



An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna

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# Junior Cycle English

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# Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

# Rationale

Language gives students the opportunity to access the understanding, knowledge and skills to promote their personal growth and effective participation in society.

The study of language enables students to build on their learning in primary school and further develop their skills and enjoyment in using it effectively. Through language learning and use, students discover information, develop thinking, and express ideas and feelings. They learn about language, and how to use it well in all areas of their studies.

Respect is shown for students' competence in their home language and the community characteristics of their language use together with their literacy practices outside of school.

Learning about language in texts, including digital texts, is important to social development and as part of this process students develop the competence and confidence needed to meet the demands of school, employment, further education and life. The knowledge and command of language are also essential to their contributions to political, social and cultural life and as thoughtful and active citizens.

As learners, it is important that they become aware of where and how they are improving in their use of language and conscious of where further improvement is necessary. As a route to this knowledge they develop greater competence in the conventions of spelling, punctuation procedures, sentence structures and text organisation.

Students are actively involved in the integrated skills of oral language, reading and writing and in discussing and comparing a wide variety of texts and forms of English. As study is a social activity as well as a personal one, students engage with the skills and opportunities of working in groups to achieve appropriate language goals.

The ability to appreciate literature from different cultures is important in developing the whole person and to this end students read literature with insight and imagination not only in class but privately as well.

Finally, as their mastery of language grows, so too will the opportunities to enjoy their world and give of their best to society now, and in the future. They will fully appreciate their success in language when pleasure and growth in it continue in their lives long after school is done.

English in junior cycle aims to develop students' knowledge of language and literature, to consolidate and deepen their literacy skills and make them more self-aware as learners.

More specifically it encourages all students:

- to be creative through language and to gain enjoyment and continuing personal growth from English in all its forms
- to develop control over English using it and responding to it with purpose and effect through the interconnected literacy skills of oral language, reading and writing
- to engage personally with and think critically about an increasingly broad range of spoken, written and multimodal texts
- to develop an informed appreciation of literature through personal encounters with a variety of literary texts
- to use their literacy skills to manage information needs, and find, use, synthesise, evaluate and communicate information using a variety of media
- to gain an understanding of the grammar and conventions of English and how they might be used to promote clear and effective communication.

# Overview: Links

Tables 1 to 3 on the following pages show how Junior Cycle English is linked to central features of learning and teaching in junior cycle.

**Table 1: Links between Junior Cycle English and the Statements of Learning**

## STATEMENTS OF LEARNING

The statement	Examples of relevant learning
SOL 1. The student communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1	Students will participate in a wide range of language activities to develop their oral and written communication in a wide variety of contexts and forms.
SOL 3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts	Students will engage critically with texts in a wide range of forms, to understand and respond to their content, and to enrich their own spoken and written output.
SOL 4. The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved	Learning from artistic works with which they engage, students will create a range of texts in narrative and aesthetic forms.
SOL 6. The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives	Students will encounter diversity through wide reading and will learn to appreciate the significance of diversity through discussion and reflection.
SOL 16. The student describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships	Students will learn—through the study of texts produced by others and through the creation of texts of their own—the significance of patterns and structures and the centrality of relationships in expression and communication.
SOL 23. The student brings an idea from conception to realisation	Students will engage in planning and development, by themselves and in collaboration with others, to bring an extended piece of work to fruition over time.
SOL 24. The student uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner	Students will engage critically with texts in a wide range of formats. They will explore the potential of technology to create texts that are rich in variety of content and presentation.

**Table 2: Links between Junior Cycle English and Literacy and Numeracy****LITERACY AND NUMERACY**

Growth in language and literacy are core concerns of English. Students will develop their literacy skills as they become actively involved in the skills of oral language, reading and writing.

In oral language they will engage in purposeful discussion of texts, ideas and dispositions and in so doing develop their own listening and speaking skills.

They will develop their reading skills by encountering a variety of texts which they learn to read with fluency, understanding and competence using a broad range of comprehension strategies.

In further developing their literacy, students will engage in purposeful planning, drafting and writing in a variety of different genres as they show increasing awareness of audience and style.

In their general literacy progression, students will deepen their critical awareness of language, leading to rich enquiry into texts in all their forms. As a result of this awareness they will learn how language works, helping them to make informed language choices to express themselves and to find, use, and communicate information and ideas.

In English, students develop their numeracy skills as they gather information through questionnaires, surveys and personal records, presenting their findings in different formats and to different audiences. They learn to recognise language patterns (e.g. rhythm and metre in poetry) and patterns in literary texts (e.g. time and space in stage drama) and in non-literary texts.

**Table 3: Links between Junior Cycle English and other Key Skills****OTHER KEY SKILLS**

<b>Key skill</b>	<b>Key skill element</b>	<b>Student learning activity</b>
Being creative	Imagining	Students will engage frequently with literary narratives and will compose imaginative narratives of their own.
Communicating	Listening and expressing myself Discussing and debating	The English classroom is a place of talk and discussion. Students enjoy frequent opportunities to debate, to adopt a point of view and defend it. They learn to communicate by writing in a range of forms and for many purposes.
Managing information and thinking	Gathering, recording, organising and evaluating information and data	Students will plan for and conduct an investigation into a chosen contemporary issue, leading to the production and presentation of a report.
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Students will manage the development of a portfolio of texts, which they will build up over time. Through this they will learn to see writing as a process to learn about and refine.
Staying well	Being confident	In oral language, reading and writing students will develop a sense of audience and purpose through the opportunities they will have to present to and for others.
Working with others	Co-operating	Students will collaborate with others to explore and discuss views on a range of texts and contexts.

# Overview: Course

The specification for Junior Cycle English focuses on the development of language and literacy in and through the **three strands: Oral Language, Reading, and Writing**. The elements of each of these strands place a focus on communicating, on active engagement with and exploration of a range of texts, and on acquiring and developing an implicit and explicit knowledge of the shape and structures of language. There is a strong focus on the oral dimension of language, including the vital importance of **learning through oral language**. This makes the English classroom an active space, a place of 'classroom talk' where learners explore language and ideas as much through thinking and talking as through listening and writing. While the learning outcomes associated with each strand are set out separately here, this should not be taken to imply that the strands are to be studied in isolation. The student's language learning is marked by a fully integrated experience of oral language, reading and writing.

