



Intellectual Property  
Awareness Foundation

# PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE

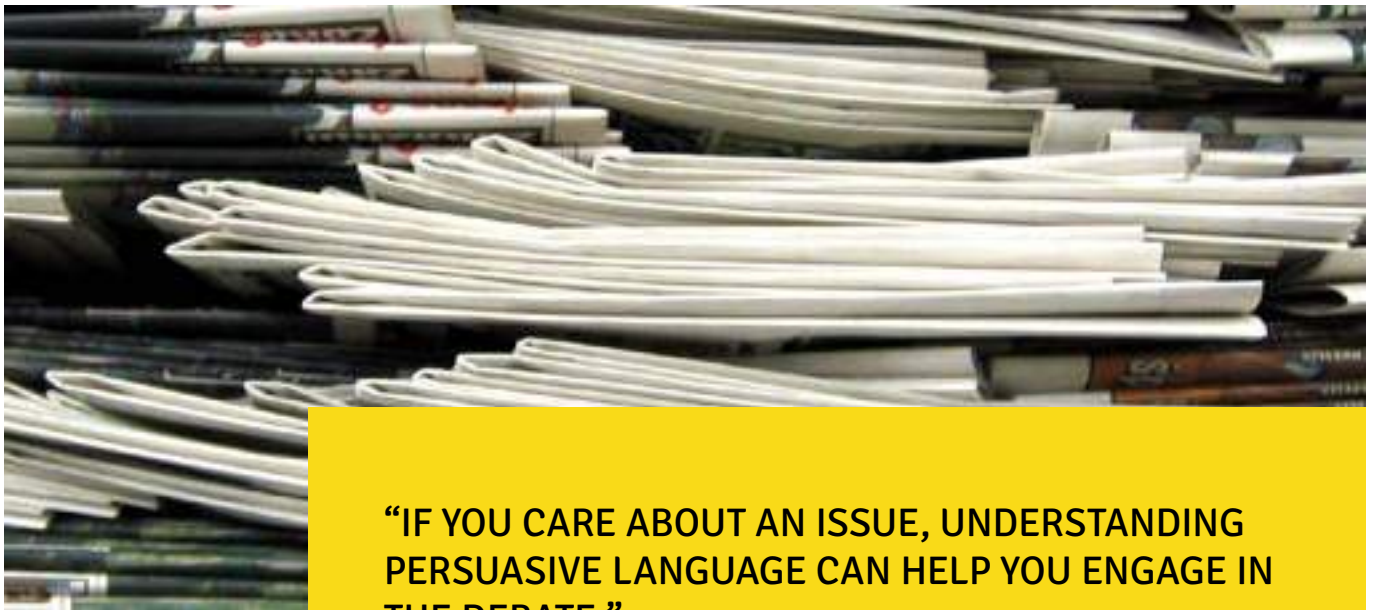
A guide to understanding persuasive language.

INCLUDING **ASSESSMENT TASKS** AND **MARKING CRITERIA!**

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# WHY STUDY PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE?



**“IF YOU CARE ABOUT AN ISSUE, UNDERSTANDING PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE CAN HELP YOU ENGAGE IN THE DEBATE.”**

The mass media is where important issues are debated and discussed. Election campaigns are fought and won over issues. Everyone has an opinion. But who should you believe? What are the facts? Who should you vote for? If you have an understanding of how persuasive language works, you'll be able to see through persuasion and rhetoric to answer these questions.

If you understand how language is used to persuade, you are much more likely to have a sophisticated understanding of issues in society. You'll be able to see through rhetoric, focus on the facts and confidently address the important issues facing our society.

What's more, if you care deeply about an issue, you can also engage in this sort of important discussion. Write to your local newspaper, comment on blogs, engage in discussions on social networking.

If you care about an issue, understanding how language works means you'll be able to successfully engage in the debate.

Understanding persuasive language, however, doesn't just involve complex social issues. The modern world is saturated with advertising - newspapers, television, social networking, bus shelters and billboards. Understanding how persuasive language works will help you navigate the world of advertising.

# WHAT IS AN ISSUE?

An issue is an important topic causing disagreement and debate. Daily newspapers are full of issues that face our society, including climate change, drug addiction, sexism, health care, crime, asylum seekers, gambling and racism.

There is often disagreement over how we should address important issues. Possible solutions to these issues are discussed and debated in the news media. Newspapers, television and blogs all feature arguments from different perspectives.

People contribute to the debate and discussion, too - writing letters, commenting on articles, calling talkback radio, tweeting and emailing.

This debate and discussion also informs how politicians respond to the issue and, ultimately, the types of policies they create to deal with such issues.



**“AN ISSUE IS AN IMPORTANT TOPIC THAT CAUSES DISAGREEMENT AND DEBATE.”**



A stack of papers is shown on the right side of the image, with the pages fanned out. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. A bright yellow rectangular box is positioned in the lower-middle part of the image, containing the text 'PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE' in bold, black, uppercase letters.

# **PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE**

# PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

When you are confronted with a piece of persuasive writing, it is useful to think about how the writer is using language to persuade. Writers can use numerous strategies to convince you of their point-of-view.

- **ADJECTIVES**

Writers often use describing words to characterise something in a particular way. When you see an adjective, think carefully about its connotations and the effect it might have on the reader.

- **ADVERBS**

Adverbs are words that give further information about a verb. For example, someone might ‘disagree strongly’. In this example, the word ‘strongly’ is an adverb because it tells us how the person disagreed. Adverbs can be used to describe actions in a particular way. Always think about the connotations of adverbs and how they make the reader feel. If a writer, for example, suggests that we have to ‘deal with a problem immediately’, this adverb makes the need for action seem particularly urgent.

- **ALLITERATION**

Alliteration is the use of words beginning with the same letter or sound. Alliteration is often used in advertising because it helps to create memorable phrases. In persuasive writing, alliteration is used to create emphasis.

- **ANALOGY**

An analogy is a comparison between two things to illustrate a point. For example, a writer might emphasise the importance of having an economy in surplus by comparing it to balancing your home finances. Analogies are an effective way to simplify complex issues in a way that persuades the audience to agree with a particular point of view.

- **ANECDOTE**

An anecdote is a short, personal story which is often used to illustrate a point. Writers often use anecdotes because it helps to personalise the issue for a reader. Anecdotes are often an effective way to simplify complex issues in a way that appeals to the audience’s emotions. A piece of persuasive writing about the economy, for example, might start with an anecdote about someone the writer knows losing their job.

- **ATTACKS**

Writers often attack and criticise those who disagree with them. These sort of attacks often take on a deeply critical tone.

- **BIAS**

Most persuasive writing is subjective, taking a particular stance on an issue. Nevertheless, there are some writers who put forward a deliberately one-sided case for their point of view, ignoring the counter arguments that more logical articles might consider. When analysing the use of persuasive language, don't simply label an article 'biased', take the time to explain how this one-sidedness helps to persuade the audience.

- **COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE**

Everyday language is used by writers to make them seem down-to-earth, practical and realistic. In Australia, writers often use colloquial language in this way. We're constantly told to give people a 'fair go' or that taking the easy way out is a 'cop out'. If you see an example of everyday, colloquial language, think carefully about why the writer has used that particular phrase.

- **CONNOTATION**

Words have two types of meanings. The denotative meaning of a word is its literal meaning. It's what you're likely to find if you look up the word in a dictionary. The connotations of a word are the ideas or feelings associated with a particular word. Writers think carefully about the words and phrases they use. They consider the connotations of words and how these might be used to persuade.

- **CLICHE**

A cliché is a trite, overused phrase. Writers are often discouraged from using clichés but they can be an effective and simple way to convey ideas to an audience.

- **DESCRIPTION**

Descriptive writing can be used to create an image in the mind of a reader. Providing the audience with a vivid image can help them to think about an issue in a particular way.

- **EMOTIVE LANGUAGE**

Emotive language is a phrase used to describe any words that have an emotional effect on an audience. Always consider how language makes you feel. Does it provoke a sense of sympathy or fear? What emotions does it play on?

- **EUPHEMISM**

A euphemism is a mild phrase used instead of another word that might be too harsh. When speaking of someone who has died, people often say they 'passed away', which is milder than simply using the word 'died'. Governments often use the phrase 'collateral damage' to describe civilian deaths during war. Euphemisms can be used to soften the impact of an idea or suggestion.

