostrophes are added to show that letters have been omitted in combined word forms. **Example:**

- she's (she is)
- we're (we are)
- you'll (you will)
- it's (it is)
- you're (you are)
- can't (cannot)



CAPITALISATION

As a general rule, capitals are **used to distinguish the particular from the general.**

PARTICULAR

I saw Professor Jade Prior.

The School of Veterinary Science.

The NSW Government's policy.

In Term 1 we will study.

GENERAL

I saw one of the professors.

There are three vets in town.

It is up to the state government.

There are four terms in the year.

For titles of books, films, songs and publications, every word is capitalised except articles ("the", "an", etc.), prepositions and conjunctions.

Example:

- War and Peace
- The Unbearable Lightness of Being
- The NSW Government Policy Framework on Work, Health and Safety



PROBLEMATIC WORDS & SPELLING

Clarity of expression in your academic work relies on **choosing the right word** for the right purpose and **avoiding common mistakes**. Below is a simple list of common mistakes to avoid in your academic writing at FSC.

WORDS AND PHRASES – COMMON PROBLEMS

Advice / Advise

Advice – noun:

e.g. The advice she gave was useful.

Advise – verb:

e.g. I advised her to wait.

Tip: 'Ice' is a noun so 'advice' is also a noun. 'Is' is a verb so 'advise' is also a verb. The same rule applies to licence/license and practice/practise.

Affect / Effect

Affect – verb, meaning to influence or produce an effect.

A lot / Alot

Should be two words, but replace with "many".

All ready / Already

All ready means "completely prepared." Already means "previously."

Conscience / Conscious

Conscience is a noun meaning "moral principles." Conscious is an adjective meaning "aware."

Enquire / Inquire

Use "enquire" for asking for information and "inquire" and "inquiry" for more formal investigations:

She enquired about her results.

The Royal Commission will conduct an inquiry into the affair.

Everyone / Every one

Everyone is an indefinite pronoun. Every one means "each individual or thing in a group."

Everyone is going.

Every one of the missing tools was returned.

WORDS AND PHRASES – COMMON PROBLEMS

Its / It is

Its is a possessive pronoun. It's is a contraction of it is.
It's always adorable to watch a cat lick its paw.

Loose / Lose

"Loose" is an adjective meaning slack or unfastened.
"Lose" is a verb meaning to misplace or be defeated.

Lots / Lots of

Informal substitutes for many. Use "many."

Than

A subordinating conjunction used to introduce comparative clauses, as in:

He knows more than I do about the family history.

Also, is used as a preposition, as in:

He knows more than me about the family history.

That / Which

"Which" often provides an alternative to that in reference to things:

I bought tickets at the counter which / that was opposite my table.

The choice between which and that may be influenced by the nature of the clause it introduces – whether it is "restrictive" or "unrestrictive." That apart, the choice is purely stylistic, a matter of their relative weight and the need to vary one's pronouns.

Whose / Who's

Whose is a possessive pronoun. Who's is a contraction of who is.
Whose bike is this? Who's ready for more beef?

Your / You're

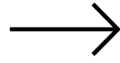
Your is a possessive pronoun. You're is a contraction of "you are."

CLICHÈS, BUZZWORDS AND OVERUSED WORDS AND PHRASES

OVERUSED / CLICHÈ WORDS

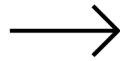
REPLACE WITH / TRY USING

Problematical



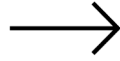
Problematic

Utilisation



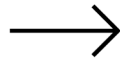
Use

Cutting-edge



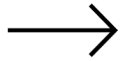
Leading

Window of opportunity



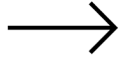
Opportunity

Moving forward



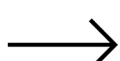
Often redundant – omit

The vast majority of



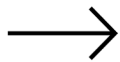
Most

A number of



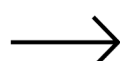
Some, several

At regular intervals



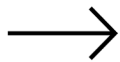
Regularly

During the course of



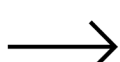
During

At the end of the day



Finally

Absolutely essential



Essential

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT WORDS – STRATEGIES TO BECOME A BETTER SPELLER

READ



Reading widely is one of the best ways to familiarise yourself with words and their spelling. If you see a word you don't know while reading, try to work out what it means from its context (the words around it and the meaning of the paragraph as a whole).