To give further emphasis to the integrated nature of language learning the outcomes for each strand are grouped by reference to three **elements**:

- Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer<sup>1</sup>
- Exploring and using language
- Understanding the content and structure of language

In its strands, elements and outcomes, the specification for Junior Cycle English mirrors the specification for the integrated language curriculum for primary schools. This affords a significant continuity of experience for language learners when they make the transition from primary to post-primary school. This is supported by the development of a sub-set of learning outcomes for First Year to take account of and to provide for continuity with learning in primary education.

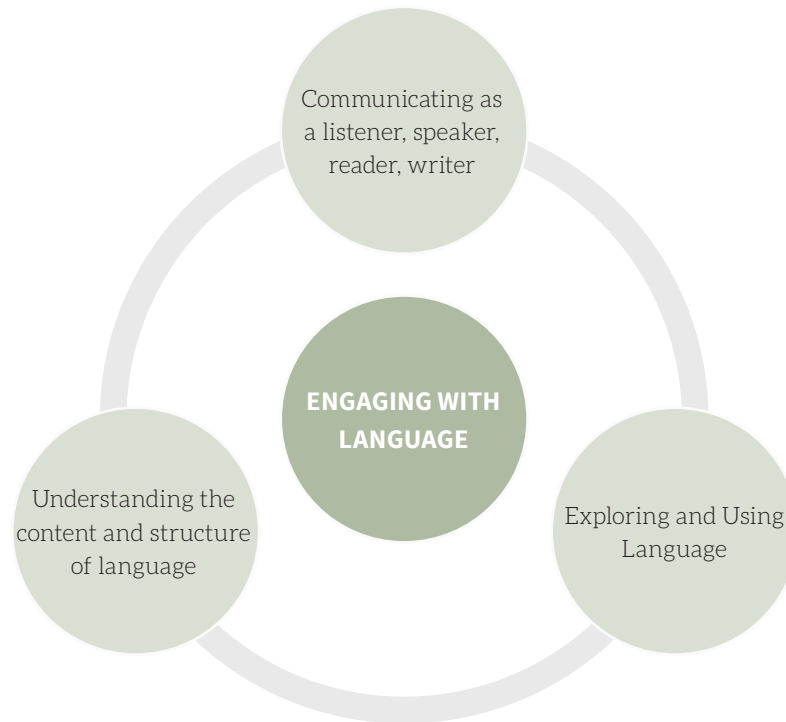
Significantly, too, there is strong continuity with English in senior cycle. This is especially evident in the learning outcomes which emphasise the students' growing sense of the writing process, their awareness of audience and purpose, their development of genre awareness, and their growing ability to make links, however informal, between texts they study.

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<sup>1</sup> **Developing communicative relationships through language** is the title of this element in the integrated primary language curriculum where the aim is *to develop children's knowledge and understanding of how we build and communicate meaning together, in communicative relationships, as givers and receivers of information.*



**Figure 1: The elements of English showing the components as interactive and interdependent**



The elements describe a three-fold focus for language learning as a systematic development of communication skills, learning language by exploring and doing, and building up an understanding and awareness of how language works across a wide range of contexts.

Engagement with text/s is central to the development of language and literacy and it is important to recognise that the term *text* applies to more than communication in written formats. All products of language use—oral, written, visual, or multimodal—can be described as texts. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication, such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and the spoken word. It is essential that over the three years of junior cycle students have a wide and varied experience of texts that stimulate, engage, inspire and challenge them.

Junior Cycle English has been designed for a minimum of 240 hours of engagement across the three years of junior cycle. In planning a course the teacher will take account of the need to provide a wide range of opportunities for students to have meaningful and stimulating language experiences across a broad range of contexts. For example, a year's work might be organised around themes and/or central texts with other texts studied in broad contextual relation to them. A course would be expected to include many opportunities for students to create their own texts in response to those studied and as part of their general language and literacy development.

It should be remembered that the language skills being developed by students in junior cycle English are for the most part unconstrained skills that need to be frequently revisited and reinforced. Therefore, care will be needed to find a balance between choosing a sufficiently broad range of texts and providing learners with a variety of language experiences and opportunities to develop the range of skills envisioned in the learning outcomes. In support of this aim two lists of texts will be provided:

- as a guide for first year an indicative list of texts from which teachers and students may choose **or** substitute text/s of their own choosing
- for second and third year there is a prescribed body of texts from which teachers must select, although they may add to these lists if they wish.

The following guidelines should be used to inform choice of texts.

<b>First Year</b>	A studied novel, with on-going, sustained reading of novels throughout the year
	A variety of drama extracts to suit appropriate learning outcomes
	A variety of non-literary texts including texts in oral format
	A number of short stories
	At least 10 poems
<b>Second and Third Year</b>	From the list of prescribed texts students must study two novels and two drama texts. (An extract from a play or extracts from one or more plays may be used as one of the drama texts. The extracts may be chosen from outside the list of prescribed texts. The extract or extracts selected by schools should provide students with a broad experience of the dramatic form.) Students intending to take the Final Assessment at Higher Level should study Shakespearean drama during second <b>and/or</b> third year.
	A variety of non-literary texts including texts in oral format
	A film chosen from the prescribed list of texts <b>or</b> a biography <b>or</b> travel text <b>or</b> documentary
	A selection of poetry (a minimum of 16 poems over the two years)
	A number of short stories

The list for second and third year will refer to specific texts in the case of novel, drama and film. In categories where specific texts are not prescribed, texts will be referred to by genre or type only and teachers will have freedom to choose specific examples. In addition, a list of indicative texts, including suggestions made by teachers, will be available on [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie) to support teachers in their selection of suitable material.

# Expectations for Students

Expectations for students is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work. When teachers, students or parents looking at the online specification view the learning outcomes, a link will sometimes be available to examples of work associated with a specific learning outcome or with a group of learning outcomes. The examples of student work will have been selected to illustrate expectations and will have been annotated by teachers. The examples will include work that is

- in line with expectations
- ahead of expectations
- has yet to meet expectations.

The purpose of the examples of student work is to show the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised in actual cases. Annotated examples of student work developed by teachers from the Junior Cycle School Network are included in Appendix 1.

## Learning Outcomes

Junior Cycle English is offered at two levels, Higher and Ordinary, and the final assessment will reflect this. The examples of student work linked to learning outcomes will offer commentary and insights that support differentiation. The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all students. As set out here they represent outcomes for students at the end of their three years of study. To provide continuity with language learning in primary education a sub-set of 22 learning outcomes for first year is indicated by the symbol ○ in the tables of outcomes. The outcomes chosen for this purpose articulate well with content objectives for language in the Primary Curriculum and focusing on them in first year will support the transition from English in primary school. The specification stresses that the learning outcomes are **for three years**. Therefore, the learning outcomes being focused on in first year will not have been 'completed' at the end of that year but will continue to support the student's language development up to the end of junior cycle.