- **EVIDENCE**

Statistics and other forms of data are often used to persuade. An argument is much more convincing if it is supported by some kind of evidence. Evidence often forms the backbone of very logical and rational arguments.

- **EXPERT OPINION**

Writers often quote or refer to experts who agree with their point of view. This use of expert opinion can help to make arguments more persuasive and credible. The use of expert opinion can be a powerful way to persuade, convincing the audience that the writer's contention must be true because notable people agree with them.

- **GENERALISATION**

A generalisation is any statement that draws a conclusion from specific examples. Generalisations are often used to simplify an issue and make something seem like the logical course of action.

- **HYPERBOLE**

Hyperbole is exaggeration. Writers use exaggeration to heighten the implications of an issue, making the situation appear far worse and mobilising the reader to agree with their point of view.

- **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

Inclusive language is the use of words such as 'we' or 'our' to create the impression that the writer and the reader are on the same side of the issue.

- **LOGIC**

Logically constructed arguments put forward a series of well-ordered ideas supported by evidence. Logic can be used to persuade an audience because it presents an argument in a very structured and coherent way.

- **METAPHOR**

A metaphor is a figure of speech which creates a comparison between two different things by describing one thing as another. Metaphors are easy to identify because they cannot be literally true. If someone says, for example, "The salesman was a rat", they don't mean that this person was actually a small rodent. What they mean is that they were dishonest or cunning.

- **PUN**

A pun is a joke that relies on the different meanings of a word or words that sound similar. Puns can be used to make light of an issue or ridicule a point of view. They are a witty way for writers to criticise their opponents.



- **SARCASM**

Sarcasm is the use of a mocking tone to convey contempt.

- **SIMILE**

A simile is a comparison between two things which often uses the words 'like' or 'as'. Similes can be used to create a vivid picture in the minds of the audience or characterise something in either a positive or negative way.

- **RHETORICAL QUESTION**

A question that doesn't need to be answered because the answer is made obvious. Rhetorical questions are often used to lead the audience to a particular conclusion. Because of the nature of rhetorical questions, they make this conclusion seem natural and logical.

- **REPETITION**

Writers often repeat words and phrases to emphasise particular ideas. Throughout a piece of writing, writers might also repeat ideas in the hope this will persuade the audience to agree with them.

# IDENTIFYING PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

- According to a recent survey, 67% of Australians agree.
- Professor Andrew Horner once described the proposal as a ‘disgrace’.
- Surely, we all agree that this is the right course of action.
- The money is a drop in the bucket compared to what the government spends on other services.
- It’s a more humane, more sensible option.
- Can’t you do anything right?
- The government’s decision is nothing short of disgraceful and will cause untold trauma and anguish for those involved.
- It will be the end of civilisation as we know it.
- There’s a million reasons the proposal won’t work.
- The decision was a kick in the guts for workers everywhere.
- He was as fit as a fiddle.
- The slaughter of sheep in overseas abattoirs is hideously brutal.
- It’s a problem that we can’t turn away from.
- The government has been working like dogs to achieve this change.
- Why should I have to put up with foul-mouthed language on public transport?
- Experts agree that treating drug addiction like a disease is the right thing to do.



## • **Activity**

With a partner, read over the items above and decide which persuasive technique would best describe them. In some cases, there might be more than one!

# APPEALING TO EMOTIONS

Writers will often appeal to different emotions to convince you of a particular point of view. When you're reading a piece of persuasive writing, think carefully about how the writer is trying to make you feel. Here is a list of emotions that persuasive writers commonly appeal to.

- **Compassion**

Writers often make arguments that rely on exploiting the reader's sense of compassion. This type of argument makes the reader feel sorry for a particular group of people who have endured some kind of hardship.

- **Fairness**

No one likes being treated unfairly. Persuasive writers frequently play on their readers' sense of fairness to persuade. If a writer attempts to convince you that something is unfair or that people have been treated poorly, they may be exploiting your sense of fairness.

- **Family**

Everyone believes that family is important. As such, persuasive writers often appeal to a sense of family and family values. These arguments often build support for a particular point of view by claiming that the issue will have a damaging effect on family life.

- **Fear**

Fear is a strong motivator and writers often use it to rally support for their point of view. An argument in support of law and order, might create a sense of fear that the reader will be a victim of crime.

- **Money**

Money is important and we don't like to feel that we've been ripped off. Writers often exploit this to convince readers of a particular point of view, pointing out that they will be worse off financially or might benefit from a particular decision. This is often called appealing to the 'hip pocket nerve'.

- **Patriotism**

Belief in your country is a powerful emotion. Writers often stir up patriotic feelings to persuade. If a writer points out how great your home country is, they might be playing on your sense of patriotism.

Of course, this isn't an exhaustive list of emotions. Whenever you're reading a piece of persuasive writing, think about the emotions and attitudes that the writer might be playing on to persuade the audience of a particular point of view!

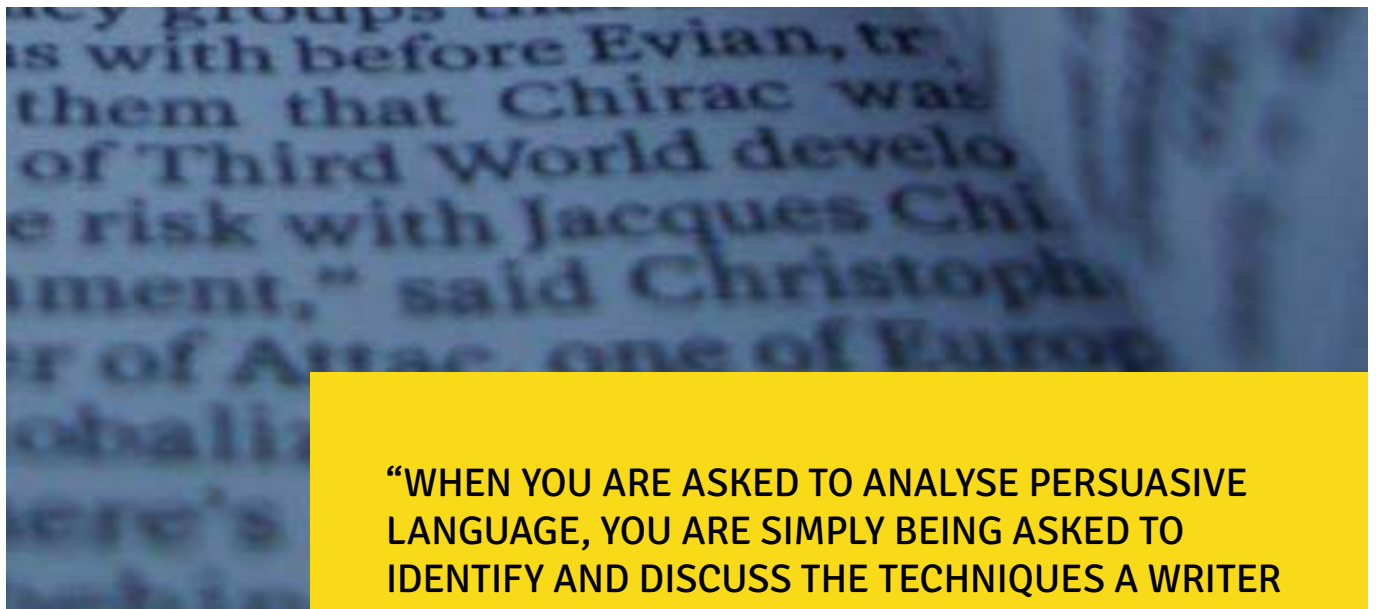
# ANALYSING PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE

When you are asked to analyse persuasive language, you are simply being asked to identify and discuss the techniques a writer is using to persuade.

Start by reading through the article several times. As you're reading, think about the words and phrases that help to persuade you. Are there particular words or phrases that make you reconsider your position on the issue or agree with the writer's contention? Is there any language obviously trying to provoke an emotional response?

Highlight or underline these words and phrases. Identify which persuasive techniques are being used. In the margin of the article, jot down how these techniques are being used to influence the audience. What do they make the reader think? What do they make the reader feel?