LOOK UP ETYMOLOGY



(History or origin) of the word – Looking up the history or origin of a word can help you understand its spelling. For example, sometimes words that all begin a certain way are related. Also, knowing its language of origin can help with remembering certain rules for spelling it, and understanding its root can help give it meaning and context.

FREQUENT EXPOSURE



Find ways to make the words you struggle to spell part of your daily routine rather than avoiding them. Put subject-specific words you need to spell correctly around your bedroom or study area and look at them daily. Sometimes mnemonics and/or visuals can be helpful in jogging your memory with particularly difficult words.

BUILD YOUR VOCABULARY



Make a conscious effort to build your word banks. Collect words and organise them into groups via subject or function. Find resources that can support your efforts. Talk to your Librarian.



Aloha.

Check in with your Librarian



GRAMMAR & SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

The rules and conventions by which words combine to make meaning. **The structure of the language we use and the description of language as a system.** In describing language, attention is paid to both structure (form) and meaning (function) at the level of the construction of words (graphemes), the word, the sentence and the text. (NESA).

WORD CLASSES OR PART OF SPEECH

There are eight major word classes used in modern English grammar.

ADJECTIVE

The role of the adjective is to describe, define or evaluate an adjacent noun:

a hot day

a French film

an organic compound

In a series of adjectives the order is normally the evaluative first, followed by the descriptive and then the definitive:

a heavy black steel door

One-syllable adjectives take the comparative endings -er and -est, as in:

cool ... cooler ... coolest

Adjectives with three or more syllables are preceded by more and most:

descriptive ... more descriptive ... most descriptive

ADVERB

Adverbs include a wide range of words that modify not only verbs but also adjectives and other adverbs. For example:

Come quickly

Most competent

Very soon

Adverbs can modify a whole sentence. For example, conjuncts such as hence, however, therefore and thus.

The question of climate change has continually been raised in parliament. It is therefore a question that must be addressed by our leaders?

CONJUNCTION

Conjunctions join smaller parts of sentences together. Some make the two parts equal in status (coordinating them), while others effectively give lower grammatical status to what follows (subordinating it). The parts that are joined may consist of phrases or clauses.

Coordinating conjunctions are a small set that includes **and**, **but**, **or** and **nor**.

Subordinating conjunctions are a larger group, indicating such things as:

- **Time** – *after, before, since, when, while*
- **Reason and cause** – *as, because, since, so*
- **Condition** – *if, in case, provided (that), unless, whether*
- **Concession** – *although, though, whereas*

While the use of conjunctions at the start of sentences is sometimes queried, such placement is entirely appropriate and they connect with the meaning of the previous sentence.

DETERMINER

Determiners, which form a more recently recognised word class, include:

- **articles** such as *the, a, an*
- **pronouns** such as *my, your, this, that, some, any*
- **numerals** such as *three, four, third, fourth*

NOUN

Nouns provide the names for tangible and visible things such as *dog, tree, wall*, as well as abstract notions such as *justice, truth, hope*.

Nouns can be counted and made plural, usually formed with -s or -es.

PREPOSITION

Prepositions indicate relationships with nouns (in time, space or abstract worlds of thought):

after breakfast

through the window

under no circumstances

PRONOUN

Pronouns stand in for nouns and noun phrases already mentioned in a text:

- Personal pronouns include *I, you, he, she, we* and *they*, and the impersonal *it* is usually added in with them.
- Possessive forms such as *my, our, his* and *her* are classed as determiners because of their different grammatical role.
- Demonstrative pronouns such as *this, that, these*, and *those*.
- Relative pronouns such as *that, who* and *which*.
- The relative pronoun *whom*, available when the person is the object of the verb or preposition, is increasingly restricted in use.

VERB

Verbs express actions or processes or states of being (*have* and *be*).

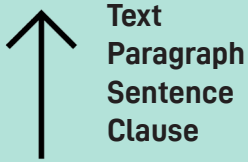
Verbs change their form or add endings to show the past tense.



THE CLAUSE

THE CLAUSE

A clause is one of the most important grammatical structures – it is the basic unit of meaning. Each clause in a text contributes to the overall meaning of a text and contributes to its overall purpose. Clauses form sentences, which in turn form paragraphs – they are the building blocks of a text.



NESA GLOSSARY:

A clause is a complete message or thought expressed in words. The essential component of a clause is a finite verb or verb group, for example '*She played in the sandpit*', '*Duc was running home*'.