Those outcomes marked with the symbol ★ indicate the outcomes upon which the **Final Assessment** will be based.

The outcomes are numbered 1-13 for Oral Language, 1-13 for Reading and 1-13 for Writing. The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves. Some overlap and repetition in learning outcomes across the strands is necessary. This arises naturally from and emphasises the integration of language learning across Oral Language, Reading, and Writing.

○ = Sub-set of outcomes for first year

▲ = learning outcome linked to an example of student work in Appendix 1

★ = learning outcomes on which the final assessment will be based

## STRAND: ORAL LANGUAGE

### ELEMENT: Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer

*Engaging with oral language students should be able to:*

1. Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction, in a variety of contexts, including class groups, for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, stating an opinion, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, criticising, commentating, narrating, imagining, speculating ○ ▲
2. Engage actively and responsively within class groups in order to listen to or recount experiences and to express feelings and ideas ○
3. Engage in extended and constructive discussion of their own and other students' work
4. Listen actively in order to get the gist of an account or presentation noting its main points and purpose ○
5. Deliver a short oral text, alone and/or in collaboration with others, using appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes ○
6. Learn from and evaluate models of oral language use to enrich their own oral language production
7. Choose appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes: persuading, informing, narrating, describing a process ○ ▲ ★

### ELEMENT: Exploring and using language

8. Listen actively in order to interpret meaning, compare, evaluate effectiveness of, and respond to drama, poetry, media broadcasts, digital media, noting key ideas, style, tone, content and overall impact in a systematic way ○
9. Apply what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken texts to their own use of oral language
10. Collaborate with others in order to explore and discuss understandings of spoken texts by recording, analysing, interpreting and comparing their opinions ○
11. Engage with the world of oral language use as a pleasurable and purposeful activity ○

### ELEMENT: Understanding the content and structure of language

12. Demonstrate how register, including grammar, text structure and word choice, varies with context and purpose in spoken texts ★
13. Develop their spoken language proficiency by experimenting with word choice, being creative with syntax, being precise, stimulating appropriate responses relative to context and purpose

○ = Sub-set of outcomes for first year

▲ = learning outcome linked to an example of student work in Appendix 1

★ = learning outcomes on which the final assessment will be based

## STRAND: READING

### ELEMENT: Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer

*Engaging in reading students should be able to:*

1. Read texts with fluency, understanding and competence, decoding groups of words/phrases and not just single words ○ ★
2. Read for a variety of purposes: learning, pleasure, research, comparison ★
3. Use a wide range of reading comprehension strategies appropriate to texts, including digital texts: to retrieve information; to link to previous knowledge, follow a process or argument, summarise, link main ideas; to monitor their own understanding; to question, analyse, synthesise and evaluate ○ ★
4. Use an appropriate critical vocabulary while responding to literary texts ★

### ELEMENT: Exploring and using language

5. Engage in sustained private reading as a pleasurable and purposeful activity, applying what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken and written texts to their own experience of reading ○
6. Read their texts for understanding and appreciation of character, setting, story and action: to explore how and why characters develop, and to recognise the importance of setting and plot structure ○ ★
7. Select key moments from their texts and give thoughtful value judgements on the main character, a key scene, a favourite image from a film, a poem, a chapter, a media or web based event ★
8. Read their texts to understand and appreciate language enrichment by examining an author's choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, and images, as appropriate to the text ○ ▲ ★
9. Identify, appreciate and compare the ways in which different literary, digital and visual genres and sub-genres shape texts and shape the reader's experience of them ▲ ★

### ELEMENT: Understanding the content and structure of language

10. Know how to use language resources (e.g. dictionary, thesaurus and online resources) in order to assist their vocabulary development ○
11. Identify and comment on features of English at word and sentence level using appropriate terminology, showing how such features contribute to overall effect ★
12. Understand how word choice, syntax, grammar and text structure may vary with context and purpose ▲ ★
13. Appreciate a variety of registers and understand their use in the written context ○ ★

○ = Sub-set of outcomes for first year

▲ = learning outcome linked to an example of student work in Appendix 1

★ = learning outcomes on which the final assessment will be based

## STRAND: WRITING

### ELEMENT: Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer

*Engaging in writing students should be able to:*

1. Demonstrate their understanding that there is a clear purpose for all writing activities and be able to plan, draft, re-draft, and edit their own writing as appropriate ○ ★
2. Discuss their own and other students' written work constructively and with clear purpose
3. Write for a variety of purposes, for example to analyse, evaluate, imagine, explore, engage, amuse, narrate, inform, explain, argue, persuade, criticise, comment on what they have heard, viewed and read ○ ★
4. Write competently in a range of text forms, for example letter, report, multi-modal text, review, blog, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences ○ ▲ ★

### ELEMENT: Exploring and using language

5. Engage with and learn from models of oral and written language use to enrich their own written work ○
6. Use editing skills continuously during the writing process to enhance meaning and impact: select vocabulary, reorder words, phrases and clauses, correct punctuation and spelling, reorder paragraphs, remodel, manage content ○ ★
7. Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing a critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, tone, images ▲ ★
8. Write about the effectiveness of key moments from their texts commenting on characters, key scenes, favourite images from a film, a poem, a chapter, a media or web-based event
9. Engage in the writing process as a private, pleasurable and purposeful activity, using a personal voice as their individual style is thoughtfully developed over the years ○ ★

### ELEMENT: Understanding the content and structure of language

10. Use and apply their knowledge of language structures, for example sentence structure, paragraphing, grammar, to make their writing a richer experience for themselves and the reader ★
11. Use language conventions appropriately, especially punctuation and spelling, to aid meaning and presentation and to enhance the reader's experience ○ ★
12. Demonstrate an understanding of how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose ★
13. Evaluate their own writing proficiency and seek remedies for those aspects of their writing that they need to improve

# Assessment

## Assessment in Junior Cycle English

Assessment in education involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways, such as to test and certify achievement, to determine the appropriate route for learners to take through a differentiated curriculum, or to identify specific areas of difficulty (or strength) for a given learner. While different techniques may be employed for formative, diagnostic and certification purposes, assessment of any kind can improve learning by exerting a positive influence on the curriculum at all levels. To do this it must reflect the full range of curriculum goals.