When you've read through the article several times and you've identified some of the persuasive techniques being used by the writer, consider the tone of the article. It's usually best to identify a word that can be used to describe the tone - such as concerned, emotional or negative - then use your dictionary and a thesaurus to identify a range of words that best describe the tone of the piece.



**“WHEN YOU ARE ASKED TO ANALYSE PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE, YOU ARE SIMPLY BEING ASKED TO IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS THE TECHNIQUES A WRITER IS USING TO PERSUADE.”**

# PLANNING YOUR ANALYSIS

Once you've read the article several times and identified a range of persuasive techniques, it's time to start planning your response.

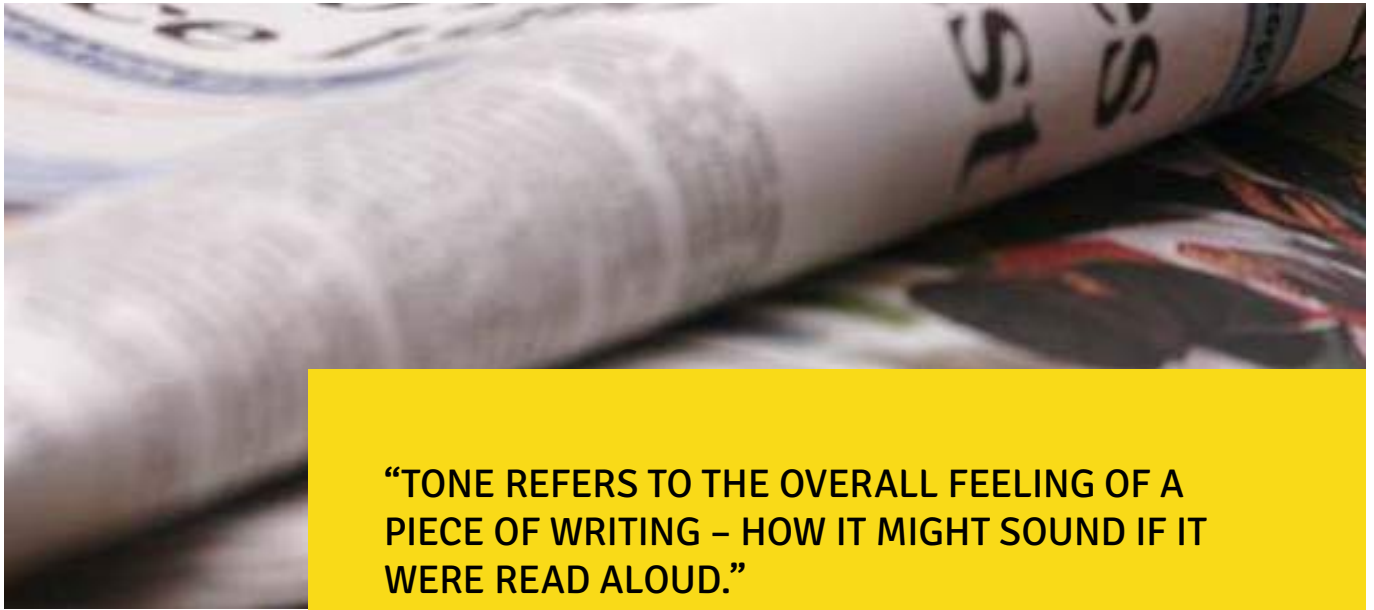
There are two approaches you can take to planning a task like this. The first involves addressing techniques and persuasive language in the order they appear in the article. This approach is effective in exam situations when you don't have a lot of time to carefully plan your response. It's also very straightforward and a good way for students who are unfamiliar with this type of writing. The weakness of this approach is that students can fall into the trap of retelling the article.

The second approach to planning your analysis involves discussing similar techniques together. A writer, for example, might make several appeals to sympathy throughout an article. It would be appropriate to discuss these together and provide an explanation for how they make the reader feel by the end of the article. Although it is time-consuming, structuring your response in this way shows a better understanding of how language has been used throughout the article. The difficulty is that the structure will be different for every single article and it requires more thought compared to dealing with the various techniques in order.

Find the approach that works for you, the article you've been asked to analyse and the time you have to complete the task.



# WHAT IS TONE?



**“TONE REFERS TO THE OVERALL FEELING OF A PIECE OF WRITING – HOW IT MIGHT SOUND IF IT WERE READ ALOUD.”**

When you're thinking about the use of persuasive language in an article, it's also useful to consider the tone. The word 'tone' refers to the overall feeling of a piece of writing. Here are some common words that you could use to describe tone:

- **ANGRY**  
Aggrieved, bitter, exasperated, incensed, hostile.
- **CONCERNED**  
Worried, troubled, bothered, upset.
- **DISAPPOINTED**  
Despondent, discouraged, disenchanted, disheartened, disillusioned, dismayed, dispirited, downcast, downhearted, saddened, upset.
- **EMOTIONAL**  
Emotive, heart-breaking, impassioned, moving, poignant, touching.
- **EXCITED**  
Exhilarated, exuberant, enthusiastic, lively.

- **HOPEFUL**

Buoyant, cheerful, optimistic, positive.

- **NEUTRAL**

Impartial, balanced, objective, unbiased.

- **HUMOROUS**

Amusing, funny, entertaining, comical, witty, light-hearted, tongue-in-cheek, wry, droll.

- **LOGICAL**

Reasoned, well-reasoned, rational, cogent.

- **NEGATIVE**

Bleak, cynical, dejected, demoralized, depressed, despairing, despondent, gloomy, hopeless, melancholic, negative.

- **SARCASTIC**

Sharp, sardonic, satirical, scathing, cutting, razor-edged, caustic, harsh, severe, devastating, abrasive, vitriolic, spiteful, vicious, malicious.

- **SYMPATHETIC**

Compassionate, caring, concerned, solicitous, empathetic, kind-hearted, warm-hearted, understanding, sensitive.

Keep in mind that these words and phrases are not an exhaustive list. When identifying the tone of a piece of writing, think about how it sounds, then use your dictionary or thesaurus to find the right word to describe its tone.



When you're presented with a piece of persuasive writing, it's useful to think about how tone helps to persuade the audience. A humorous article, for example, might persuade by gently poking fun at the people who support a particular idea. A logical article might persuade by presenting a well-organised case supported by evidence. In your analysis, always identify the tone of the article and explain how it helps to persuade the audience.

# IDENTIFYING TONE

- Our public parks and waterways are thriving, thanks largely to highly effective environmental protection laws and the hard work of enthusiastic volunteers around Australia. It's terrific to see that we really care about our environmental legacy.
- The Prime Minister should hang his head in shame. The treatment of asylum seekers is nothing short of a disgraceful blight on Australia's international reputation. To the rest of the world, we're selfish and cruel and insular.
- We should feel sorry for the friends and families. They're the real victims of road accidents. Imagine the grief and sorrow that tears through a community in the aftermath of a tragic accident like this.
- Thanks to the government's broadband policy, we're looking at a period of great promise where Australians will have access to new, exciting employment opportunities and business will experience incredible new growth.
- You should feel ripped off. After all it's your tax dollars that have paid for this terrible idea.
- Seeing people whose lives have been affected by gambling in this way is a harrowing experience. You begin to understand the way that it tears apart families and harms the most vulnerable people in our society.
- There are numerous reasons why we should start treating drug addiction like a disease. First, punitive measures simply aren't working. Second, it has been demonstrated time and time again - in countries like Sweden - that this type of approach simply works.



## • **Activity**

Read over the extracts above and identify two words that can be used to describe the tone of each article. You may use the words from the previous page but try to find other words in a dictionary and thesaurus.

# WRITING YOUR ANALYSIS

Once you've read the article several times and started to consider how the writer is using language to persuade, it's time to start writing your analysis. Remember, your analysis is a clear and straightforward discussion of how a writer is using language to persuade. Follow these hints for writing your analysis.

## • **INTRODUCTION**

When analysing persuasive writing, crafting a good introduction is critical. In the introduction of your analysis, you need to show a good understanding of the issue as well as introducing the articles that you are going to discuss. In the introduction of your analysis, you should:

- Identify and describe the issue.
- Identify the title of the article you will be analysing and its author.
- Identify the writer's contention or point of view.
- Identify and describe the tone of the article. What effect does it have on the reader?

