** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Anecdote **

Short account or story

** Example:**
‘Recently my neighbour experience these problems first-hand’

** How it positions:**
Positions readers to respond emotionally. ‘Rings True’ so positions readers to take notice and accept information.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Authority **

Uses the opinion of an expert or authority figure to impress audience or prove a point

** Example:**
‘Professor Tran’s extensive research in this area leaves little doubt that …’

** How it positions:**
Reassures the reader that the writer’s viewpoint is shared by someone with expert knowledge.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Common Sense **

A practical everyday knowledge that is accepted as obvious and therefore ‘true’

** Example:**
‘The Australian Medical Association said it was “common sense” that a ban should be in place’

** How it positions:**
Pressures the reader to agree by implying that anyone who disagrees lacks practical intelligence.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Family Values **

Suggests that traditional family life provides the essential values for a healthy, stable society.

** Example:**
The government needs to make the well-being of families a top priority to ensure parents have the time and resources to care for children.

** How it positions:**
Leads the reader to view traditional nuclear families as most desirable.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Fear and Insecurity **

Suggests that people’s safety, security or freedom are at risk.

** Example:**
‘If we don’t act now we will be in mortal danger’

** How it positions:**
Pressures the reader to feel that solutions are needed urgently so they should agree with the proposals.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Hip-Pocket Nerve **

Threatens our financial well-being because we fear or believe that we are being overcharged.

** Example:**
The government is going to desperately claw money out of purses and wallets.

** How it positions:**
Positions the reader to reject the view of those who want to raise prices, fees etc.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to tradition and Customs **

Appeals to a sense of security based on the belief that rituals and traditions are valuable.

** Example:**
‘Generations of Australians once thrilled to see the circus roll into town. And while urban sprawl is taking its toll, a small band of families keeps the magic alive.’

** How it positions:**
Encourages the reader to resist change and to feel that links with the past should be retained.

** USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE **

** Appeal to Loyalty and Patriotism **

Assumes a commitment to our group, a love of our country, that old ways of doing things should be highly valued.

** Example:**
‘Don’t let your community down—you owe it a helping hand so it can help you in the future.’

** How it positions:**
Positions the reader to agree with (and possible take part in) actions that will benefit the nation or the group.
**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Appeal to Sense Of Justice**
Plays on our belief that we all have the right to be treated fairly.

Example:
‘the death penalty is the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment, and a violation of fundamental human rights’

How it positions:
Positions the reader to agree that ‘the punishment should fit the crime’.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Attacks and Praise**
Attacks belittle a group or individual
Praise presents a person or group as outstanding

Example:
‘the sorry state of the Murray River is not just a consequence of drought, but of more than a century of dysfunctional management.’

How it positions:
Attack: makes us to think badly of the person/group
Praise: makes us admire the person / group

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Clichés**
Overused phrases that a wide range of readers can recognise.

Example:
‘Let’s hope he turns over a new leaf’

How it positions:
Reassure the reader through a family expression that can position the reader to accept an idea because they are lulled into an uncritical mindset.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Colourful Language**
Creates a strong image through unusual and striking words, especially adjectives.

Example:
Alas, not even the lure of ogling furry creatures—or brawny life savers—could convince Laura Bust to change her mind.

How it positions:
Creates a memorable image and catches the reader’s interest.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Connotations and Loaded Words**
Meanings associated with or implied by words, as opposed to their literal or ‘dictionary’ meaning.

Example:
‘A recent report claims that Aussie worker is a myth. While it stopped short of saying the Aussie bludger is back, it claims data shows working hours getting longer is a myth.

How it positions:
Associated meanings of words arouse feeling and attitudes that position the reader.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Emotional Appeals**
Any appeals to the emotions that arouse hopes, fears, desires and so on.

Example:
‘there are plans for a national helpline. This should be fast-tracked. In the desperate, late-night hours, a prompt reply could make the difference between life and death.’

How it positions:
The reader reacts emotionally to agree with the writer’s viewpoint before reason comes into play.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Evidence**
The use of facts and figures to provide rational, scientific ‘proof’ as the basis for a point of view.

Example:
‘Federal funding for private school will increase from $5.8 billion to $7.5 billion over the next 5 years.’

How it positions:
The reader views the writer’s argument as more convincing because it appears to be objective and reliable.

**USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE**

**Exaggeration, Overstatement and Hyperbole**
Presents an extreme view of a situation for dramatic impacts.

Example:
‘With the Greens holding the balance of power, whole industries would be shut down and workers thrown on the scrap heap.’

