Text Types

Purpose, Structure, and Language Features

Locally Assessed Languages Continuers Level

The context, purpose and audience of the text, and whether the text will be spoken or written, will determine the language chosen. Levels of language, language features, language structures, conventions, tone, etc., are factors that need to be considered when constructing a text.

In their teaching, learning, and assessment programs, teachers should introduce students to a wide range of text types. Text types for receptive use in teaching, learning, and assessment are not prescribed.

The table below is presented as a guide for those subject outline text types that have been identified for productive use in the external examination at Stage 2.

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| *Text Type* | *Purpose* | *Structure* | *Language Features* |
| Article | * To sustain an argument * To describe * To inform, to persuade, to amuse or entertain | * Titles/headings * Development of ideas/argument * Sequencing and linking of ideas * Statement of conclusion/advice | * Range of tenses * Linking words * Language can be descriptive, informative evaluative, or persuasive depending on context. |
| Conversation or Dialogue | * To exchange information, ideas, opinions, and experiences * To maintain and sustain communication | * Exchange of opening salutations * Question/statement followed by response * Interaction is sustained | * Question forms * Strategies to maintain conversation (fillers) * Interjections * Sentences may not be complete * Language level will depend on context and relationship between participants |
| Diary or journal entry | * To record personal reflections or experiences | * Date/place/time (as appropriate) * Chronological or stream of consciousness | * First person * Abbreviated words/sentences * Subjective/informal language |
| Discussion (spoken, written, or online) | * To give different points of view * To examine issues from more than one perspective * To make recommendations based on evidence * To sustain an argument | * Presentation of main idea in introduction * Evidence/data to support main idea * Interaction between participants to clarify understandings * Conclusion/reiteration of main idea * Balanced presentation | * Linking words to sequence ideas logically * Qualifying words (e.g. usually, probably) * Persuasive, descriptive, or personal language depending on context * Comparative expressions |
| Email | * To inform * To request * To remind * To seek a response | * Conventions (email addresses) * Specific details without elaboration * Salutations and endings | * Abbreviated words and sentences * Simple language structures |
| Interview (e.g. written magazine interview, or script of an interview – radio, podcast, television) | * To seek and convey information, views, opinions | * Question and response form | * Question words * Link words |
| Invitation | * To invite in written form | * Layout conventions * Statement of facts, detail of event * Details for responding | * Abbreviated language * Formal or informal languages * Words that tell when, where, with whom |
| Letter – Formal  *(note: the degree of formality required is determined by the grammatical expectations of the subject outline and individual language letter writing conventions)* | * To communicate in writing in formal contexts * To request information * To lodge a complaint * To express an opinion | * Salutations * Letter conventions (layout, address, date, etc) * Logical and cohesive sequence of ideas | * Use of full sentences and paragraphs * More complex sentence structure * Objective language * Use of formulaic expressions |
| Letter – Informal | * To communicate in writing with acquaintances, friends, family * To inform, amuse | * Salutations * Letter conventions (layout, address, date, etc) * Logical and cohesive sequence of ideas | * Frequent colloquial language * Subjective language |
| Note, message | * To inform * To request * To instruct * To remind | * General statement, description, procedure * May be in point form | * Succinct * Abbreviated words and sentences * Lack of descriptive detail * Frequent use of colloquial language |
| Blog | * To inform * To reflect * To seek a response, to interact | * Personal thoughts, online journal * Discrete entries (“posts”), usually with most recent at the top * Often themed on a single subject * Reflections on idea * (interactive – comments from other users) | * Abbreviated words and sentences * Simple language structures * Linking words to sequence ideas logically * Qualifying words (e.g. usually, probably) * Persuasive, descriptive or personal language depending on context |
| Postcard | * To provide information * To retell events | * Salutations * Brief description or message * Formulaic ending | * Descriptive language * Incomplete sentences * Abbreviated words * Colloquial expression * Clichés * Personal impressions |
| Report | * To classify and/or describe * To organise facts * To draw conclusions | * General statement or classification * Description * Logical progression | * Supporting evidence (e.g. statistics, examples) * Factual * Usually present tense * Language specific to the topic |
| Review | * To respond to a text/stimulus * To summarise, analyse, or interpret a text and to assess its value | * Describe context of text or work * Describe the text or work * Judgment or evaluation of text or work | * Descriptive language * More complex structures with frequent abstract language * Words that express judgment * Possible comparisons * Expressions of aesthetic nature |
| Script of a speech or talk | * To communicate ideas, opinions, and attitudes * To entertain * To persuade * To welcome * To thank | * Introductory statement of purpose * Explanation or sequence of events or presentation of argument * Concluding remarks | * Choice of expressions to engage the audience * Descriptive words * A range of tenses * Subjective language * Use of slogans or catch phrases * Use of humour and anecdotes |
| Story or narrative | * To entertain, amuse, or instruct | * Series of events presented in logical progression * Resolution/conclusion * May contain a series of complications | * Time words used to connect events * Use of action words * Description of characters and settings |

Text types indicated with two asterisks are those that students will be required only to fill in.  
Form \*\* Personal profile or curriculum vitae \*\*  
List \*\* Survey or questionnaire \*\*  
Map, plan chart or table \*\* Timetable \*\*

# Kinds of Writing Locally Assessed Languages Continuers Level

Students should be familiar with and able to produce the following kinds of writing: informative, imaginative, narrative, personal, persuasive, evaluative, and descriptive.