## • **BODY**

In the body of your analysis, you need to clearly identify the different techniques that the writer has used and explain how they help to persuade the reader. In the body of your analysis, you should:

- Identify a range of persuasive techniques used throughout the article.
- Clearly explain how each of these techniques helps to persuade the reader.

## • **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion should bring your analysis to a close, giving an overview of the different techniques and approaches that the writer has used to persuade. In the conclusion, you should:

- Briefly recap the main techniques or approaches the writer has used to persuade.

# QUOTING AN ARTICLE



**USE SHORT EXAMPLES TO HELP EXPLAIN HOW THE WRITER OR SPEAKER HAS USED A PARTICULAR TECHNIQUE.**

In your analysis you will need to use short examples which help to explain how the writer or speaker has used a particular technique. When you're giving examples, try to keep these quotes short and appropriate. Quoting a few words in a sentence of your own can help to explain the impact of language more successfully than copying in a whole sentence.

Here's an example of how you can successfully incorporate short quotations into your article:

Right from the outset of the article, the writer contends that people who download film and television shows are nothing but “thieves”. The use of this emotive word helps to influence the readers to believe that internet piracy is wrong.

If you need to include a whole sentence, use a colon to introduce the quote.

Towards the beginning of the article, the writer argues that people who download film and television are doing the wrong thing: “Let's face it. When we download a television program, we're little better than common thieves.” The negative connotations of the word ‘thieves’ encourages the reader to agree that internet piracy is wrong.

When you're writing your analysis, don't just use a quote from the article without any discussion. Remember, you need to explain how language and persuasive techniques are being used to persuade the audience.



# USEFUL PHRASES

When you're writing your analysis, finding the right words to show your understanding of persuasive techniques can sometimes be the most difficult thing to do. Here are some phrases that will help you improve the expressiveness of your analysis.

## • In the article...

- Towards the beginning of the article...
- From the outset, the writer...
- In the introduction, the writer...
- Midway through the argument...
- Partway into the article...
- In the middle of the article...
- To conclude, the writer...
- When wrapping up the argument, the writer...
- The writer ends with...
- The article ends on a...

## • Explaining impact

- ...makes the reader feel...
- ...makes the reader think...
- ...leads the reader to the conclusion that...
- ...persuades the reader to conclude...
- ...encourages the reader to think...
- ...helps to convince...
- ...influences the reader to think...
- ...prompts the reader to agree...
- ...makes the reader acknowledge...
- ...helps the reader concede that...
- ...prompts the reader to accept...
- ...makes the reader recognise...
- ...influences the reader to...
- ...guides the reader to the conclusion that...
- ...sways the reader to...
- ...positions the audience to...
- ...brings the audience round...

# USEFUL PHRASES

## LINKING WORDS

When you're writing an analysis of persuasive language, it's a good idea to vary your use of language. Here are some words that can be used to explain and link ideas.

- **ADDITIONALLY**

By the same token, further, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, on top of that, similarly.

- **CONTRAST**

In comparison, conversely, on the other hand, however, regardless, whereas.

- **FOR EXAMPLE**

For instance, to demonstrate, as an example.

- **CONCLUSION**

Finally, hence, in conclusion, in summary, therefore.

## PROOFREADING YOUR ANALYSIS

When you've finished writing your analysis, it's a good idea to proofread your work.

- Have I written a clear introduction which explores the issues and identifies the persuasive texts that will be analysed?
- Have I identified the tone of the article?
- Have I clearly and accurately identified persuasive techniques?
- Have I explained how these techniques may influence the audience?
- Have I used short examples from the article to illustrate my understanding of these techniques?
- Have I written a conclusion that provides closure to my analysis?

# THINGS TO REMEMBER

Here are some useful things to remember when analysing the use of persuasive language in an article.

- **READ THE ARTICLE SEVERAL TIMES**

Read through the articles you've been asked to analyse several times. As you're reading the article, think about the intended effect of the language. What is the writer trying to make you think and feel?

- **HIGHLIGHT AND ANNOTATE**

As you're reading the article, certain words or phrases will stand out as being obviously persuasive. Highlight these words or phrases. In the margins, identify the persuasive technique that is being used and briefly describe its intended impact. How does it make you feel? What does it make you think? How is it positioning you to agree with the writer's point of view?

- **THINK ABOUT TONE**

As you're reading the article, start to think about the writer's tone. What would this piece of writing sound like if it were read aloud? Is it logical and rational? Does it mock or belittle? Is it humorous? Thinking about the overall tone of the article can help you understand how the writer is attempting to persuade.

- **PLAN YOUR RESPONSE**

Before writing your analysis, it's a good idea to plan your response. There are two main ways that you can write your analysis. First, you can address the main persuasive techniques and language in order from beginning to end. The advantage of this approach is that it's very straightforward and suited to exam situations. Another way to approach the issue is to dedicate a body paragraph of your analysis to a particular persuasive technique. Imagine that you're reading an article in which the writer repeatedly uses evidence to persuade. You could dedicate a whole paragraph to writing about this use of evidence throughout the article and explaining its impact on the audience. Which approach you take depends on the articles that you've been given and the time that you have to plan your response.

- **VISUAL TEXTS**

If the article you have been asked to analyse is accompanied by a photograph, cartoon, illustration, graph or other visual material, think about the impact that these images have on the reader and how they might reinforce the writer's point of view.

- **WRITE AN INTRODUCTION**

Always start your analysis with an introduction that shows a clear understanding of the issue debated in the articles that you have been asked to analyse. Your introduction should also identify the title and author of the persuasive texts you have been asked to analyse. If appropriate, introduce the writer and explain their interest in the issue. When you start your analysis, refer to the writer by their full name and thereafter only use their surname.

- **WELL-STRUCTURED BODY PARAGRAPHS**

Every paragraph of your analysis should introduce a technique using a topic sentence and then provide examples from the article which demonstrate how this technique is used and the effect that it has on the audience. For example, you might begin your paragraph with a topic sentence like this: “Throughout this article, the writer frequently uses evidence to persuade his reader to agree that...” In this paragraph, you would then give examples of how the writer uses evidence, explaining how this influences the reader.

- **BE CLEAR AND EXPRESSIVE**

When you’re writing your analysis, it’s important to state your ideas clearly. Don’t confuse yourself by using words or phrases that you’re unfamiliar with. To avoid repetition and make your analysis more expressive, develop a bank of phrases that you can substitute for phrases like ‘this makes the reader feel’ or ‘this helps to make the reader think’.

- **USE SHORT, RELEVANT QUOTATIONS**

Short and relevant quotations from the article can help to explain how language and persuasive techniques are being used to influence the audience. Never use a quote from the article without discussing its impact on the audience.

- **WRITE A CONCLUSION**

A good conclusion will provide closure to your analysis. When you’re writing the conclusion, bringing your discussion back to the tone of the article can be an effective way to show an understanding of the writer’s overall approach to persuasion. If you have been asked to analyse more than one article, the conclusion provides an opportunity to contrast the approach taken by different writers.

- **PROOFREAD**

When you’ve finished writing your analysis, it’s a good idea to proofread your work. As you’re reading, ask yourself whether you have clearly identified a range of persuasive techniques and explained how they influence the reader. When you are proofreading, make sure you eliminate any points that aren’t relevant or might be poorly explained.

- **FEEDBACK**

When you've written your analysis of persuasive language, always seek feedback from your peers, parents and teachers. They will be able to help you identify what you can improve on and what you need to focus on next time you write an analysis like this.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- **DON'T EVALUATE**

When you're analysing the use of persuasive language in an article, you are not being asked to point out the flaws in a writer's argument. Remember, the focus is on how a writer or speaker is using language and various techniques to persuade their audience.

- **DON'T PRAISE**

Another common mistake made by students when they are first asked to analyse the use of persuasive language is praising the writer. You are not being asked to give a glowing review of the article!

- **DON'T SUMMARISE**

If you find yourself simply rewriting the contents of the article, remember that you're being asked to explain how persuasive language is used to persuade. Using phrases like 'this encourages the reader to think' or 'this encourages the reader to feel' can help ensure that you're staying on track.

- **DON'T LIST**

Avoid listing the rhetorical techniques that a writer has used. Instead, focus on particular techniques and explain their intended impact on the reader. Weaker responses often lapse into reciting a 'shopping list' of persuasive techniques. Once you've identified a technique, always give an example and explain its intended impact on the reader.