How it positions:
Exaggeration positions a reader to respond emotionally and so be more likely to accept or reject a viewpoint.
**Using Language To Persuade**

**Generalisation**

A sweeping statement that suggests what is true for some is true for most or all.

**Example:**

‘Today’s young royals are rich, famous and fond of partying.’

**How it positions:**

Powerful because appeals to commonly held beliefs, prejudice and views.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Graphs and Diagrams**

Facts and figures presented in a visual form.

**Example:**

![Graph Example]

**How it positions:**

Give a quickly understood picture of the ‘facts’ that support a viewpoint in an article or similar—help to persuade and position the reader to agree.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Inclusive Language**

Uses ‘we’, ‘our’, ‘us’, etc. to include the readers in the same group as the writer.

**Example:**

‘We all know that…’

**How it positions:**

The reader is positioned to agree with the writer because it appeals to their desire to belong to the group or plays on their fears of being “left out” or regarded as an outsider.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Irony**

A feature of language that allows the writer to say one thing when their real meaning is the opposite.

**Example:**

‘We’re running out of water and the government wants another swimming centre—that’s just what we need.’

**How it positions:**

The reader is positioned to share in the writer’s ridicule (and rejection) of an idea or object.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Metaphor and Simile**

Compare two different things, suggesting a similarity. Simile uses ‘as if’ or ‘like’; a metaphor does not.

**Example:**

‘The team was about as effective as a walking corpse.’

**How it positions:**

Create a striking and memorable image, often with emotional impact than can influence the reader’s viewpoint.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Pun**

A play on a word that suggests a double meaning.

**Example:**

‘Bombers hit target after slow start’

**How it positions:**

Grabs the reader’s interest and attention, especially through the use of humour.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Reason and Logic**

Used to link ideas and develop an argument supporting the writer’s point of view.

**Example:**

‘If we had single-bench seating on either side of the train carriage we could easily accommodate more people’

**How it positions:**

Makes you accept the writer’s viewpoint as objective.

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**Using Language To Persuade**

**Repetition**

Using the same word or phrase and idea several times to add emphasis.

**Example:**

‘It’s a simple choice, a simple plan, a simple solution’

**How it positions:**

Increases the impact of the main point or key term and so engages the reader’s attention.
**Rhetorical Question**
A question with an implied but unstated answer.

**Example:**
‘How can we be expected to abandon our cars in favour of public transport when the system is in such despair?’

**How it positions:**
Suggests that the ‘answer’ is self-evident and therefore the reader must agree with it.

**Alliteration**
Repetition of a consonant, especially at the start of words.

**Example:**
‘Australian households world’s worst at water use’

**How it positions:**
Gains attention; adds emphasis; often in headlines.

**Tone**
The mood or feeling of the language used by a writer or speaker.

**Examples:**
Serious, mocking, comic, angry, calm, concerned, sarcastic, optimistic, flippant, amusing, bitter, flamboyant, sombre, fearful, flushed, excitable, wistful, hopeful, sarcastic, outraged, calm, bemused, belligerent, aggressive, condescending

- A shift in tone can have a persuasive technique Style
- Two broad categories: serious or comic

**Style**
Style is the way in which language is used, the way in which words are combined to form phrases and sentences

**Examples:**
Formal, informal, colloquial or slang, simple and direct or poetic and descriptive, literary, informative, plain, colourful, simple, discursive, colloquial, chatty.

**Main Contention**
Is the writer’s viewpoint on an issue

**Example:**
If homework has no value in the younger years, it’s time children were allowed to get on with being children once they got home.

- Usually stated in the first few paragraphs
- It is the writer’s main point in a nutshell

**Point of View / Perspective**
Is where the writer stands on the issue, and the ideas that they support and reject.

- Broader than the main contention

**Colours**
An important element of almost all images and can cause impact.

- White suggests purity
- Green suggests nature
- Red suggests danger
- Black suggests seriousness

**Photographs**
Can add powerful emotive impact that can persuade the reader

- Highlights an extreme aspect of the issue
- Shows expression of people to convey an emotion
- Shows people in familiar contexts
- Presents a landscape
- Sets up other ways to persuade the reader to agree
**Illustrations**

Allow us to ‘see’ information and understand it more easily.

- Maps or diagrams
- Graphs presenting numerical information
- A drawing of a person where no photograph is available

**Cartoons**

Present a clear point of view on an issue

Cartoons will employ many different persuasive techniques to get their point across:

- Puns
- Exaggeration
- Irony
- Personal attack

**Language Analysis Steps—Step 1**

Read carefully and take notes

- What is the writer saying?
- How it is said?
- Why is it persuasive?