Assessment in Junior Cycle English rests upon the provision for learners of opportunities to set clear goals and targets in their learning and upon the quality of the focused feedback they get in support of their learning. Providing focused feedback on their learning to students is a critical component of high-quality assessment and a key factor in building students' capacity to manage their own learning and their motivation to stick with a complex task or problem. Assessment is most effective when it moves beyond marks and grades to provide detailed feedback that focuses not just on how the student has done in the past but on the next steps for further learning.

Essentially, the purpose of assessment at this stage of education is to support learning. To support their engagement with assessment, teachers and schools will have access to an Assessment and Moderation Toolkit. Along with the guide to school-focused moderation, the Toolkit will include learning, teaching and assessment support material, including:

- Formative assessment
- Planning for and designing assessment
- Assessment tasks for classroom use (initially for Junior Cycle English)
- Judging student work – looking at expectations for learners and features of quality
- Reporting to parents
- Thinking about assessment: ideas, research and reflections
- Glossary of assessment and moderation terms.

The contents of the Toolkit will be an essential element of quality assurance, and it will include the range of assessment supports, advice, guidelines and exemplification that will enable schools and teachers to engage with the new assessment system in an informed way, with confidence and clarity.

## Assessment for Certification

Junior Cycle English will have two assessment components in the assessment for certification: a school work component and a final assessment. The school work component will carry 40% of the marks available and the final assessment will carry 60%.

The school work component will comprise **two assessment tasks** as set out in Table 4. The tasks will be spread over the second and third years of junior cycle and **will relate to the student's reading, writing, and oral work during that time.**

**Table 4: The assessment tasks in the school work component**

<p><b>Oral communication</b><sup>2</sup> linked to the exploration of an issue or topic identified by the student</p>	<p>A <b>collection of the student's texts</b> emerging through engagement with a broad range of texts, literary and non-literary. It is recognised that in this context the student's created texts may be presented in a wide range of formats – hand-written, digital, multi-modal, and so on.</p>
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## Rationale for the assessment tasks

The strands of Junior Cycle English are Oral Language, Reading, and Writing. The elements of these strands are

- Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader and writer
- Exploring and using language
- Understanding the content and structure of language.

Over the three years of junior cycle students will have many opportunities to enjoy and learn English across the strands. They will read widely; they will talk and discuss; they will write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Through these activities they will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in language and literacy, thereby achieving the learning outcomes across the strands. The assessment tasks link to important aspects of that development and relate clearly to priorities for learning and teaching. Tables indicating the main learning outcomes to be assessed through each of the tasks are provided below, stressing the interdependence and integration of the strands. Therefore, although the task relates to **writing**, for example, learning outcomes from **oral language** and **reading** are of significance.

<sup>2</sup> In cases where students have specific learning difficulties in relation to oral communication a system of reasonable accommodation would be employed. Details regarding this will be included in the Assessment and Moderation Toolkit.



## Oral communication

Students are given an opportunity to choose a topic or issue that is of interest or importance to them and to carry out an exploration over time. The development of basic research skills will be central here, e.g. searching for information, reading and note-making, organising material, using key questions to give shape to ideas, developing a point of view, preparing a presentation, using props and hand-outs. This task provides useful opportunities for the study of a range of oral presentation styles. In addition, the task offers students opportunities, where appropriate, to collaborate with classmates and others in gathering and developing materials, leading to **the individual's oral communication of findings for summative assessment**.

The main learning outcomes to be assessed through **oral communication** are:

Oral Language	Reading	Writing
OL 1, 5, 7, 9, 13	R 3	W 3, 5

## Collection of the student's texts

Creative writing is a vital part of English, but students are not 'born' writers. They need to develop a voice and an identity, a good sense of audience, and an awareness of the process of writing – making notes from their reading and personal experience, trying things out, revising, and polishing for 'publication'. This is best done over time, with supportive feedback and scaffolding from the teacher. This assessment task offers students a chance to celebrate their achievements as creators of texts by compiling a collection of their texts in a variety of genres over time and **choosing a number of pieces to present for summative assessment**.

The main learning outcomes to be assessed through **the collection of the student's texts** are:

Oral Language	Reading	Writing
OL 1	R 6, 8	W 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11

## Features of quality in the school work component

Key features of quality in support of student and teacher judgement are set out for each of the assessment tasks for the school work component. The features of quality are the criteria that will be used to assess the pieces of student work.

### ORAL COMMUNICATION

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#### **Achieved with Distinction (90-100%)**

Communication is clear and convincing, showing a comprehensive knowledge of the subject. The line of thought is logical and perfectly sequenced with supporting evidence pointedly chosen. Engagement with the audience/listener is effective and sustained. Communication is fully shaped to its intended purpose. Support materials are used to clear purpose and effect.

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#### **Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%)**

Communication is clear and convincing, showing a thorough knowledge of the subject. The line of thought is logical and sequenced to good effect, with supporting evidence well chosen. Engagement with the audience/listener is effective and sustained. Communication is fully shaped to its intended purpose. Support materials are used to clear purpose and effect.

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#### **Achieved with Merit (55-74%)**

Communication is clear and convincing for the most part, showing a good knowledge of the subject. The line of thought logical and clear, supported by evidence. Engagement with the audience/listener is reasonably well sustained and communication is clearly shaped to a purpose. Support materials are used to good effect.

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#### **Achieved (40-54%)**

Communication is clear for the most part, showing some knowledge of the subject. The line of thought is reasonably clear but may be lacking in logical sequence and order. Some evidence supports the argument. Engagement with the audience/listener is established but not always adequately sustained. The purpose of the communication may be unclear at times. Support materials are used to some effect.

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#### **Not achieved (0-39%)**

Communication is unconvincing although some knowledge of the subject is shown. The line of thought is unclear and lacking in sequence and order. Little evidence supports the argument. Engagement with the audience/listener is haphazard and poorly sustained. The purpose of the communication may be unclear and vague. Support materials, where used, achieve little effect.

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**COLLECTION OF THE STUDENT'S TEXTS**

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**Achieved with Distinction (90-100%)**

Shows creative manipulation of all aspects of the chosen genre.

Writes with full awareness of the effects that can be achieved through imaginative word choice and development of ideas.

Fully shapes the work for its intended audience.

Writes with creativity and flair throughout the work in order to achieve desired effects.

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**Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%)**

Shows full control of chosen genre.

The writing fully achieves the writer's intended purpose.

Shows full audience awareness in content and development of ideas.