A close-up photograph of a camera lens, showing the intricate details of the lens elements and the aperture. The lens is illuminated with warm, golden light, creating a bokeh effect in the background. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, containing the text "VISUAL TEXTS" in black, bold, uppercase letters.

**VISUAL TEXTS**

# ANALYSING VISUAL TEXTS

It is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Indeed, persuasive writing is often accompanied by visual material - including photographs, cartoons, graphs and charts - which can help to persuade the reader to agree with a particular point of view. The images that accompany a piece of persuasive writing are often as powerful as the words themselves.

## ANALYSING PHOTOGRAPHS

Here are some questions to think about when considering how photographs can be used to persuade. It is often a good idea to start by considering what has been included in the photograph and what has been left out. Photographs, like all media texts, are constructed. When someone takes a photograph, they make decisions about what will be included and left out of the photograph. In newspapers, writers often don't have a say about the images that accompany their article but subeditors usually choose an image that will reinforce the point-of-view and tone of the article.

- **SUBJECT**

Photographs usually have a subject. This is the focus of the photograph. Although the subject of a photograph is usually a person, this isn't necessarily the case. When you're looking at the subject, think about how they are dressed and their body language. These sort of visual cues can be subtly used to make us think about the issue in a particular way.

- **CAMERA ANGLE**

Photographers always consider how camera angle will contribute to the meaning of their photograph.

- **OVERSHOT.** The camera is positioned directly above the subject, looking down. This can create a sense of powerlessness and insignificance.
- **HIGH ANGLE.** The camera is positioned at an angle above the subject, looking down. This camera angle usually makes the subject appear small and powerless.
- **EYE LEVEL.** Most photographs are taken at eye level because it is how we're used to seeing the world. It can create a sense of normalcy.
- **LOW ANGLE.** The camera is positioned below the subject, looking up, giving them a sense of power and dominance.
- **UNDERSHOT.** The camera is positioned directly beneath the subject.

## • SHOT SIZE

Shot size refers to how close the camera is positioned to the subject.

- **EXTREME LONG SHOT.** An extreme long shot is when the camera is positioned a long way from the subject. Extreme long shots are usually used to show landscapes or cityscapes. This type of shot size could be used to show how vast or large a location is.
- **LONG SHOT.** In a long shot, people are usually visible but there is often a great deal of background as well. Long shots often depict places and provide some sort of commentary about how people in the frame are affected.
- **FULL SHOT.** A full shot shows a person from head to toe. Full shots can be used to show what a person is wearing or capture their body language, both of which can convey a great deal about an issue.
- **MID SHOT.** A mid shot shows the subject from the waist up, capturing aspects of their appearance and body language while helping to illustrate their facial expression more clearly.
- **CLOSE UP.** Close ups are usually used to emphasise the facial expressions of a subject. Whether pain, anguish, happiness or confusion, the close ups of these expressions can help to persuade an audience to accept a particular point of view.
- **EXTREME CLOSE UP.** Extreme close ups show a very small detail. It might be a shot of someone's eyes or something else entirely. Extreme close ups can create emphasis by capturing a detailed view of something related to the issue.

## • LIGHTING

Photographers think carefully about their use of lighting and how this contributes to the meaning created in their photograph.

- **KEY LIGHT.** The key light refers to the main light in a scene. Shots that are only lit with one light source can create shadows and areas of great contrast on the face of a subject.
- **FILL LIGHT.** A fill light is a secondary light source that softens shadows and helps to illuminate the face of a subject.
- **BACK LIGHT.** A back light is often used to create a subtle halo-effect around the edge of the subject. This can help distinguish them from a dark background.
- **HARD LIGHT.** Hard light refers to any light source that emits bright, direct light onto the face of a subject. This creates shadows, emphasises wrinkles and creates a sense of gritty realism.
- **SOFT LIGHT.** Soft light refers to any light source that is diffused or indirect. This is usually more flattering than hard light because it creates softer shadows.

- **COLOUR**

Colour always conveys meaning and can be a powerful persuasive technique. Always consider how colour contributes to the meaning conveyed by a photograph and how it might be used to persuade. Are the colours bright and vivid? Are they dull and desaturated? The colours themselves also convey meaning. Red is commonly used to convey passion and romance. Blue might create a sense of sadness or depression. The colour green might be used to reinforce an environmental message.

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- **FOCUS**

When discussing photographs, always consider how focus contributes to the image. Depth of field is a term that refers to how much of an image is in focus. Deep focus is when everything in an image, from the foreground through to the background, is completely in focus. This can help to emphasise the surroundings of the subject. The phrase ‘narrow depth of field’ is used to describe shots in which the focal distance is quite short. Photographs using narrow depth of field typically have the subject in focus while the background is completely blurred out. This technique can be used to emphasise the subject of the photograph.

- **COMPOSITION**

When analysing photographs, always consider how the shot has been composed. Think about the positioning of the subject and objects within the frame. Is the photograph balanced or asymmetrical? How does this help to represent the issue? What does it make the audience think and feel?

When you’re explaining how a photograph might be used to reinforce the point of view of an article, don’t get bogged down in unnecessary detail. Only discuss techniques that are appropriate and clearly being used to make the audience think or feel about the issue in a particular way.



- **Activity**

Describe how the above image, which accompanied an article about drug addiction, helps to create a sense of sympathy for the victims of drug abuse.



# ANALYSING CARTOONS

Cartoons often accompany opinion articles online and in newspapers. Political cartoons often stand alone as persuasive texts. If they accompany an article, they are usually not the work of the writer but often reinforce the message or tone of the article. Cartoons are often used to ridicule and caricature politicians. They might comment on the absurdity of a situation. Although people think about cartoons as light-hearted, they often use black humour to highlight important issues.

- **SUBJECT**

Who or what is depicted in the cartoon? How is the subject portrayed? How is the subject represented when compared to other elements in the illustration?

- **TO NE**

It's very useful to think about the overall tone of a cartoon. Is it humorous? Derisive? Dismal? Gloomy? How does the illustration make you feel?

- **CARICATURE**

Are particular features of the subject exaggerated or ridiculed? What might this make the audience think or feel about the subject?

- **COLOUR**

What type of colours are used in the illustration? How does this make the audience feel about the issue?

- **SYMBOLISM**

Is there anything in the cartoon that might symbolise or represent something else?

- **CAPTION**

Is there a caption or any text in the cartoon? How does this make the subject look? What does it suggest about the issue? How does it make the audience feel about the issue?

# CARTOON ANALYSIS



Cathy Wilcox, November 7, 2013.



Ron Tandberg, November 7, 2013.



## • Activity

In a paragraph of writing, describe how the above cartoons are intended to make you feel about an issue. Your response should make reference to the elements on Page 29.

Cartoons used by permission of Cathy Wilcox and Ron Tandberg.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## WHAT IS ONLINE PIRACY?

Online piracy is the process of copying television, films and music without paying for them. This is usually done by downloading torrents or streaming programs from sites hosting the material. Companies that create this content own the material, which they then make profits from by making online sales, selling cinema tickets, selling DVDs and Blu-ray discs and selling the programs to television networks. Copying or downloading this material deprives these companies of profit.

## RECENT RESEARCH

The Intellectual Property Awareness Foundation (IPAF) commissions research into the attitudes and behaviours of Australians in relation to online piracy of movies and TV programs. The research is conducted by Sycamore Research, an independent research organisation, in partnership with Newspoll. IPAF makes public the results of this research in order to inform the debate and to dispel some of the myths and preconceptions around the issue of piracy.

- Pirating movies or TV shows is not the social norm amongst Australians aged 12-17 (despite the anecdotal assertion that “everyone does it”) – 76% say they don’t pirate movies and TV shows.
- The majority of 12-17 year-olds who use websites to access pirated content recall viewing gambling advertisements and pop ups, and over a third recall sex industry advertisements. This supports recent academic research that found piracy websites are increasingly dependent on high-risk advertisements as their primary means of profit.<sup>1</sup>
- Almost half of Australians aged 12-17 agreed that the internet should be more regulated in order to prevent piracy- only 19% disagreed.
- Parental influence is a key factor in the behaviour of Australians aged 12-17. 78% of teens who don’t pirate say that their parents have spoken to them about piracy.
- The primary motivator for Australians of all ages pirating movies and TV shows is that it is free.