**Language Analysis Steps—Step 2**

Prepare your ideas for writing

- Rewrite the main contention in your own words
- List the supporting points or arguments
- Select the persuasive words, phrases and techniques
- Select some quotations to be used as evidence

**Language Analysis Steps—Step 3**

Plan your structure

- Introduction
- Body paragraphs—Using T E E A L
- Conclusion

**Language Analysis Steps—Step 4 and 5**

Write your language analysis / Edit then Proofread

- Use the plan you have constructed and stick to it
- Include the following: type of text studies, tone, main contentions, persuasive techniques and strategies, linked paragraphs, strong conclusions, clear expression, spelling and grammar and vary your sentence structure and vocabulary

**Sentence Starters**

**Main contention**

- The writer asserts that...
- Contending that ..., the writer then ...
- The author quickly establishes the main contention that ...
- The writer’s claim that ... encapsulates the main contention
- In an inflammatory tone, the writer declares that...

**Point of View / Viewpoint Position 1**

- The point of view presented by [Name of writer] is...
- Adopting a controversial position, the writer argues that...
- Arguing from a position of principle, the writer asserts that...
- The position is further elaborated by the writer when...
- A contradictory point of view is established when/by
USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Point of View / Viewpoint Position 2

• Deliberately shifting the main argument to...
• Conversely, the writer argues that ...
• Confirming the perception that...
• The use of ... positions the reader to...
• Reference to... signals the writer’s viewpoint that...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Tone 1

• The tone established by the writer is sombre and intended to highlight...
• Designed to provoke a reaction from the audience, the tone is...
• In a mocking tone, the writer...
• The author’s tone elicits sympathy for their position by...
• Using colourful language, the writer establishes a ... tone designed to...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Tone 2

• Provocative in language and dismissive in tone, the writer argues strongly against...
• The reverent tone created through the use of...
• The tone shifts as the writer goes on to demonstrate that...
• Delivered in a forthright manner, the author’s opinion...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Using Visual Material

• The impact of the graph is...
• The photograph sends a clear message that...
• Placed prominently on the page, the photograph positions the reader to...
• The grim humour of the cartoon provokes a ...
• The cartoon highlights... through ...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Persuasive Techniques 1

• A range of persuasive techniques has been used to...
• Reminding the reader to past events triggers associations of...
• By introducing a controversial example, the writer positions us to...
• The use of colourful language predisposes us to...
• When the writer highlights conflict within the debate, the reader is influenced to...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Persuasive Techniques 2

• References to ... (experts/scientific findings/ statistics, etc) influences the reader to...
• The use of a stereotypical example contributes to the effect of...
• Highly emotive language, for example..., influences us to accept...
• Citing example after example, the writer seeks to convince us that...
• The deliberately explosive opening pressures us to accept...

USING LANGUAGE TO PERSUADE

Sentence Starters

Persuasive Techniques 3

• Reference to the well-known authority of .. Sways us to accept that ...
• Substantiating the point with many statistics is designed to add legitimacy to the writer’s position that...
• The writer establishes that ... by deriding the opposing viewpoint to ... the reader’s (response/feelings/attitude and so on)
### Using Language to Persuade

#### Sentence Starters

**Persuasive Techniques 4**

- In associating the ... with ... the author aims to instil trust in his position.
- With a series of rhetorical questions the author aims to appeal to...
- Having shown the advantages of his solution, the author briefly mentions the disadvantages but dismisses them as being...
- Citing extensive data builds the credibility of...

**Persuasive Techniques 5**

- The writer flatters supporters of the idea by referring to them as...
- Through repetition of the word ... the writer seeks to coerce the reader into believing that...

#### Media Types

**Front Page News Story—Tabloid**

- Short and simple
- Very large headlines and photos to attract attention
- Often sensational and dramatic to attract buyers
- Usually presents one viewpoint only

**Front Page News Story—Broadsheet**

- Informative
- Large headlines but not huge because usually 2-3 articles on front page
- Longer text with more detail and information
- Sentences more complex
- Presents a viewpoint but tends to be more subtle or less sensational

**Opinion Articles—Tabloid**

- Openly persuasive
- Tend to publish more political-opinion and issues-based articles
- Tend to use more evidence and quote authoritative references
- More sophisticated and complex language for a mainly professional readership

**Opinion Articles—Broadsheet**

- Openly persuasive
- Tend to publish more political-opinion and issues-based articles
- Tend to use more evidence and quote authoritative references
- More sophisticated and complex language for a mainly professional readership