- **A main clause** (also known as a principal or independent clause) is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence, though it may be joined with other clauses, for example '*The child came first*'.
- **A subordinate clause** (also known as a dependent clause) is a group of words that cannot stand alone or make complete sense on its own. It needs to be combined with a main clause to form a complete sentence. Subordinate clauses will usually be adjectival or adverbial clauses.
- **An adjectival clause** is a clause that provides information which defines the qualities or characteristics of the person or thing named. It usually begins with a relative pronoun and is sometimes called a relative clause, for example '*The child who had the red top came first*'.
- **An adverbial clause** is a clause that modifies the verb in the main clause, for example '*The child came first because he was the fastest runner*'.
- **An embedded clause** occurs within the structure of another clause, often as a qualifier to a noun group, for example '*The man who came to dinner is my brother*'.



THE CLAUSE

THE SENTENCE

- A sentence is a complete thought. It makes sense by itself. A sentence can be made up of one or more clauses.
- There are three basic types of sentences: simple, compound and complex.
- Understanding how sentences work is a foundational step in becoming a better writer.

SIMPLE SENTENCES:

- A simple sentence contains a single clause only and is known as an independent clause.
- It has two parts: the subject which tells who or what, and the predicate, which tells what they did and contains the verb (all grammatically correct sentences need to contain verbs).
- A simple sentence does not have to be simple in concept – you can convey complex ideas with a simple sentence. It also does not need to be short – some simple sentences can be quite long. The word 'simple' is about the parts of the sentence and how they work together.

Examples of simple sentences: can you identify the subject, predicate and verb?

- The man drove the car.
- The novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a brutal totalitarian state.
- The roots of the plant gather water for photosynthesis.

COMPOUND SENTENCES:

- A compound sentence consists of two independent clauses (simple sentences) joined together by a conjunction. To write a compound sentence you must first understand how simple sentences work.

Examples of compound sentences:

- The man drove the car and he parked it in the garage.
- The novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a brutal totalitarian state yet Orwell offers the reader a glimpse of hope.
- The roots of the plant gather water for photosynthesis so it can survive.
- Common conjunctions used in compound sentences: for, and, nor, but, yet, so (among others).



THE CLAUSE

COMPLEX SENTENCES:

- A complex sentence is composed of an independent clause (simple sentence) and a dependent clause – an 'incomplete' sentence fragment that depends on the rest of the sentence for meaning and grammatical clarity.
- Just as simple sentences are not always short or simplistic in concept, complex sentences are not always long or complicated in their subject matter – the word 'complex' refers to the way the parts of the sentence work together.

Examples of complex sentences (**the independent clause**, the dependent):

- **The man drove the car** because his wife couldn't.
- **The novel Nineteen Eighty-Four depicts a brutal totalitarian state**, resonating with the multiple political and cultural upheavals of the 20th Century.
- **The roots of the plant gather water for photosynthesis** unlike animals who have to eat other living things for energy.

Complex sentences are useful for writing because their structure is flexible – the dependent clause can be placed before the independent clause, retaining the same meaning.

For example:

- Resonating with the multiple political and cultural upheavals of the 20th Century, **the novel Nineteen Eighty-Four depicts a brutal totalitarian state.**

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

Common Problems (and how to fix them)

SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

A sentence fragment is a word group that pretends to be a sentence. To be a sentence, a word group must contain at least one full independent clause (includes a subject and a verb). Sentence fragments should be integrated into a nearby sentence or rewritten as a complete sentence.

- *Australians have come to fear the Ross River virus. Because it is transmitted by the common mosquito.*
- *(Because introduces a subordinate clause, so it cannot stand alone.)*
- *Australians have come to fear the Ross River virus because it is transmitted by the common mosquito.*

RUN-ON SENTENCES

Run-on sentences are independent clauses that have not been joined correctly. An independent clause is a word group that can stand alone in a sentence. When two independent clauses appear in one sentence, they must be joined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet) or occasionally a semicolon, a colon or a dash. The clauses could also be turned into separate sentences or one of the independent clauses could be turned into a subordinate clause and the sentence can be restructured:

- *Air pollution poses risks to all humans it can be deadly for asthma sufferers.*
- *Air pollution poses risks to all humans* (independent clause)
- *it can be deadly for asthma sufferers* (independent clause)
- *Air pollution poses risks to all humans, but it can be deadly for asthma sufferers.* (joined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction)
- *Although air pollution poses risks to all humans, it can be deadly for asthma sufferers.* (Although introduces a subordinate clause).