<sup>1</sup> “A systematic approach to measuring advertising transparency online: an Australian case study”, Dr. Paul A. Watters, University of Ballarat, 2013.

# Pursuing the right course demands an act of piracy

Christopher McKenzie, January 15 2013.

The way we consume film and television is changing. Audiences don't want to be chained to their television any more than they want to be shackled to a television schedule. People want to watch their favourite programs now. They want to tweet and blog. They want to be part of a global conversation. They want to devour an entire television series in one sitting instead of being tossed stale morsels months after they air overseas. They only want the television shows that they care about, not the expensive and slightly sickening buffet dished out by pay television networks.

What have Australians done in the face of an industry that stubbornly refuses to change? We turned to piracy.

If television networks won't give us what we want when we want it, we'll hoist the Jolly Roger and take it for ourselves.

Maybe it's our convict roots. Maybe it's all the years our wallets have been gouged by pay-television providers. Whatever the reason, Australians are some of the most enthusiastic pirates in the world. In 2011, a report by the Australian Content Industry Group revealed that almost 4.7 million Australians pirate films and television online. They calculated that internet piracy results in an annual loss of \$900 million to Australian retail. By 2016, it is predicted that over 40,000 jobs will disappear if we don't stop plundering.

You might think these are alarming statistics but it's only part of the story.

2012 was one of the most profitable years on record for film studios. Movies like *The Avengers* and *Skyfall* helped propel box office figures into the stratosphere when, for the first time in history, ticket sales exceeded \$10.7 billion. At the same time, television has prospered. Programs

like *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead* have ushered in a new era of storytelling.

All of this has occurred despite widespread internet piracy.

Although piracy is the wrong thing to do, you've got to admit that it's forcing the industry to evolve. They tried the heavy-handed approach that worked so well for the music industry. Surely suing a couple of teenage girls for downloading *Jersey Shore* will fix the problem, they thought. Industry boffins also tried a little scare mongering. "You wouldn't steal a car," the anti-piracy commercial warned. The internet responded by confirming that, if it was possible, not only would they love to download a car but they'd also make copies for their friends as well. The industry even flirted with feeble copy protection techniques before basement-dwelling nerds across the globe proved they could be cracked open faster than a can of soda.

The spectacular failure of these tactics has forced the industry to innovate. For a nation of pirates marooned without legal or timely access to their favourite shows, there's finally a glimmer of hope on the horizon. In the United States, Netflix decided to tackle internet piracy by commissioning groundbreaking political drama *House of Cards*. The series, which starred Kevin Spacey, premiered internationally on Netflix and iTunes. In a speech at the Edinburgh Television Festival, Kevin Spacey lauded the program's success, explaining that the audience will pay when networks give them what they want. "The audience wants control," he said. "They want the freedom. If they want to binge as they've been doing on *House of Cards* and lots of other shows, then we should let them binge."

In 2013, director Rob Thomas crowd sourced over \$5 million to create a *Veronica Mars* movie, proving that fans are willing to support content

that they're interested in.

The success of iTunes in Australia has also proven that people are willing to pay for content if it's convenient and timely. The increase in piracy has also forced television networks to fast track programs from the US so they screen at almost exactly the same time and ensure that Australian audiences aren't left behind. Why is the industry now so keen to embrace digital downloads, fast tracking and innovative business models?

The answer is piracy.

And while piracy may cause moderate losses

when it comes to retail, Australian consumers have proven that they will pay for content when they're not treated like second-class digital citizens. Australian pirates have given the entertainment industry a thorough keelhauling but it'll be better for it.

In the next few years, I'm going to keep the Jolly Roger hoisted. If the film and television industry is going to treat Australia like a digital backwater, they'll have a mutiny on their hands...

## It's theft, pure and simple...

**George Reed, January 18 2013.**

You've been working hard all day. You're exhausted. You wipe the sweat from your brow, expecting a hefty pay check for your effort. Instead, your boss smiles, and thanks you for sharing your labour. This might sound absurd but it's the unfortunate situation that millions of people working in the entertainment industry face every time you download films or television programs.

Pirating films and television is theft. Pure and simple.

We try to ignore this fact. We call it file sharing. We insist that it's somehow different to sticking a copy of Anchorman down your pants and running the gauntlet of security guards at JB Hi-Fi. At the end of the day, when we download films and television programs, we're no better than petty criminals.

The problem is perception. It doesn't seem like shoplifting. After all, we're not stealing something tangible and we're doing it in the anonymity of cyberspace without the immediate threat of a burly security guard calling the cops.

Nevertheless, we are stealing.

We're stealing something that hundreds, perhaps

thousands, of creative people have worked on.

Piracy is decimating the entertainment industry. Whenever we download a film or television program, we're undermining the entertainment business, a business consisting of honest, hardworking individuals who just want to get paid. In Australia, one episode of a television program costs little more than a cup of coffee. We're willing to pay a barista to grind some beans and froth a little milk but, for some reason, we're reluctant to reward the talented individuals who script, shoot and star in a television drama series.

We don't think about the thousands of ordinary people who work in the entertainment industry - everyone from the dolly grips and lighting technicians to the personal assistants and ushers. It's not all limousines and red carpets, you know. Most people who work in the entertainment industry are ordinary people who need to put food on the table and pay off the mortgage like everyone else. When you fork out a few dollars to buy a television program, you're supporting the people working behind the scenes who make your favourite shows possible.

It costs millions of dollars to make films and



television programs. When we download films and television programs, we're stealing employment opportunities from thousands of people in the entertainment industry. According to a report by the Australian Content Industry Group, that 40,000 jobs in Australia will disappear if our damaging addiction to piracy

continues. Surely the hardworking people who bring you programs like *Breaking Bad* and *The Newsroom* deserve to be rewarded. At the end of a hard day's work, you expect to be paid and it's no different for people in the entertainment industry.

## DISCUSSION: Piracy

Yesterday, 12.06 pm

Trinity



**Joined:** Jul, 2007.  
**Location:** Sydney.

**Posting Frequency:**



Don't studios realise that piracy actual benefits the film and television industry? A research firm called Ofcom published a report earlier this year which found that people who pirate content end up spending more money on film and television programs than people who buy their content legally.

How is this possible? If a new television program comes along, I'm reluctant to fork out my hard earned cash. What if it's a stinker? What if I don't like it? Sure, I could get some use out of the DVD as a drink coaster. That's where piracy actually starts to benefit the industry. If I can download films and television for free, I'm going to be exposed to more content and I'm more likely to stumble across something that I'll genuinely enjoy. If I like something, I'll gladly purchase the box set or the blu-ray. And how do I know if I'm going to like a television program if I can't watch it first?

Before the industry starts crying poor about the so-called 'loss of revenue' caused by pirates, they need to take a hard look at the facts. Like most of us, most of the television that I download has been obtained from BitTorrent sites. There's a limit to how much money I can spend every month on entertainment. Since there is not a chance in hell that I'd ever purchase this much television, how can the industry chalk up these sales as a 'loss'? A few years ago, Felix Oberholzer-Gee from the Harvard Business School did a study which point-blank proved that piracy has little effect on the industry because people wouldn't buy the content that they pirate anyway.

Back in the 1980s, record companies whipped themselves into a frenzy over cassette tapes, claiming that people recording songs from the radio would devastate the recording industry. What a load of rubbish! Companies also went ballistic when people started recording television programs with VCRs. To their disgust, some people even shared these recordings with their friends. The horror! Did the entertainment industry collapse? Of course not. It continues to be profitable to this very day.

If we're going to crack down on piracy, maybe we ought to ban libraries too! After all, you can walk into a library and borrow a new hardcover book without paying a cent. Armed with their rubber stamps and barcode readers, these librarians are a vile scourge on the publishing industry. They must be stopped. How are best-selling authors expected to sleep at night with these criminals sharing their books?

The film and television industry also claims that if people don't abandon piracy their favourite shows will disappear overnight. This couldn't be further from the truth. People have been telling stories for thousands of years. It's only in the last century that people have been making obscene amounts of money from it. People will continue to make films and television. The only thing that will disappear overnight is the antiquated way that studios are trying to squeeze every last cent out of creative people.

Despite the rise of internet piracy, the film and television industries have continued to be obscenely profitable.