Writes competently and fluently showing sophisticated awareness of word choice and sentence structure to achieve desired effects.

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**Achieved with Merit (55-74%)**

Shows control of chosen genre.

The writing is clearly shaped to the intended purpose.

Development of content and ideas is managed effectively with the receiver/audience in mind.

Writes with competence, showing awareness of word choice and sentence structure to achieve desired effects.

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**Achieved (40-54%)**

Shows a basic awareness of genre.

The writing has recognisable shape and reasonable development of content and idea.

Writes with basic competence showing an awareness of appropriate word choice and sentence structure in order to achieve an effect.

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**Not achieved (0-39%)**

Shows little awareness of the chosen genre.

Writes with little attention to structure and has negligible development of content or ideas.

Displays little or no intention to achieve a desired effect.

The student does not display basic writing competence and lacks attention to word choice and basic sentence structure.

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## Mark weighting for the assessment components

The following tables are predicated on the total mark available being 400.

School work component	40%	160 marks
Final assessment	60%	240 marks

## Timing and mark weighting for the assessment tasks in the school work component

Task	Marks	Submitted	Moderation meeting
Oral communication	60 marks	End of Year 2	End of Year 2
Collection of the student's texts	100 marks	Christmas Year 3	Christmas Year 3

## The Final Assessment

The final assessment will carry 60% of the marks available. It will be offered at Higher and Ordinary Levels. At both levels there will be one examination paper. It will be linked to students' engagement with texts during second and third year. The assessment will address outcomes marked with the ★ symbol in the tables of learning outcomes.

### The Final Assessment

<b>Reading/engaging with texts</b>	Students will sit a two-hour written examination paper. They will be required to engage with, demonstrate comprehension of, and respond to stimulus material.	The examination takes place at the end of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year and will be offered at Higher and Ordinary Levels.
<b>Comprehending</b>		
<b>Responding</b>	The content and format of the examination papers may vary from year to year. In any year, the learning outcomes to be assessed will constitute a sample of the outcomes from the tables of learning outcomes.	

The material on Junior Cycle English included in the Assessment and Moderation Toolkit will contain details of the practical arrangements relating to the assessment of the school work component including, for example, the suggested length and format for written pieces, the format and duration of oral pieces, and the process of school-focused moderation involved.

## Reasonable Accommodations

A scheme of reasonable accommodations, operated by the State Examinations Commission, is currently in place to accommodate candidates with special educational needs in taking their Junior Certificate examinations. In this context, the term special educational needs applies to candidates who have physical/medical and/or specific learning difficulties.

Reasonable accommodations are designed to remove as far as possible the impact of a disability on a candidate's performance, so that he or she can demonstrate in an examination his or her level of achievement. They are not designed to compensate for a possible lack of achievement arising from a disability.

In line with the introduction of the Framework for Junior Cycle, a revised scheme of reasonable accommodations designed to reflect the changed assessment and certification arrangements is currently in preparation.

# Appendix 1

## Annotated examples of student work

- Writing for different audiences (1 example)
- Reading and responding to aesthetic texts (3 examples)

## Material used to support the tasks

### Reader Note:

These annotated examples of student work have been generated by teachers of English from the NCCA Junior Cycle School Network through their participation in exploratory moderation sessions. To ensure that individual students will not be identified the examples have been typed, but exactly as they were written. The work you will see is the work of real second-year students. It was done in response to pre-set tasks and with limited time for preparation. Each example is accompanied by a Cover Sheet, which includes information about:

- The strands and elements from the specification to which the piece of work relates
- The learning outcome/s from the specification upon which the task is based
- The task itself
- The time allowed, conditions under which the task was done, and the format of the student responses.
- The agreed decision of the teachers – whether the work was
  - In line with expectations
  - Ahead of expectations
  - (Has) yet to meet expectations
- A teacher comment on the overall judgement is supplied.

Each piece of work is annotated with teacher comments drawn from discussion during the moderation session.

## Annotated example of student work

## WRITING FOR DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

## SAMPLE 1

<b>Strand</b>	ORAL LANGUAGE <b>and</b> READING <b>and</b> WRITING		
<b>Element</b>	Exploring and using language		
<b>Learning Outcome/s</b>	<p><b>Reading:</b> <i>Students should be able to understand how word choice, syntax, grammar and text structure may vary with context and purpose</i></p> <p><b>Writing:</b> <i>Students should be able to write competently in a range of text forms, for example letter, report, multi-modal text, review, blog, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences</i></p>		
<b>Task</b>	<p>In class: Read two short texts; discuss and analyse them. Guide questions have been included to direct discussion and group or individual written responses.</p> <p>Homework/Assessment task: Write a brief report about a local event <b>in two different journalistic styles</b>, similar to the texts read in class: a factual account of an event and a racy account of the same event.</p>		
<b>Time Allowed</b>	Up to three classes for discussion/preparation Homework completed over one or two evenings		
<b>Conditions</b>	Open access to given texts and other materials		
<b>Student Response Format</b>	Written		
<b>Teacher's Overall Judgement</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In line with expectations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ahead of expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Has yet to meet expectations
<b>Teacher's Commentary</b> (Supporting the judgement made)	<b>Student's Commentary</b> (if appropriate)		
<i>In some respects the student is ahead of expectations (especially for a first attempt at this kind of task) but is less successful when it comes to the more factual, objective piece of writing. Therefore, the first text is very successful but the second text is somewhat underdeveloped and skimpy on detail.</i>			
<i>On balance, the student is ahead of expectations for 2<sup>nd</sup> year.</i>			

## Student Response: Sample 1

[Student work has been typed exactly as written]

**STUDENT'S FIRST TEXT**

English – Homework

### Violent Flamingo Startles Child

Saturday, December 8, 2012

A small girl was distraught after a violent encounter with a terrifying flamingo.

On Saturday the little girl was visiting Fota Wildlife Park with her family.

The girl was walking down by the monkeys when the pink perpetrator attacked her almost breaking her arm.

She said he popped up out of nowhere like a pink feathery ninja.

A park worker blamed the girl for wearing a pink t-shirt causing the flamingo to attack.

Headline understated and factual

Word choice more measured – absence of imagery

Direct focus on 'who, what, where' etc.

Register more formal

Lacking detail and development



## Student's notes and second text

Serious: About an incident that was avoided

Formal: Because...it has formal language like 'made its request'

Objective: There is a lot of facts in the article

Emotional: it's creating a story

Pick a recent incident: 1st text style ½ page.

