# Teaching writing in secondary English in the NAPLAN era

## The experiences of secondary English teachers

FINAL REPORT 2020 I SUSANNE GANNON

Australian Association for the Teaching of English

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

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# PREFACE

This report presents findings from research investigating the writing pedagogies, beliefs and practices of English teachers in the context of a decade of NAPLAN testing, where writing has been consistently identified as problematic in secondary schools. The research aimed to develop and trial a survey tool to map writing pedagogies in secondary English; and a protocol for generating in-depth case studies of writing pedagogies and practices. These comprised the two phases of a mixed method study undertaken with teachers in Queensland and Tasmania through 2018 and 2019, with potential to scale up to other sites.

Findings from both phases of the study with the Queensland and Tasmanian cohorts provide insights that are consistent with other research into NAPLAN effects on the teaching of writing, however they are also indicative of a range of other influences and the continuing commitment of English teachers to the needs of their students and their contexts.

This report briefly reviews pertinent literature and outlines aims, questions, methods and the ethical dimensions of this study. Findings are presented in summary form, with qualitative case studies providing snapshots in time of pedagogical practice in the teaching of writing in four schools. Recommendations are made for teachers, schools, professional associations and government sectors.

## About the author

Susanne researches issues of equity in education including: gender, poverty and diversity; higher education and aspiration; and curriculum and pedagogy in secondary English. She is current co-editor of the journal *Gender and Education*, regional editor of the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, and is a previous editor of *English in Australia*. Prior to beginning her career in the tertiary sector, Susanne was a secondary English teacher and English curriculum adviser.

Associate Professor Susanne Gannon

## Acknowledgements

# INTRODUCTION

While there have been various investigations of the impact of standardised testing in Australian schools over the decade since NAPLAN (National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy) was introduced, few have focused on extended writing and the experiences and impacts on the professional knowledge and practices of secondary English teachers. Yet these are the teachers most often charged with the responsibility for teaching writing.

## The Project

A two-phase mixed method pilot study was conducted across two Australian states between October 2018 and December 2019. The two phases of the study were an online survey followed by qualitative case studies incorporating instructional artefacts, teacher reflections and interviews. It examined what teachers say and demonstrate about the writing pedagogies that are currently practised in secondary schools, and the influences of NAPLAN on English.

## Phase 1 – Online Survey

Teachers who participated were located in Tasmania or Queensland and were current teachers of English, meaning that they had taught English in a secondary school during the 12 months prior to completing the survey. Of the participants who completed the online survey, the total number who fulfilled the current teaching requirement across both states was 181. They were a representative sample of the secondary English teaching specialization across sectors, regions, school socio-economic advantage, ages and years of experience, and reflected the relative size of the profession in each state (Gannon, 2019). The teachers who participated in this survey were broadly representative in age and experience, however, significantly more women than men participated. Just over half had begun teaching English prior to NAPLAN testing, and just under half since the introduction of NAPLAN. Around two-thirds of participants were current members of their state English Teaching Associations (ETAs).

Not all questions were answered by all participants as the survey used skip logic to deliver relevant questions to each person, and teachers also could skip over questions if they chose to do so.

The online survey had five parts: 1 'You as a teacher', 2 'Your English class', 3 'Writing in your school', 4 'Your networks and resources' and 5 'Conclusion'. Parts 2 and 3 had the most questions as they aimed to drill down into the detail of current pedagogical practice.