Reply



## DISCUSSION: Piracy

Today, 1.07 pm

**Plague**



**Joined:** Jan, 2012.

**Location:** Melbourne.

**Posting Frequency:**



So the people working in film and television should suffer just because you don't want to pay for something? We should simply overhaul the entire industry because you don't feel like spending a couple of dollars to watch Twilight?

Suppose I can't really criticise. I've downloaded my fair share of films and television. Eventually I decided enough was enough. There were a couple of reasons for stopping. First, I was drowning in popular culture. I was in an absurd situation where I had more television shows than I could possibly ever watch. At about the same time, I started to take my own filmmaking pretty seriously. I started uploading my own short films to YouTube. I'd spent hours writing scripts, storyboarding and convincing friends to act for me. When the film was finally shot, I'd spend hours hunched over my laptop cutting it together. Filmmaking is something that I love. Eventually, I'd like to make it profitable. I don't have any illusions about becoming a famous director. I'd just like to work in the industry. Maybe as a camera operator or an editor. Thinking about employment, it finally dawned on me. It's difficult enough finding jobs in the entertainment industry without the threat of piracy. Every time you decide not to pay for something, you're stopping ordinary people from doing something that they love.

Equipped with a couple of iTunes gift cards, I decided that I'd only download content legally. I stopped woofing down television shows and found myself only spending money on the things that I really wanted. When a film comes out by my favourite director, I'm more than happy to spend money on cinema tickets and popcorn. I've made a little money on the side shooting and editing videos for friends and family. I'm more than happy to spend this money on the films and television programs that I genuinely enjoy. Don't you think the people who made this stuff deserve to be rewarded?

Your point about libraries is flawed. It only takes one person to write a novel. Films, television programs and video games usually have hundreds of people working on them. It's expensive to create this stuff, particularly when studios are for professionals at the height of their careers - whether they're writers, cinematographers or actors. If a movie costs several hundred million to make, it seems only right to pay \$30 to own a copy on blu-ray. After all, it's not the disc you're paying for it's the tens of thousands of hours that people spent making the film. When it think of it that way, it's a bargain, really.

I reckon it's time you put other people ahead of your own selfishness.

**Reply**



### • **Activity 1**

Select one of the pieces of writing from this section and read it carefully, underlining the words and phrases you think are being used to persuade.

### • **Activity 2**

Write a short analysis of this piece of writing, explaining how the writer uses written language to persuade.

# SAMPLE ANNOTATION

Here's an example of how you might annotate an article when first thinking about how a writer has used language to persuade. First, make sure you read the article all the way through. On your second read, highlight the words and phrases that have the most impact on you as a reader. In your annotation, briefly identify the persuasive technique used and how it is intended to make the audience feel.

## Pursuing the right course demands an act of piracy

Christopher McKenzie, January 15 2013.

The way we consume film and television is changing. Audiences don't want to be **chained to their television** any more than they want to be **shackled to a television schedule**. People want to watch their favourite programs now. They want to tweet and blog. They want to be part of a global conversation. They want to **devour** an entire television series in one sitting instead of being **tossed stale morsels** months after they air overseas. They only want the television shows that they care about, not the expensive and **slightly sickening buffet** dished out by pay television networks.

What have Australians done in the face of an industry that stubbornly refuses to change? We turned to piracy.

If television networks won't give us what we want when we want it, we'll **hoist the Jolly Roger** and take it for ourselves.

Maybe it's our convict roots. Maybe it's all the years our wallets have been **gouged** by pay-television providers. Whatever the reason, Australians are some of the most enthusiastic pirates in the world. In 2011, a report by the Australian Content Industry Group revealed that almost 4.7 million Australians pirate films and television online. They calculated that internet piracy results in an annual loss of \$900 million to Australian retail. By 2016, it is predicted that over 40,000 jobs will disappear if we don't stop **plundering**.

You might think these are alarming statistics but it's only part of the story.

2012 was one of the most profitable years on record for film studios. Movies like *The Avengers* and *Skyfall* helped propel box office figures into the stratosphere when, for the first time in history, ticket sales exceeded \$10.7 billion. At the same time, television has prospered. Programs like *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead* have ushered in a new era of storytelling.

All of this has occurred despite widespread internet piracy.

Although piracy is the wrong thing to do, you've got to admit that it's forcing the industry to evolve. They tried the heavy-handed approach that worked so well for the music industry.

**Surely suing a couple of teenage girls for downloading Jersey Shore will fix the problem, they thought.** Industry **boffins** also tried a little scare mongering. "You wouldn't steal a car," the anti-piracy commercial warned. The internet responded by confirming that, if it was possible, not only would they love to download a car but they'd also make copies for their friends as well. The industry even flirted with feeble copy protection techniques before basement-dwelling nerds across the globe proved they could be **cracked open faster than a can of soda.**

The **spectacular** failure of these tactics has forced the industry to innovate. For a nation of pirates marooned without legal or timely

Metaphor, 'chained to their television' makes viewers seem like victims.

Alliteration and metaphor which makes broadcast TV seem unfair.

Food metaphor used to make the reader feel that TV schedule is unfair. Metaphor continues, alliteration used to describe the 'slightly sickening buffet' of pay television.

Metaphor referring to traditional pirates, making the idea of pirating seem more harmless.

Powerful word, 'gouged' makes the reader feel like we're being ripped off.

The word 'plundering' is a euphemism which doesn't sound as bad as theft or stealing.

Mocking tone ridicules the industry's response to the issue.

Simile makes efforts to stop piracy seem inadequate.

Adjective creates the impression that it's industry that has failed - not the fault of pirates.

access to their favourite shows, there's finally a glimmer of hope on the horizon. In the United States, Netflix decided to tackle internet piracy by commissioning groundbreaking political drama *House of Cards*. The series, which starred Kevin Spacey, premiered internationally on Netflix and iTunes. In a speech at the Edinburgh Television Festival, Kevin Spacey lauded the program's success, explaining that the audience will pay when networks give them what they want. "The audience wants control," he said.

"They want the freedom. If they want to binge as they've been doing on *House of Cards* and lots of other shows, then we should let them binge."

In 2013, director Rob Thomas crowd sourced over \$5 million to create a *Veronica Mars* movie, proving that fans are willing to support content that they're interested in.

The success of iTunes in Australia has also proven that people are willing to pay for content if it's convenient and timely. The increase

*Use of expert opinion and evidence to build a case for piracy.*

in piracy has also forced television networks to fast track programs from the US so they screen at almost exactly the same time and ensure that Australian audiences aren't left behind. Why is the industry now so keen to embrace digital downloads, fast tracking and innovative business models?

The answer is piracy.

And while piracy may cause moderate losses when it comes to retail, Australian consumers have proven that they will pay for content when they're not treated like second-class digital citizens. Australian pirates have given the entertainment industry a thorough keelhauling but it'll be better for it.

In the next few years, I'm going to keep the *Jolly Roger* hoisted. If the film and television industry is going to treat Australia like a digital backwater, they'll have a mutiny on their hands...

*Use of adjective makes the reader feel that the impact on industry isn't as bad.*

*Continued metaphor of old fashioned piracy doesn't make theft seem as bad.*

# SAMPLE ANALYSIS

Here is an example of how you might write about how language is used to persuade in the article 'Pursuing the right course demands an act of piracy'.

In the article 'Pursuing the right course demands an act of piracy', writer Christopher McKenzie uses a number of techniques - including metaphor, simile, powerful words and evidence - to persuade the reader that online piracy isn't that bad and, in fact, has a beneficial effect on the entertainment industry.

His argument opens with a metaphor which makes his reader feel like it's television viewers who are the victims, rather than the companies whose material is being copied, when he describes how audiences have been 'chained' to their televisions and 'shackled to a television schedule'. Here, the use of alliteration helps to emphasise the argument that companies aren't keeping up with changing technology, helping to convince the reader that piracy isn't that bad.

Towards the end of this paragraph, McKenzie uses a number of food related metaphors to describe the entertainment industry. Audiences are described in a very positive light, eager to 'devour' new films and television programs. He continues the metaphor, casting the entertainment industry in a much more negative way by describing how they toss people 'stale morsels' months after they air in other countries and how Australians have been forced to endure the 'slightly sickening buffet' dished up by pay television stations. These metaphors help to persuade the reader that the entertainment industry is treating audiences poorly, building support for his case that piracy isn't that bad.