Flamingo Assaulted Child

Saturday, December 8, 2012

A flamingo in Fota Wildlife Park assaulted a young girl because of her bright pink t-shirt.

The girl was on a tour of the park when she got a nasty shock when one of the flamingos grabbed onto her and injured her arm.

A worker in the park said that the flamingo was attracted by the girl's pink t-shirt causing him to attack.

The girl did not sustain a serious injury from the flamingo but will not be returning for another visit. She and her family also received their money back.

Headline understated and factual

Word choice more measured – absence of imagery

Direct focus on 'who, what, where' etc.

Register more formal

Lacking detail and development

## Criteria identified by the teacher group:

- Genre awareness - precise and accurate response
- Formal/informal/emotive
- Subjective v objective
- Structure of the report
  - Headline/s
  - Introduction, development, conclusion
  - Paragraph v bullets
- Clear expression, including the mechanics of writing - spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Denoting v connoting
- Editorial presentation

## Material used to support the task: Writing for different audiences

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

**Reading:** *Students should be able to understand how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose*

**Writing:** *Students should be able to write competently in a range of text forms, for example letter, report, multi-modal text, review, blog, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose for different audiences*

Task: We have had a classroom task that involves reading two short texts, **discussing and analysing** them. Your homework task is to write a brief report about a local event **in two different journalistic styles**, similar to the texts we have read in class: a factual account of an event and a racy account of the same event.

**N.B. for teachers: Tabloid/Broadsheet may be acknowledged but not dwelt upon.**

Here is the material, with questions, for discussion/classwork. Please note that all need not be used.

The material consists of two reports of an air incident.

## TEXT 1

**From the Irish Times Newspaper**  
**Passenger helps land flight in Dublin**

Wed, Nov 21, 2012

An off-duty pilot assisted an emergency landing of a Lufthansa flight in Dublin Airport on Monday morning.

The pilot was identified through the passengers' list after the co-pilot fell ill while halfway through the flight from Newark to Frankfurt. The aircraft landed safely at Dublin Airport at 5.40am.

The Boeing 747 flight was in Oceanic airspace when it made its request to Shanwick Air Traffic Control to divert to Dublin.

Shannon Air Traffic Control was informed of the diversion by Shanwick.

A spokeswoman for Lufthansa said that even if the off-duty pilot had not been on board, the captain would have had control of the aircraft.

The Air Accident Investigation Unit has begun an inquiry into the incident.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/1121/1224326897920.html>

**TEXT 1 – Some prompt questions/suggestions for teachers**

**N.B. It is not necessary that you use all/or any of these questions.**

1. Tick which of the following questions are answered in the opening one sentence paragraph: *Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?*
2. Is this report factual? Count the number of facts mentioned in the article. Number: ....., Place \* on the margin beside any paragraph that contains a fact.
3. How would you describe the tone of the article? Tick any three of the following tones: *Serious, formal, light-hearted, objective, exciting, funny and emotional.*
8. Are there any words or phrases that strike you as an attempt to be dramatic? Show any such words and phrases with a 'D' beside them. If there are none, then don't mark any.
4. Which **one** of the following best describes the tone and language use of the report: a) Emotive b) Informative or c) Informative and Emotive?
5. Consider the wording of the final fact. Why is it stated in this way?

## TEXT 2

**From the Daily Mail website****'I can wing it!' Passenger steps in to land 747 after co-pilot falls ill... lucky he happens to be off-duty pilot himself**

- Co-pilot struck down with migraine on flight from Newark to Frankfurt
- Passenger reveals he is fully qualified to help captain land Lufthansa jet
- Captain traveling on the plane 'works for North American Airlines'
- Plane diverts to Dublin Airport, where accident investigation is under way.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2235746/Passenger-steps-land-747-pilot-falls-ill--happens-duty-pilot.html>

**TEXT 2 – Some prompt questions/suggestions for teachers****N.B. It is not necessary that you use all/or any of these questions.**

1. Tick which of the following questions are answered in the opening one sentence paragraph:  
*Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?*
2. Is this report factual? Count the number of facts mentioned in the article. Number: .....  
Place \* on the margin beside any paragraph that contains a fact.
3. How would you describe the tone of the article? Tick any three of the following tones:  
*Serious, formal, light-hearted, objective, exciting, funny and emotional.*
4. Are there any words or phrases that strike you as an attempt to be dramatic? Show any such words and phrases with a '**D**' beside them. If there are none, then don't mark any.
5. Which **one** of the following best describes the tone and language use of the report:  
a) Emotive b) Informative or c) Informative and Emotive?
6. Consider the wording of the final fact. Why is it stated in this way?

**Comparison Questions – these are the more important questions and could be used as a basis for group and/or individual work.**

**N.B. It is not necessary to use all/or any of these questions.**

- a. Compare the way the final fact in each article is presented to a reader. What can you say about the difference between them?
- b. Which of the articles contains opinion? Is that helpful to the reader?
- c. As a reader, which of the articles do you consider to be the most interesting? Explain
- d. Which of the reports tries the hardest to appeal to a wide audience? Consider using some of the words '*informative*', '*emotive*', '*dramatic*', '*theatrical*' and '*sensational*' in your answer. Select at least one example of language to illustrate your answer.
- e. Which report tries to be more entertaining? Does that mean it will have a bigger audience of readers, in your opinion? Why.
- f. Do you think that the readers of the Irish Times and the Daily Mail differ from each other in some ways? How?
- g. Which version would you like on Facebook? Compose a smart comment in Facebook style reacting to that report or a fact from the report?

**HOMEWORK/ASSESSMENT TASK:**

Model these report styles to compose an alternative story on some event that happened around your area. **Write two versions**, one resembling the Irish Times style, the other the Daily Mail web-page style.