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

In the present tense, verbs agree with their subjects in number (singular or plural) and in person (first, second, third):

- *The slaughter of elephants for their ivory have caused the elephant population to decline drastically.*
- (The subject is slaughter, not elephants)
- *The slaughter of elephants for their ivory has caused the elephant population to decline drastically.*

PRONOUNS

A pronoun is a word that substitutes for a noun. Many nouns have antecedents, nouns or pronouns to which they refer. A pronoun and its antecedent agree when they are both singular or both plural:

- Dr. James *Brown* finished *his* rounds. (singular)
- The hospital *interns* finished *their* rounds. (plural)

Treat collective nouns as singular unless the meaning is plural.

- The *jury* reached *its* decision. (a group is treated as singular)
- The *jury* put *their* signatures on the document. (the group functions as individuals so treated as plural)

ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

Adjectives modify nouns or pronouns. They usually come before the word they modify; occasionally they function as complements following the word they modify. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs:

- **Adjective** The detective looked *cautious*.
- **Adverb** The detective looked *cautiously* for fingerprints.

The adjective *cautious* describes the detective, the adverb *cautiously* modifies the verb looked.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

What works?

PREFER ACTIVE VERBS

Active verbs express meaning more emphatically than passive.

Passive The pumps were destroyed by a surge of power.

Active A surge of power destroyed the pumps.

Keep in mind that passive verbs have legitimate uses, especially in some scientific writing.

BALANCE PARALLEL IDEAS

Writers often use parallelism to emphasise ideas.

This novel is not to be tossed lightly aside, but to be hurled with great force.

– *Dorothy Parker*

Series Children who study music also learn *confidence, discipline and creativity*.

Lists Renewable energy technologies include the following: *hydroelectric power, solar power, wind energy and geothermal energy*.

Pairs Emily Dickinson's poetry features the use of *dashes* and the *capitalisation of common words*.

Conjunctions Thomas Edison was not only a prolific inventor *but also* a successful entrepreneur.

Comparison It is easier to speak in abstractions *than* to ground one's thoughts in reality.

UNTANGLE MIXED CONSTRUCTIONS

A mixed construction contains sentence parts that do not sensibly fit together due to either grammar or logic.

Mixed For most drivers who have a blood alcohol content of .05 per cent double their risk of causing an accident.

Revised For most drivers who have a blood alcohol content of .05 per cent, the risk of causing an accident is doubled.

EMPHASISE KEY IDEAS

If a sentence buries its major idea in a subordinate construction, readers may not give the idea enough attention.

Theme or topic in a sentence, refers to the starting point in a sentence. In closely argued texts, theme is an important device that can be used for orienting readers. The beginning of a sentence is the most important 'slot'. Whatever is there gets foregrounded for the reader as the ongoing focus of interest.

The all-important first slot in the sentence is often referred to as the **topic or theme**. The rest of the sentence is referred to as the **comment**.

Topic or theme **Comment**

The tone of the work is both intimate and philosophical, revealing a ...

PROVIDE SOME VARIETY

Vary your sentence openings.

Use a variety of sentence structures (simple, compound, complex).

Try inverting the occasional sentence (subject-verb-object).

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

What works?

USE NOUNS

Nominalisation is an important resource for creating abstract texts and for condensing information in texts. Nominalisation is also one of the major differences between spoken and written language.

Nominalisation refers to the process of turning adjectives and verbs into nouns. This is often done in academic writing that requires a formal or impersonal tone; it can also make your writing more concise by packing more information into fewer words.

Nominalising often, but not always, involves the application of a suffix such as -tion, -sion, -ity, -ment. The word 'nominalisation' is itself the nominalised version of the verb 'nominalise'.

Examples of nominalised verbs:

VERB

Educate
Introduce
Clarify
Consume
Engage

NOUN

Education
Introduction
Clarity
Consumption
Engagement

Examples of nominalised adjectives:

ADJECTIVE

Long
Anxious
Happy
Safe
Beautiful

NOUN

Length
Anxiety
Happiness
Safety
Beauty

TEXT CONNECTIVES AND TRANSITION SIGNALS

Text connectives sequence ideas and provide information about logical sequence.

Clarifying	for example, that is, to illustrate, in particular
Showing cause / result	therefore, as a result, accordingly, due to, consequently, thus
Sequencing	first of all, secondly, to summarise, in conclusion
Adding information	in addition, furthermore, moreover, similarly, in the same way
Condition / concession	however, yet, on the contrary, nevertheless, yet
Indicating time	previously, finally, then, next

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