The NAPLAN effect featured mainly in Part 3 where teachers reported on their experience of NAPLAN inside their schools. The survey was lengthy but gathered considerable information on domains of practice. Survey items were constructed with reference to other survey-based and mixed method research conducted in Australia pertaining to NAPLAN (Cumming et al., 2018; Dulfer et al., 2012; Frawley & McLean Davies, 2015; Lingard et al., 2015; Perelman, 2017; Polesel et al., 2012, 2014; Rogers et al. 2016, 2018; Spina, 2017; Wyn et al., 2014; Wyatt-Smith & Jackson, 2016) and overseas (Applebee & Langer, 2011a, 2011b; Dockrell et al., 2016; Fisher et al., 2011; Graham et al., 2007; Graham & Perin, 2007; Harland et al. 2014; Kiuhara et al., 2009; Sundeen, 2015)[1]. A range of materials with relevance to writing pedagogies in English was also consulted throughout the process of developing survey items (Boas & Gazis, 2016; Caldwell & White, 2017; Comber, 2016; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Dove, 2018; Frawley, 2014; Locke, 2014), including the body of work by this researcher (Dove & Gannon, 2017; Gannon & Davies, 2007; Gannon, 2011, 2013, 2014).

The findings of the online survey have been published as:

Gannon, S. (2019). Teaching Writing in the NAPLAN era: The experiences of secondary English Teachers. *English in Australia.* 54(2), 43-56.

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[1]  Note that further important reports have been published since this survey was designed and undertaken. These include: Carter et al. 2018, McGaw et al., 2020; Rose et al., 2018; Simpson Reeves et al. 2018, 2019; Swain et al., 2018; Thomas, 2019; Thompson, 2012.

# FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NAPLAN test results have different consequences for English teachers in secondary schools than for other teachers: English teachers are blamed for poor results and held responsible for turning them around.

An underlying sense of anxiety is evident among teachers about how NAPLAN writing compares in their school to other schools, states and the nation. Teachers in disadvantaged schools express greatest concerns and are most likely to report a downward trend in writing results at their school.

**Recommendation 1 (Teachers and schools):**
Although English teachers have particular experience and expertise in teaching writing, they are not responsible for improving school NAPLAN results. Sustained whole-school writing-focused programs where all teachers share responsibility for writing improvement are most likely to lead to NAPLAN improvements in writing.

In those schools where NAPLAN writing results had improved, English teachers ascribed improvement most often to a school-wide focus on writing / literacy. However, where NAPLAN writing results had worsened, English teachers most often ascribed the change to attributes of the students themselves (to *attitudinal or affective factors*, e.g. disengaged, disinterested, anxious; or, to *demographic factors* e.g. low SES, EAL, Indigenous, boys). Others noted detrimental effects of pedagogical overreliance on explicit teaching / direct instruction / scaffolding; or conversely, to lack of coherence or vision in the teaching of writing across the school.

**Recommendation 2 (Teachers and schools):**
In disadvantaged schools, a sustained whole-school focus on writing is particularly important and should be underpinned by an assumption that all students, regardless of demographic factors, have the capacity to develop as writers. Positive student attitudes to writing can be cultivated, e.g. through low stakes writing opportunities that build confidence and enjoyment, including those that provide authentic audiences and purposes.

Preparation for NAPLAN varies widely between schools and includes practising tests in class and the redesigning of the English curriculum to fit NAPLAN timetables and text types. NAPLAN takes time from English in many schools and is often seen as counter to good writing pedagogy. Almost half the respondents viewed NAPLAN as having excessive influence over English teaching. However, about a third said that in their schools NAPLAN was *not* a primary driver of what happens in English in Years 7 and 9.

**Recommendation 3 (Teachers and schools):**
English curriculum time and resources should not be repurposed or reduced to NAPLAN preparation. NAPLAN focused writing does not necessarily promote good writing pedagogy. English teachers have broad repertoires of practices for teaching writing in ways that enhance student mastery and independence. A sustained comprehensive English program that emphasizes writing throughout will impact positively on student writing outcomes in all assessment contexts, including NAPLAN.

Although NAPLAN writing results were perceived as high stakes and were seen as very important to school executive groups and systems in evidence-based decision-making, the data that they provided was of limited use to teachers in teaching writing. NAPLAN data ranked significantly lower in usefulness than a wide range of in-class formative and summative assessment practices. In a response that ranked various sources of evidence for usefulness, NAPLAN data was not selected as the most useful evidence by any of the participants.