## Annotated example of student work

## RESPONDING TO AESTHETIC TEXTS

## SAMPLE 1A

<b>Strand</b>	ORAL LANGUAGE <b>and</b> READING <b>and</b> WRITING		
<b>Elements</b>	Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer Exploring and using language Understanding the content and structure of language		
<b>Learning Outcome/s</b>	<p><b>Oral Language:</b> Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction, in a variety of contexts, including class groups, for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, stating an opinion, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, criticising, commentating, narrating, imagining, speculating</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Read their texts in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of language enrichment by examining an author's choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, sounds, images etc., as appropriate to the text</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing their critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, sounds, and images</p>		
<b>Context and Task</b>	<p><b>Reading the poem, <i>The Battle</i> by Louis Simpson, in class groups</b> students discuss, agree on, and record the three most striking images (pictures, colours etc.) and three most striking sound-effects or sound patterns that help them to imagine the soldier's experience of battle.</p> <p>In a brief plenary class they will agree on the most popular image and sound effect.</p> <p><b>Task:</b> Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.</p>		
<b>Time Allowed</b>	Up to two classes for discussion/preparation Homework – all work should be completed in two days		
<b>Conditions</b>	Open access to given texts and other materials		
<b>Response Format</b>	Written		
<b>Teacher's Overall Judgement</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In line with expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Ahead of expectations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has yet to meet expectations
<b>Teacher's Commentary</b> (Supporting the judgement made)	<p>Shows a vague grasp of key aspects of the task. Displays little personal engagement with the text. Mechanics are weak and shows a loose understanding of words. Has yet to meet expectations, but will improve with guidance on how to follow through with commentary on the chosen details from the text.</p>		
<b>Student's Commentary</b> (if appropriate)			

## Reading and Responding to Aesthetic Texts

### POETRY – *The Battle* by Louis Simpson

**Task:** Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.

**Student Response:** Sample 1A [Student work has been typed exactly as written]

8 Foyle Avenue  
Cork  
20<sup>th</sup> February 2013  
Dear Mr Simpson,

I read your poem "The Battle" today. I taught it was very good and entertaining. I liked the way you used colours like "The snow was black" and "The night on every side was turning red" and "The corpses stiffened in their scarlet hoods. I liked the way you described the soldiers as "Helmet and rifle, Pack and overcoat Marched through the forest. When you said "How hands looked thin around a cigarette. It really hit me there because I felt the way the soldiers was feeling. I felt the thiness and hungryness.

I really understanded the poem alot like the image's. The sounds I heard was when you said "Somewhere up ahead guns thudded", I could really hear the Bullets flying around. I really liked the poem and I would like to read more yours poem's.

I really like the title as well "The Battle" it give's a great discription of was the poem would be about.

Your's sincerlly  
Forrest Gump.

Vague comments made

Poorly developed ideas

Some references to sound and image but not very convincing – did not give clear reasons why the images were effective, or why he liked them.

Refers to text and does use relevant quotation, yet misunderstands the impact of 'thudded'.

Impact of the poem on the student was not clearly identified or explained.

Suffers from basic mechanical and grammatical errors throughout

Expression is basic, lacking in clarity

## Annotated example of student work

## RESPONDING TO AESTHETIC TEXTS

## SAMPLE 1B

<b>Strand</b>	ORAL LANGUAGE <b>and</b> READING <b>and</b> WRITING		
<b>Elements</b>	Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer Exploring and using language Understanding the content and structure of language		
<b>Learning Outcome/S</b>	<p><b>Oral Language:</b> Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction, in a variety of contexts, including class groups, for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, stating an opinion, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, criticising, commentating, narrating, imagining, speculating.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Read their texts in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of language enrichment by examining an author's choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, sounds, images etc., as appropriate to the text.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing their critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, sounds, and images.</p>		
<b>Context and Task</b>	<p><b>Reading the poem, <i>The Battle</i> by Louis Simpson, in class groups</b> students discuss, agree on, and record the three most striking images (pictures, colours etc.) and three most striking sound-effects or sound patterns that help them to imagine the soldier's experience of battle.</p> <p>In a brief plenary class they will agree on the most popular image and sound effect.</p> <p><b>Task:</b> Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.</p>		
<b>Time Allowed</b>	Up to two classes for discussion/preparation Homework – all work should be completed in two days		
<b>Conditions</b>	Open access to given texts and other materials		
<b>Student Response Format</b>	Written		
<b>Teacher's Overall Judgement</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In line with expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Ahead of expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Has yet to meet expectations

**Teacher's Commentary**

(Supporting the judgement made)

Shows a clear grasp of key aspects of the poem and a good understanding of imagery, but lacks precision in analysing the chosen images or highlighting their impact on the reader. Writes with conviction but the expression is cumbersome. Overall, is in line with the expectations described in the criteria.

**Student's Commentary**

(if appropriate)



## Reading and Responding to Aesthetic Texts

### POETRY – *The Battle* by Louis Simpson

**Task:** Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.

**Student Response:** Sample 1B [Student work has been typed exactly as written]

Dear Mr Simpson,

Based on my reading and study of your poem 'Battle', in my opinion, I think you gave a brilliant and vivid description throughout your poem. The two main topics of you use of description are the use of imagery and your use of sound effects. Also, I found your use of reality and creativity tremendous.

My favourite uses of imagery are the uses of death and the astonishing way you describe the soldiers in comparison to objects. Throughout this poem your repetaly use the image of death. As it states in the poem that, 'The snow was black. The corpses stiffened in their scarlet hoods.' The snow was black is a symbol of blood and death and 'The corpses stiffened is a symbol of the bodies pilling up and also death. Also, throughout this poem you use the image of people being compared to objects. As it states in the poem that, 'Helmet and rifle, pack and overcoat marched through the forest. This is an example from this poem showing that only the things are being described not the person itself.

Furthermore, my favourite uses of sound effects are the sounds of guns thudding and the sound of shells cracking. In this poem you display the sound of guns thudding. As it states in the stanza that, 'somewhere up ahead guns thudded like the circle of a throat the night on every side was turning red! When you say the word 'somewhere' I get the impression that your trying say that the soldiers are uncertain.

Furthermore, your poem displays the sound of shells cracking. As it stages in the text, 'At dawn the first shell landed with a crack. When you say the phrase 'At dawn' I think you are trying to say that the soldiers where caught off guard.

This poem really speaks to me and is after opening my believes that war is a dish served cold and does not resolve a problem in any means necessary.

Your's Sincerely,  
Percy B Shelly

For the most part the task is clearly grasped, especially in paragraph 3, but it slips into vague comments that make references to techniques but don't always show strong understanding or an ability to analyse the techniques.

Phrasing is repetitive, e.g. 'You use...'

There are plenty of references to the text but discussion of images lacks reference to their impact on a reader...lacked a sense of conviction in the comments.

Quite a dense piece of writing, but is lacking in clarity – rather heavy and cumbersome.

Concepts are present in the writing but there is a notable lack of development in discussion.

Poorly organised.