**Letters to the Editor—Tabloid**

- Deliberately persuasive
- Usually gives one viewpoint on an issue
- Short and to the point—succinct
**Using Language To Persuade**

**Media Types**

**Letters to the Editor—Broadsheet**
- Openly persuasive
- Vary in length
- Can include single viewpoint or more balanced views on an aspect of an issue

**Editorials—Tabloid**
- Openly persuasive
- Often suggests what the public ‘should think’ on the issue
- Short and to the point

**Editorials—Broadsheet**
- Openly persuasive
- Expresses one viewpoint strongly with evidence and reason
- Language and sentence structures can be sophisticated; tone reasonable and considered
- Often gives a moral position for public to consider or adopt

**Feature Articles—Tabloid**
- Often presents one viewpoint persuasively—can be subtle
- Use several images
- High-quality writing
- Use story-telling techniques to engage reader

**Feature Article—Broadsheet**
- Usually preset a balanced viewpoint but can present one side in depth
- Openly or subtly persuasive
- Longer articles
- High-quality writing

**Sample Issue**

**Climate Change**

**Major Causes**
- Global warming
- Greenhouse gases
- Over-consumption
- Deforestation

**Solutions**
- Carbon trading
- Clean energy
- Biodiversity
- Consuming less, e.g. fewer cars, electrical goods and so on

**Point of View**

A wide range of viewpoints generally arise from one of the various combinations of the following:
- Individuals with direct experience and specialist knowledge
- Individuals with strong personal and political views
- Stakeholders who want to ensure that their interests are taken into account
- Certain groups and individuals who want to draw attention to matters overlooked
- The political agenda of the specific newspaper
Sample Issue

Climate Change Effects
- Rising temperatures
- Drought—water shortages
- Melting ice caps and rising sea levels
- Increasing tropical diseases
- Extreme weather events
- Endangered flora and fauna
- Changing rainfall patterns

The Six Key Questions When you are Developing your Point of View

1) What’s my contention?
2) Who is my audience?
3) What’s my form?
4) What tone will I use?
5) Have I considered the counter-arguments?
6) Am I adopting a persona?

Contention
Where do I stand on the issue—Why?
The main contention should be phrased as a firm statement and is the foundation of your argument.
Hint: You’re much more likely to persuade other to agree with you if you can show that you know what you are writing or speaking about. So stay informed!

Audience
Who am I addressing my argument to?
Hint: think about the following audiences: a group of Year 7 students; new migrants from a war-torn country; prisoners in high security wing; and residents in a retirement village. Each of these would respond differently to a given point of view on an issue; they would be also be persuaded by diverse modes of delivery.

Form
Am I writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper, an editorial, a commentary, an essay, an open letter, or a speech?
Hint: It is important to be familiar with the structure of a range of forms so that you can create one under pressure.

Tone
What personal feelings will I display about this issue?
Tone is essentially the mood or feeling conveyed by the writing, so it is a very good way to show your readers or listeners what your attitude is to the issue.
Hint: Avoid being abusive or defamatory. There is a fine line between criticism and abuse.

Counter-Arguments
There is never only one point of view on an issue.
Hint: You may like to deal with your counter-arguments early in your piece, so that readers are left with your point of view in their minds. Alternatively, you can address counter-arguments towards the end after establishing your own position and argument strongly.

Persona
You do not have to write from your own perspective. Even if you do present your own personal view on an issue, you can express it by adopting an imaginary persona and writing or speaking as though you are that person.
Essential Elements Checklist Part 1

- Show that you have a thorough knowledge of the issue and understand the main argument around it.
- Develop your argument logically and coherently.
- Substantiate your argument with up-to-date evidence.
- Acknowledge your sources of evidence (quotations, facts, statistics) and give publication or broadcast details where relevant.

Essential Elements Checklist Part 2

- Consider the counter-arguments to your position, state them clearly and indicate why you reject these alternative views.
- Demonstrate your fair-mindedness and the fact that you have thoughtfully researched the issue from several perspectives.

Exam Revision—Addressing the Criteria

Show that you can read, understand and respond to the ideas and view presented.
Demonstrate an understanding of some of the persuasive strategies used to present a point of view and position readers to agree.
Show how the writer/s’ language is designed to have an impact on the audience through particular word choices and/or visual features.
Make effective use of an appropriate vocabulary to discuss the ways that language is used to persuade.
Use clear and accurate language.

Exam Revision—The Three Main Points of Attack

- Developing a reading strategy that identifies key features of persuasive language use.
- Showing HOW language is used to persuade the reader/viewer to agree with a viewpoint.
- Practising language analysis.