**Recommendation 4 (Teachers and schools):**
English teachers have considerable knowledge and expertise in assessing student learning outcomes and progress. The evidence that they gather through in-class formative and summative assessment, and discussions with students about their writing, should be recognized as providing rich and granular information about student learning.

Most English teachers feel satisfied or highly satisfied about teaching writing in English, with their satisfaction relating most frequently to their commitment to their subject and to working with students and seeing them progress and develop. Teachers described the importance of conveying their own enjoyment of writing, emphasising the relevance of writing and seeking to enhance their students' experiences of success.

**Recommendation 5 (Teachers and schools):**
Recognise that teachers' engagement and interactions with their discipline and with their students are important resources that enhance learning.

Teachers were asked to reflect on how their most recent English unit had contributed to their students' senses of themselves as writers. Confidence was the most frequently named quality, with other responses including affective elements such as: enjoyment, encouragement, self-worth, excitement, satisfaction, growing independence, and ownership. Skills mentioned included: sense of audience, use of evidence in arguments and analytical essays, developing a thesis, use of tone, aesthetic features, stylistic choices, conciseness, and exam preparation. See Appendix One for wordclouds of open text responses.

Teacher concerns about the most recent task they had undertaken with their students overwhelmingly emphasised what are often called the mechanics of writing: punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, spelling. More than half of these assessment tasks had been undertaken in both class and home time.

More than a quarter were completed under exam conditions, which may have precluded opportunities for students to revise their work. Again, see Appendix One for wordcloud examples of open text responses.

Teachers' professional learning about how to teach writing is patchy. Most teachers did not remember learning how to teach writing in their initial teacher training, however, those few who did, mentioned learning about functional grammar / genres / text types. Very few mentioned learning about teaching creative writing, and even fewer about the writing process.



A distinction was made between craft knowledge (about writing itself) and pedagogical knowledge (about how to teach writing). Teachers identified their experience as English teachers as the most significant source of both craft and pedagogical knowledge.

Teachers were asked to rank order, in the context of the unit they had recently taught, the relevance of a set of instructional strategies that can be taught to students to improve writing quality (Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Graham & Perin, 2007; Graham et al., 2014; Kiuhara et al., 2009). While

researchers stress that teachers need to draw on multiple strategies to meet the needs of their students, the relative interest and use of these strategies indicates the preferences of teachers in Australia.

The top rankings were: 'plan, revise and edit own work', and 'identify specific reachable goals for writing', followed by 'use generic structures or text types scaffolds'. The lowest ranked strategy was 'adapt writing to different real world contexts and purposes'. Other infrequently used strategies were 'embed writing in an inquiry approach to learning' and 'develop a process approach to writing (e.g. a developmental writing portfolio)'. Moderately used strategies were 'analyse and emulate published examples of writing', 'combine sentences to create more complex clause structures' and 'collaborate with peers on writing'. Notably, according to meta-analysis undertaken by Graham and Perin (2007), learning to 'plan, edit and revise' has the strongest effect size for weak writers. The next most effective strategy, which was not highly ranked by this sample of teachers, was teaching students to collaborate on their writing, as they plan, draft, revise and edit their writing.

> **Recommendation 6 (Teachers and schools):**
> Allow time to teach students strategies for planning, editing and revising their own and each other's writing. Allow students to collaborate. Investigate and draw on a range of instructional strategies with demonstrated effectiveness.

The volume, frequency and diversity of opportunities for writing in low stakes contexts is relevant to developing a writing-focused classroom. Teachers selected non-assessable writing activites undertaken in class during the unit from a provided list. The most popular selection was 'working on drafts of their assignment', followed by 'copying notes from the board', which was then followed by 'completing short answer questions' and 'developing notes from small group discussions', and finally, 'summarizing' followed by 'free writing' and 'creative writing'. Although these brief indications of everyday writing practice are not detailed enough from which to draw significant conclusions, these activities appear to vary

in cognitive complexity and control. Both are important in extending student writing skills and autonomy. For example, 'developing notes from discussion' and 'summarizing' create different cognitive demands than 'copying notes'.