## Annotated example of student work

## RESPONDING TO AESTHETIC TEXTS

## SAMPLE 1C

<b>Strand</b>	ORAL LANGUAGE <b>and</b> READING <b>and</b> WRITING		
<b>Elements</b>	Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer Exploring and using language Understanding the content and structure of language		
<b>Learning Outcome/s</b>	<p><b>Oral Language:</b> Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction, in a variety of contexts, including class groups, for a range of purposes, such as asking for information, stating an opinion, listening to others, informing, explaining, arguing, persuading, criticising, commentating, narrating, imagining, speculating.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Read their texts in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of language enrichment by examining an author's choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, sounds, images etc., as appropriate to the text.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing their critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, sounds, and images.</p>		
<b>Context and Task</b>	<p><b>Reading the poem, <i>The Battle</i> by Louis Simpson, in class groups</b> students discuss, agree on, and record the three most striking images (pictures, colours etc.) and three most striking sound-effects or sound patterns that help them to imagine the soldier's experience of battle.</p> <p>In a brief plenary class they will agree on the most popular image and sound effect.</p> <p><b>Task:</b> Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.</p>		
<b>Time Allowed</b>	Up to two classes for discussion/preparation Homework – all work should be completed in two days		
<b>Conditions</b>	Open access to given texts and other materials		
<b>Response Format</b>	Written		
<b>Teacher's Overall Judgement</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In line with expectations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ahead of expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Has yet to meet expectations
<b>Teacher's Commentary</b> (Supporting the judgement made)	<b>Student's Commentary</b> (if appropriate)		
Writing displays a strong sense of engagement with the poem and the task. Not perfect by any means but the student has a solid sense of the impact of the sounds and images on the reader. Comments convey the student's empathy with the experience and fate of the soldiers. There are some mechanical errors but the argument is sustained and the material is well organised.			

## Reading and Responding to Aesthetic Texts

### POETRY – *The Battle* by Louis Simpson

**Task:** Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.

**Student Response:** Sample 1C [Student work has been typed exactly as written]

Dear Mr Simpson,

I think you gave a very vivid description of how war is and how gruesome and miserable it can be. Everything is described in such detail, I really felt like I was there. The words you use are very descriptive and effective for the reader. It's make the reader imagine that they are in the soldiers place. The line 'Helmet and rifle pack and overcoat marched through a forest'. It really makes the soldiers seem like their just zombie, Pawns with no life within ready for the taking.

The words also give great sound effects to the poem, it can really put the reader in the battle, like when you said 'At dawn the first shell landed with a crack' At dawn everythings only starting to come alive and everythings moving so slowly and to have a bullet fired it makes everything speed up, like civilians trying to avoid being hurt and shots and bombs being fired everywhere you turn. I also like the way you used the word Swept 'Then shells and bullets swept the icy woods'. The word is only one syllable and it really gets everything to speed up and create the scene. You can imagine the bullets buzzing past your ears and battering off the wood of the trees. I believe you really understood the misery and mourning war brings, when you say 'the tiredness in eyes, how hands look thin around a cigarette and the bright ember would pulse with all the life there was within. It's interesting how this shows how war takes away any happiness and joy in a persons life. It also shows how people went hungry and didn't get much sleep, but how could anyone in that position. I felt you really got the message across about war, Yours Sincerely Owen Harris.

Very detailed with a strong sense of personal response – continuous reference to what the student liked/enjoyed

Clearly explains *how* the poet conveyed the experience of battle, e.g. in the reference to the word 'swept'

References to both images and sound are clear. The student has a solid sense of the *impact* of both.

Comments convey the student's empathy

Clear discussion of the emotional impact on the reader

Some mechanical errors, but paragraphs are well organised

Clear argument throughout; there is a strong sense of purpose and understanding of the task.

Material used to support the task:

### RESPONDING TO AESTHETIC TEXTS



#### The Battle

Helmet and rifle, pack and overcoat  
Marched through the forest. Somewhere up ahead  
Guns thudded. Like the circle of a throat  
The night on every side was turning red.

They halted and they dug. They sank like moles  
Into the clammy earth beneath the trees.  
And soon the sentries, standing in their stoles,  
Felt the first snow. Their feet began to freeze.

At dawn the first shell landed with a crack.  
Then shells and bullets swept the icy woods.  
This lasted many days. The snow was black.  
The corpses stiffened in their scarlet hoods.

Most clearly of the battle I remember  
The tiredness in eyes, how hands looked thin  
Around a cigarette, and the bright ember  
Would pulse with all the life there was within.

*Louis Simpson*

## Learning outcomes:

**Oral Language:** Engage in oral language for a variety of different purposes – imagine or explore

**Reading:** Read their texts in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of language enrichment by examining an author’s choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, sounds, images etc., as appropriate to the text

**Writing:** Respond imaginatively in writing to their texts showing their critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, sounds, and images

### WRITTEN HOMEWORK:

Imagine that the poet Louis Simpson has asked you to write to him telling him whether he gave a vivid description of battle and what you liked or disliked about it. Write your reply. Use quotes or reference.

### FEATURES OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

(used by the teachers to support the judgment process)

	Ahead of expectations	In line with expectations	Has yet to meet expectations
<b>Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, writer</b> Vivid description	Shows a precise grasp of the aspects of the poem that make it dramatic, convincing, exciting, ‘real’, or graphic, and supports the points made with accurate reference to appropriate images and/or sounds	Shows a clear grasp of the aspects of the poem that make it dramatic, convincing, exciting, ‘real’, or graphic, and supports the points made with some reference to appropriate images and/or sound	Shows a vague grasp of the aspects of the poem that make it dramatic, convincing, exciting, ‘real’, or graphic, and provides some supporting reference to image and/or sound
<b>Exploring and using language</b> Choice of words, language patterns, images	Commentary links the poet’s word choice, imagery and sound effect with the impact of the poem on the reader, and indicates a clear preference – likes or dislikes	Commentary makes a reasonable attempt to link the poet’s word choice, imagery and sound effect with the impact of the poem on the reader, and indicates a preference – likes or dislikes	Commentary makes some attempt to identify imagery and/or sound effect, but struggles to sustain a clear preference – likes or dislikes
<b>Understanding the content and structure of language</b> Coherence and expression	Writes with conviction and flair, the argument is clear and the language use is efficient with few errors	Writes with reasonable conviction, the argument is clear for the most part and there are few mechanical errors	Writes with some conviction, the register is more descriptive than analytical, the clarity of communication is hampered by mechanical error

**GROUP COMMENT SHEET**

(used by individual teachers and small groups to record comments and judgements)

**Sample** \_\_\_\_\_

Vivid description

Choice of words,  
language patterns,  
images

Coherence and  
expression