*Adapted from Main Characteristics of Different Kinds of Writing, Study Design, LOTE, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority*

The following descriptions outline the main characteristics of different kinds of writing. They are intended as a guide only; students would not be expected to include all aspects in their writing. Authentic writing will require using a combination of styles.

Informative writing:

* Aims to convey information from the writer to the reader as clearly, completely and accurately as possible.
* Usually uses objective style and impersonal expressions, although the writer may use an informal style to establish a relationship of ‘friendly helper’ with the reader.
* Normally has no particular point of view to convey; if a point of view is involved, the writing becomes either persuasive or evaluative.
* Generally uses facts, examples, explanations, analogies and sometimes statistical information, quotations and references as evidence.
* Chooses language, structure and sequence to make the message clear and unambiguous, so the sequencing of information is usually logical and predictable.
* Probably uses few adjectives, adverbs and images, except as examples or analogies in explanation.

*Purpose: The author is conveying objective information.*

Imaginative writing:

* Creates visual and/or emotional appeal.
* Usually creates a strong sense of context (physical surroundings and atmosphere) and situation.
* Normally includes description (person, place, emotion, atmosphere), so careful selection of language such as adjectives and adverbs (or their equivalents) is important.
* Uses techniques such as variation in sentence length, juxtaposition of different sentence length, careful control of structure and sequencing, to add to the overall effect by creating the desired atmosphere or conveying the required emotion.
* May break normal sequencing for added impact, such as in a flashback or in a final disclosure which puts a different interpretation on preceding passages.

*Purpose: The author is creating a piece of fiction designed to entertain, amuse, or create an impression, picture, or feeling in the reader.*

Descriptive writing:

* Creates a vivid impression of a person, place, object or event; a particular mood, atmosphere; vivid pictures of characters.
* Engages a reader’s attention; brings writing to life.
* Includes precisely chosen vocabulary with evocative adjectives and adverbs, similes and metaphors.
* Is focused, interesting and compelling.
* Uses sensory description – what is heard, seen, smelt, felt, tasted; with sensory details to increase the reader’s experience.
* Uses active verbs and varied sentences; structured and ordered.
* Creates a dominant impression.
* Evokes feelings and attitudes – connotative language.
* Makes comparisons – similes, metaphors, personification.
* Develops the experience, focusing on key details, powerful verbs and precise nouns.

*Purpose: The author is painting a picture through words to make the reader see what they have seen.*

Narrative writing:

* Tells a story in chronological order.
* Entertains, to gain and hold a readers’ interest.
* Teaches or informs; changes attitudes/social opinions.
* Sequences: setting, characters, initiating event, conflict/goal, events, resolution, theme; series of actions.
* May set up problems to be resolved.
* Is imaginary or factual; has characters with defined personalities/identities.
* Dialogue often included.
* Tense may change.
* Descriptive language to enhance the story.
* May include complication involving the main character; conflict; points of view.

*Purpose: The author is telling a story/retelling events to entertain or to teach.*

Personal writing:

* Uses a personal voice.
* Establishes a relationship/intimacy/empathy between the writer and the reader.
* Usually employs first and/or second person; subjective; informal, familiar style/register; often includes emotive language.
* Emphasises ideas, opinions, feelings and impressions, rather than factual, objective information.
* May use the act of writing to help the author understand and unravel his/her own feelings or ideas.
* May, in certain contexts, use contracted language, such as is used in speech.

*Purpose: The author is conveying something personal to the reader.*

Persuasive writing:

* Aims to convert the reader to a particular point of view or attitude in order to convince him or her to act or respond in a certain way.
* Manipulates the reader’s emotions and opinions in order to achieve a specific purpose, that is, to achieve a desired outcome or effect which is important to and selected by the writer.
* Persuasive techniques chosen are strongly influenced by the nature of the target audience; that is, the language (vocabulary, sentence structures, style/register), structure and sequencing of the piece are framed with the particular audience and purpose in mind.
* Requires choice of the best word (with the precise shade of meaning and overtones of approval/disapproval, virtue/vice etc.), so range of vocabulary and dictionary technique are important.
* Aims in certain instances (for example, advertisements) to keep the target audience unaware of being manipulated and adopts an appearance of objectivity and rationality by using indirect, subtle techniques; confidential, intimate register.
* Sometimes uses exaggeration, extravagant language, and humour to create a conspiratorial relationship between the writer and the reader.
* Often uses the second person for direct address and appeal.
* Sometimes employs direct speech and questions to intensify the relationship with the audience.
* May use techniques such as the use of technical or scientific language and superlatives or quantitative statements to lend authority to the content.

*Purpose: The author is taking a stance and trying to persuade the reader.*

Evaluative writing:

* Aims to weigh two or more items/ideas in order to convince the reader rationally and objectively that a particular point of view is correct.
* Aims to reach a conclusion acceptable to an unbiased reader through the logical presentation and discussion of facts and ideas.
* Presents two or more important aspects of an issue or sides of an argument and discusses these rationally and objectively; using evidence to support the contrasting sides or alternatives.
* Uses objective style; appeals to reason not emotion; creation of an impression of balance and impartiality is essential.
* Often includes expressions of cause, consequence, opposition and concession.

*Purpose: The author is giving a balanced view of both sides of a case.*