> **Recommendation 7 (Teachers and schools):**
> Continue to create varied opportunities for low-stakes writing to develop students' control and autonomy, and their expectations that an English class is a writing-focused class.

Most often English teachers indicated there was no real-world purpose for the writing that was undertaken in the unit, and no audience beyond the teacher for the writing that students produced during the unit.

Most often students received feedback on their drafts before final submission, with just over half of the participants indicating that feedback came from the teacher, and just over a third from peers. Peer feedback was almost always supported by 'guidelines, checklists, scaffolds or rubrics'.

Feedback from teachers was usually written and teachers then drew on the feedback most often by 'designing mini-lessons around areas of weakness' or 'keeping a detailed record to track each student's progress'. Less frequently, teachers held individual conferences or consultations with students, or differentiated instruction for students or groups. The least often used strategy was differentiated tasks for students.

Students were often required to draw on the feedback by developing 'personalised learning goals for their writing' or were required to 'summarise or write a reflection on the feedback'. Much less frequently were they required to 'rewrite their text in response to feedback' and very rarely to 'conference with peers on their feedback' or 'add to a portfolio of cumulative writing'.

> **Recommendation 8 (Teachers and schools):**
> Consider how feedback on student drafts can be used most powerfully in a writing-focused class to assist students developmentally as writers. This is likely

> to include personal goals of writing, and responding to feedback, but also rewriting and improving drafts, and conferencing with teachers and peers in a writing-focused classroom.

English teachers tend to be highly collaborative within their faculties. Other English teachers are their most important resources in their schools. Their peers are more important as resources than designated school leaders such as Head of Faculty or Literacy Coordinator. The English faculty as a whole, followed by teachers at the year level for the class they are teaching, are their most significant in-school professional resources.

Issues were raised about widespread use of teachers who are not English trained in English classes, some of whom lack disciplinary knowledge of literature and language, including grammar. Students in many schools may not have an English specialist teacher in their early years of secondary school. However, some comment was made about teachers who are not English trained being less likely to collaborate or undertake to seek out professional learning.

Around a third of the respondents noted that their school had engaged with one of the many external organisations or private providers that focus on writing. The most frequently selected organisations were Writers' Festivals and *Poetry in Action* (www.poetryinaction.com.au). Several people also mentioned individual consultants and private providers such as *Write that Essay* (WTE) Pty Ltd with Dr Ian Hunter. Very few mentioned, or may have had the resources to facilitate author visits or sustained engagement through writers-in-residence.

Opportunities and resources produced by their state ETAs have been the most useful sources for ongoing professional learning on writing pedagogy, even for those English teachers who are not individual members of a professional teaching association. Full or half day professional learning sessions offered by ETAs have been the most accessed sources of learning about teaching writing, followed by ETA Facebook pages/groups, then sessions at the state ETA conference. Facebook was used more than twice as much as Twitter or other social media platforms. Almost

none of these teachers in 2018 had accessed online ETA courses or ETA writing groups during the year.

Print and text-based resources produced by ETAs were very important for English teachers. The most frequently accessed resources on teaching writing have been articles in the state-based professional journals, followed by articles in the peer-reviewed national journal, *English in Australia*. Of equal and significant value have been the AATE publication, *The Artful English Teacher* (eds. Boas & Gazis), and online AATE and ETA resources such as: *English Textual Concepts*, 'English for the Australian Curriculum' (e4ac), 'Reading Australia' and webinars.

> **Recommendation 9**
> **(AATE and the state and territory ETAs):**
> Within the professional development ecology for English teachers, their state and territory ETAs and the national organisation are very significant providers of professional learning for English teachers. AATE and the state and territory ETAs should continue to develop and emphasise high quality writing pedagogy, also considering how the specific needs of teachers working out of field, as well as those who are very experienced, can be met. They should also consider how the collaborative cultures of most English teachers and their faculties can be harnessed productively, perhaps by considering PL that extends beyond full/half day or single session offerings.