McKenzie builds further support for his case by using a number of adjectives to describe how audiences have been 'gouged' by expensive pay television providers and anti-piracy efforts from the industry have been a 'spectacular failure'. These adjectives are used to describe the industry as the problem, rather than pirates.

Midway through the article, McKenzie takes on a scathing tone to describe the way the entertainment industry has attempted to deter pirates. He describes the industry 'suing a couple of teenage girls for downloading Jersey Shore' and mockingly refers to the 'industry boffins' who created anti-piracy campaigns. He uses simile to describe copy protection techniques that can be 'cracked open faster than a can of soda'. His scathing tone and use of simile help to convince readers that the entertainment industry is the problem and internet piracy isn't that bad.

Towards the end of the article, McKenzie uses evidence and expert opinion to praise those in the entertainment industry who are embracing new forms of distribution and funding. He quotes a speech by Kevin Spacey describing the success of the Netflix series House of Cards. The use of this quote helps to convince the reader that the

industry is out of date and piracy isn't that bad. He goes on to cite the example of Rob Thomas who raised over \$5 million to fund a Veronica Mars movie. This evidence is used to support the argument that piracy isn't that bad and might actually be having a beneficial impact on the industry.

McKenzie rounds off his argument by downplaying the impact of piracy, claiming that it only causes 'moderate' losses for the industry. This adjective is important, helping to persuade the reader that piracy doesn't have such a terrible impact. He finishes his argument with another metaphor, describing how if entertainment companies continue treating Australia like a 'digital backwater' they'll have a 'mutiny' on their hands. This metaphor, which compares online pirates to traditional pirates who hoist the 'Jolly Roger', paints an amusing picture which helps to convince the reader that piracy isn't that bad.

Throughout this article, McKenzie uses a number of techniques - including metaphor, simile, adjectives and evidence - to convince the reader that piracy is not so bad and that it's simply a response to the entertainment industry not keeping up with technology.

# PERSUASIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES

Now it's time to try your own hand at persuasive writing. Choose one of the tasks from the list below. Think carefully about your argument and the different persuasive techniques you might use to convince your reader of your point of view.

- **LETTER TO THE EDITOR.** Write a letter to the editor stating your opinion on internet piracy. Remember to think about the issue and gather evidence to support your points of view.
- **FEATURE ARTICLE.** Find out more about online piracy, such as the facts about its impact on the entertainment industry. Write a feature article exploring the arguments for and against internet piracy.
- **LEAFLET.** Create an anti-piracy leaflet aimed at teenagers to discourage them from pirating films and television programs. What arguments would you make to discourage people from doing this?
- **ADVERTISEMENT.** Create an A3 advertisement which aims to discourage piracy. Try to think of clever and memorable slogans that will help persuade your target audience. Also provide a few paragraphs of further information.
- **TV ADVERTISEMENT.** Write the script and storyboard a short advertisement about internet piracy.

# ASSESSMENT TASK: WRITING



**0:45** MINUTES TO COMPLETE THIS TEST



# INTERNET PIRACY

What do you think about the issue of internet piracy? Write a letter to the editor stating your opinion on this topic.

- **PLANNING.** Read over the facts and figures on the following page for facts, figures and arguments that might help you write your letter.
- **INTRODUCTION.** Start off with an introductory paragraph which clearly states your contention on the issue.
- **PARAGRAPHS.** Organise your arguments into paragraphs, providing arguments or evidence to support your opinion.
- **PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES.** Think about how you might use persuasive techniques - such as emotive language, metaphor or simile - to help persuade your reader.
- **CONCLUSION.** Finish with a concluding paragraph which brings your argument to a close and ends on a persuasive and convincing note.
- **PROOFREADING AND EDITING.** Edit your writing when you are finished to ensure there are no mistakes, such as spelling or punctuation errors.



**WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT INTERNET PIRACY?  
CONVINCE US OF YOUR OPINION USING  
PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES.**

# ARGUMENTS ABOUT PIRACY

## • ARGUMENTS AGAINST PIRACY

- Piracy is a form of theft.
- There are more and more ways to access legitimate content online.
- Websites that host pirated content make enormous profits from advertising pornography, gambling, scams and other questionable activities.
- 60% of the advertising on pirate sites is malware or scams which can infect your computer with viruses or compromise your cyber security.
- Films and television programs are expensive to produce and piracy affects financial returns to the industry. If content isn't profitable, it impacts the ability of the industry to finance more films or TV programs.
- It's the right of the filmmaker to determine how their film is released and monetised. Piracy takes that choice out of their hands and deprives them of any profit from their work.
- When you purchase a film or television program, you're supporting the industry and keeping thousands of crew members, cast and support industries in work.
- Buying films and television programs means you get bonus features and cool packaging.
- Owning a physical copy is better than having a dodgy download.
- There may be criminal or civil penalties for piracy.
- Morally, it's the wrong thing to do.

## • ARGUMENTS FOR PIRACY

- Pirated films and television programs are free.
- Pirated films and television shows are sometimes available before they are released in Australia.
- Some programs are not legally available for purchase on all devices.
- The companies that make film and television programs and the actors who are in them appear to make a lot of money.
- Using a subscription television services means that I have to pay for channels and content that I don't want.
- It's a way to preview films and television before purchasing.
- If the government or the movie companies really wanted to stop piracy, they could do so.
- I'm already paying for my internet downloads so why should I pay more for the content?
- It's sharing, not theft.
- It's just a digital copy and therefore has no real value.
- I'm just one individual. How can my activity have any impact on the film and television industry?

Lined writing area with 25 horizontal lines.

Blank lined writing area with 30 horizontal lines.

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

A series of 32 horizontal lines for writing, arranged in a single column.

# PERSUASIVE WRITING: ASSESSMENT SHEET

NAME:

	Very High (5 marks)	High (4 marks)	Medium (3 marks)	Low (2 marks)	Very Low (1 marks)
Structure	<input type="radio"/> A very well developed argument which is divided into paragraphs. There is an introduction, body paragraphs with supporting evidence and a strong conclusion.	<input type="radio"/> A well developed argument which is divided into paragraphs. There is an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion.	<input type="radio"/> You have organised your ideas into paragraphs but there might not be a clear introduction and conclusion. Your ideas needed to be organised more carefully.	<input type="radio"/> Little organisation. You may not have an introduction, conclusion or body paragraphs with supporting evidence.	<input type="radio"/> Very little organisation. No introduction, conclusion or body paragraphs with supporting evidence.
Persuasive devices	<input type="radio"/> You have used a range of persuasive techniques, such as emotive language, metaphor or rhetorical questions, in a sustained and confident way	<input type="radio"/> You have used a range of persuasive techniques such as emotive language, metaphor or rhetorical questions.	<input type="radio"/> You have used some persuasive techniques, such as emotive language, metaphor or rhetorical questions, throughout your writing.	<input type="radio"/> You have used a few persuasive techniques, such as emotive language, metaphor or rhetorical questions, throughout your writing.	<input type="radio"/> You have used very few persuasive techniques, such as emotive language, metaphor or rhetorical questions, and mainly rely on just stating opinion.
Vocabulary	<input type="radio"/> You have used a range of words related to the topic in a confident, precise and expressive manner.	<input type="radio"/> You have used a range of words related to the topic in a confident manner.	<input type="radio"/> You have used words appropriate to the topic that help you to convey meaning but some words may have been used incorrectly.	<input type="radio"/> Although you have used some words appropriate to the topic, they are often simple. More difficult words may be used incorrectly.	<input type="radio"/> Mostly simple words have been used and your work is very short.
Punctuation and spelling	<input type="radio"/> Your spelling is correct and you have used a sophisticated and varied vocabulary.	<input type="radio"/> Most of your spelling is correct and you use a good range of words appropriate to the task.	<input type="radio"/> There are a few spelling errors in your work, you need to ensure you use a spelling checker, dictionary and have someone look over your essay to eliminate such errors.	<input type="radio"/> There are many spelling errors which suggests that you need to proofread your work more carefully and get someone else to read over it.	<input type="radio"/> There are many spelling errors which suggests that you need to proofread your work more carefully. Make a list of these words and try to learn them.

TOTAL: / 20



# PHOTO CREDITS

**Page 1:** Compressed by Lucretious.

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