Language Analysis

Identifying Elements for Analysis

A checklist

The following is a checklist of important elements you need to identify in the persuasive writing piece in the language analysis section of the exam:

- **Author –** who wrote the piece?

- **Text type –** is this a letter, opinion column, speech or editorial?

- **Publication –** where did this opinion piece appear?

- **Audience –** who is the audience of the publication? Who is the opinion piece appealing to? How would they currently feel about the issue?

- **Contention –** what is the main point of view of the opinion piece?

- **Arguments supporting contention –** what are the main arguments the author is using?

- **Title –** how is the title persuasive or engaging?

- **Persuasive techniques –** what are at least 10 examples of persuasive techniques? Do certain techniques recur throughout the entire piece?

- **Visuals –** how does the accompanying picture link to the author's point of view?

- **Tone –** what are the main persuasive techniques used in this piece, what tone best describes these techniques?

Written Persuasive Techniques

- **Techniques to emphasize the message – rhetorical devices**

  - repetition
  - similes
  - exaggeration

- **Techniques to make the audience feel something about the message – emotive techniques**

  - appeal to fear
  - appeal to greed

- appeal to fairness
- emotive language
- inclusive language

- **Techniques to make the audience feel the message is reasonable – logic devices**

- statistics
- examples
- expert opinion

- **Techniques to make the audience trust the person delivering the message**

- personal anecdotes
- inclusive language

Visual Persuasive Techniques

- **Image**

- Who or what is the image? How is it related to the issue?

- **Focus**

- What is our attention drawn to in the picture? Is it because of size? Position? Language? Why is this element important?

- **Emphasis and purpose**

- What is the main subject of the picture? What attribute or characteristic of this subject is being emphasized? For what purpose? How are we as an audience meant to feel? How does this link to the contention of the written piece?

Writing Introduction

Identify:

- Issue
- Author
- Text type
- Publication
- Contention
- Title and its significance
- Audience

- Tone

Phrases and words to use...

Is entitled...
Contends that..
Argues that..
Written in response to...
Responds to the issue of...
Maintains a...tone throughout
Is directed at an...audience

Writing Body of Analysis

There are two ways the body of your analysis can be structured:

1. *Identify key persuasive techniques used in the piece* – such as emotive techniques or reason techniques. Base your paragraphs on the techniques used.
2. *Identify main points and sections of the opinion piece* – structure your paragraphs around an analysis of each of the sections – i.e the opening/introduction, the middle part of the opinion piece, the conclusion.

Analysis within your paragraphs:

In order to provide quality analysis you must –

1. Identify and describe the technique being used
2. Provide examples
3. Analyse the intended persuasive impact of the examples on the audience and how they are being used to support the author's arguments or contention.

Identify technique*:* At the beginning of her opinion piece Voxi creates a series of similes and comparisons that are designed to make the audience link digital technology to things that we consider great and ingenious.

Provide examples: Voxi says that people who have moved history forward "have been like the grit in an oyster. Gritty people produce pearls." She gives the example of Copernicus, Galileo and Darwin as people who have moved forward history.

Analyse examples: By comparing the invention of digital technology to Darwin and Galileo Voxi wants the audience to feel that digital technology will have a great and lasting impact on us like the discoveries of these great scientists. Further, when she describes people who have moved history forward as being

like "grit in the oyster" she wants the audience to see that marvelous things can come from what might first appear as not special.

Analysing Visuals

- **What is the image?**
- **What is our attention drawn to?**
- **What characteristic is being emphasized?**
- **How does it link the author's contention?**

In the accompanying picture we see an image of a transparent head with digital like components floating in a stack from within it. Our focus is drawn to the digital technology floating from the head. The purpose of the picture is for the audience to associate digital technology with amazing ideas that can be produced one after another. This supports Voxi's contention that digital technology will "revolutionise the way we learn and think."

Writing The Conclusion

Conclusions can be most effective when they focus on the conclusion of the opinion piece you have been asked to analyse:

Voxi concludes her opinion piece by describing the two positions that can be taken on digital technology. Someone who doesn't want to embrace it is a "loser." To not embrace change means we could still be "swinging in the trees." On the other hand embracing digital technology is about being "excited" and "informed," the "experience of discovery" and "being in touch and connected." Voxi wants to overwhelm that audience with how much of a positive experience digital technology is, while at the same time making them fear being a "loser" is they do not embrace it.