While English teachers' work is increasingly organised in relation to NAPLAN, despite the apparent lack of usefulness of the data it produces for informing the teaching of writing, teachers' views of NAPLAN in the public arena were ambivalent. They recognised the importance of it to the school executive, school systems and public discourse, but there were many comments made about its misuse and misunderstanding. At the schools where these teachers were located, Year 9 writing results had been more likely to increase rather than to remain neutral or decrease. For most schools, there had been no impact from NAPLAN on school funding arrangements or enrolments, with a small number receiving more of both. More schools had positive media

attention than negative, and more schools tended to have positive changes to teaching and learning and to curriculum than negative. Overall, the results of this study are consistent with those of a range of current evaluations of NAPLAN effects.

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**Recommendation 10**
**(AATE and other professional teaching organisations):**

AATE should retain a critical view of NAPLAN, its declared purposes and its effects, and including its pedagogical impacts on secondary English. It should continue to lobby, with other professional associations and education bodies, for more effective, just and appropriately designed national testing.

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## Phase 2 - Case studies

The qualitative component of the study was designed to gauge an in-depth insight into teachers' everyday practices in the teaching of writing within the curriculum. It assumed that in English some components of writing instruction and practice are likely to be present in any unit of work regardless of whether its focus was specifically writing (eg Creative Writing). It developed and piloted a novel design of 'case study at a distance' using an online artefact collection portal and follow-up interviews by Zoom. This ensured that the study was low cost and less obtrusive than an in-person visit and observation by a researcher, as in many classroom studies. It also allowed greater autonomy for the teacher who selected the time period, the year level, the sequence of lessons and the artefacts that they felt best represented their practice in teaching writing in those lessons. The case studies were artefact led, in that after deciding on the collection period, artefacts were collected and uploaded first, with an interview held during the month following the artefact collection. Interviews focused on the artefacts, the learning design, and on teachers' philosophies and experiences in teaching writing, including but not limited to NAPLAN. Findings are provisional, time-limited and limited to what was observable in these lesson artefacts and the teacher interviews.

One state school and one non state school participated in each state in this pilot study, with regional and urban schools represented. Case studies were completed throughout 2019 across the full span of the year, at a time selected by teachers and in alignment with the ethics' approvals from state education authorities. No direct comparisons are made between systems or states, as agreed through ethics' processes. Rather, each case is a stand-alone glimpse into writing pedagogy in-situ in a particular school, and of particular teachers' professional pedagogical practice. Each of the teachers was considered exemplary within their context, and included early career teachers as well as highly experienced teachers in leadership positions. They were recommended by their professional associations and leaders within and beyond their schools. Collaboration across school faculties was an important element of practice for teachers in several of the schools and where requested, interviews were held with several teachers at the school. The final section of this report includes case study descriptions of the four schools.

The pedagogical artefact e-portfolio method was adapted from US research conducted with Science teachers (Borko et al. 2005, 2007; Martinez et al. 2012), with addition of follow up interviews to form the case study for each school. Each teacher uploaded into the online portal ten instructional artefacts representing something about how they teach writing, with brief contextualising information. Although artefacts were intended to be from consecutive lessons with the same class, there was considerable variation – two schools focused exclusively on one year level, while the other two mixed artefacts across year levels. Artefacts uploaded by teachers included teacher generated materials from during lessons or in classrooms (e.g. snapshots of whiteboards, displays), and materials prepared outside the classroom (e.g. individualised feedback on writing, handouts and scaffolds, teacher-authored model texts, PowerPoint slide decks, formal assessment tasks and rubrics). They included some text excerpts used as stimulus materials or as model or mentor texts, and some commercially produced resources. Appendix Two lists all artefacts submitted for the study. The case studies presented below are descriptive summaries from each school's data and drafts of these cases have been checked by the participating teachers.

The exemplary teachers selected for the study

demonstrated diverse approaches to the teaching of writing, variously demonstrating aspects of personal growth, cultural heritage and genre approaches to writing. Several demonstrated collaborative practices where they co-plan and sometimes co-teach with other teachers, sometimes within mentoring relationships. However, they also displayed considerable autonomy and individual creativity. Responsiveness to the particular cohort of students in their class and school characterised their pedagogy. In several schools this responsiveness led to the importation of formulaic approaches, and to highly scaffolded writing. In others, it led to a focus on increasing student independence and confidence. All the teachers were committed to developing their students' mastery of writing skills, however, these were differently interpreted by different teachers. Even more formulaic approaches had the intention - through 'gradual release of responsibility' - of increasing students' capacities to write independently.



Case study teachers felt that NAPLAN was overstated, inaccurate or unrepresentative of the capabilities of students. They were concerned about rigidity of genre and text structures, the role of English teachers as literacy instructors and NAPLAN's excessive influence in school planning - sometimes precipitating 'fights and conflict' within the school. Teaching to NAPLAN writing requirements was seen as counter to good writing pedagogies, including requiring students to revert to less sophisticated understandings of narrative. In the selected lesson sequences, none of the teaching pertained directly to NAPLAN.

# CASE STUDY SCHOOL REPORTS

## School 1

## Teacher(s)

This teacher is in their third year at the current school and has been teaching for five years. They are a literacy coach for reading skills in Science and Year 7 and 8 teachers of English. The teacher's work with science teachers around the reading of information texts is a result of: "NAPLAN data said that our kids were not very good at reading information texts".

## Context

This case is located at a suburban state high school that "puts a balance on arts and sports" and has a significant focus on NAPLAN results and writing structures. However, the school also has dedicated creative writing classes including a popular Writers Workshop class in Year 8 and a Year 9/10 Writing class, and promotes writing competitions including an in-house writing competition run as a house sport, so that students can earn points for their house. Selected pieces from this competition are published in an end-of-year anthology.

## Year

A Year 7 class was the focus of the interview; "they all hover on that C/B" range and most have some "literacy quirks" including "the same universal gap around certain spelling techniques and editing".

## Unit

Year 7 Cross-curricular unit: 'How is water life?'

## Artefacts

Resources for the Year 7 unit were provided as artefacts. A classroom poster of 'What good writers do!' that could be added to throughout the year was displayed in the classroom for the students and teacher's reference. It included samples of student work (cloud poems) as well as literary techniques and tips. A sample of writing from a student's Writer's Notebook illustrated a startegy that has been adopted in all middle school classrooms after a system-wide intervention on writing in schools. These notebooks are not assessed, which was one of the 'Rules of the Writer's Notebook,' which were provided as an artefact. Instead they provide a place to respond to prompts that can then be extended and drafted outside the notebook. The instruction, 'Have fun writing!' is designed to highlight the low stakes nature of the notebooks. An example of a writing prompt with a short model text was provided; a PowerPoint activity directed students to explain the history of their name. Students' understanding of literary techniques was reinforced with a matching activity with definitions. Finally, the teacher provided a copy of a summative assessment task and rubric for a cross-curricular project linking learning from English, Geography and Science. The cross curricular final task rubric for the 'How is water life?' unit was written in accessible language for Grade 7 students.

## Interview

### Philosophy / approach to teaching writing

The teacher's approach to writing is one of avoiding stagnation and rigidity. Providing opportunities to practise low stakes writing, allowing students to play with words and language features without labelling them, and working towards disrupting Year 7 students' "specific beliefs" about writing are classroom practices that intervene to undo rigid views about writing forms and give control over the form back to the students. The teacher's approach of "mucking around" with language can be challenging for students accustomed to strict rules, with some students "overwhelmed by the freedom of it".

At the teacher's previous school, the students were "very academic" and knew how to write, which meant that "there was an opportunity to play". In their current context, students lack sufficient skills to approach writing with

this attitude, so the teacher uses the Readers' Notebooks, which are not assessed, to provide low stakes writing opportunities. "Allow them to create, and create in terms of that play, and that experiment." The teacher provides a range of prompts including examples that show students what to avoid, such as "a really, really bad story that's full of tell don't show." Students are encouraged to experiment with how vocabulary can affect meaning and how they can demonstrate their understanding in a range of modes and forms. This approach to teaching writing in Year 7 and other year groups is undertaken with a view to the skills necessary to be successful in Years 11 and 12 literary analysis. The teacher did note that there was feedback from secondary teachers that students lacked a strong sense of organisation in their essay writing.

## Pedagogical approach in this unit/ these lessons

During lessons, the teacher's focus is on engagement. They expressed a desire for all students to come out of class with the feeling that "I've given it my all, and I'm happy with my work". Rubrics are used to guide individual goal setting in one-on-one conversations: "I wouldn't say it's individual goals, but... goals based on the rubric". This approach allows students to analyse where they are not achieving at the required standard and work towards improvements in those areas. The teacher acknowledged that students were reluctant to use correct punctuation "unless it's almost like forced," even though they understand the rules. Peer assessment appeared regularly in lessons but was difficult "because they're all too polite to change each other's stuff". Familiarity with the peer editing process was recognised as necessary so the students can act "more like an editor" as well as developing their understanding of writerly processes and how a piece of writing moves from first draft to a final copy.

The cross-curricular planning of assessment tasks was undertaken because all the Year 7 teachers teach English, History and Geography and it was possible to also include Science teachers. The challenge lay in coordinating the requirements of the rubric and in students' understanding how to demonstrate their connected learning. So within the rubrics "we try to have language for them rather than language for us".

## Additional comments

Although the teacher described a strong focus on NAPLAN writing structures in the school, they also commented on the feedback from Years 11 and 12 teachers at feeder schools about the students: "that there is something missing... in terms of academic level. Usually that's to do with essay writing". They attributed this to a lack of academic essay writing within the school and the allowance for "a bit more creativity." Low stakes writing opportunities and dedicated creative writing classes in addition to English aim to build students' confidence and capacities in writing.



## NAPLAN

The teacher noted that NAPLAN strongly influenced the Year 7 students' writing. They resisted suggestions relating to "playing around" with narrative point of view and non-linear structures and instead, were inclined towards "very NAPLAN-ny narrative" that they had learnt in primary school. The structure for persuasive texts "has been hammered into their heads... Particularly persuasive, it is exactly what a NAPLAN script would be with the firstly, secondly, thirdly...". However, from the teacher's perspective, there's no creativity if the students produce pieces of work that are "all the same".

The teacher was anticipating the teaching of Year 9 in the new year and planning to include some persuasive writing. It's acknowledged that "there will be NAPLAN and I will probably have to do the things you have to do, which will kill me inside". They find their passion for letting the students find their own way with writing in conflict with the "rigidity" of NAPLAN and hope for a "brave" shift of thinking away from

NAPLAN to a bigger picture. "NAPLAN's a very small measurement but it's measured in huge amounts by schools and by the government," despite success in the test being the result of "ticking boxes" and "teaching kids a formula." Instead teachers should be allowing for "individuality and creativity in how kids show or demonstrate their learning. A (good) teacher understands that people don't learn in the same way. People don't show their learning in the same way".



## SCHOOL 2

### Teacher(s)

This case study comprises a team of English / humanities teachers ranging from early career to leaders of learning in the school. There is a culture of collaboration around school improvement at the school, with co-planning, sharing of resources, whole school pedagogical approaches, extensive mentoring, consistent messaging and lesson design practised widely across the school. The teacher leaders have experience in a range of school settings with expertise in supporting early career teachers, developing school wide literacy for learning

initiatives, and assisting rural, remote and at-risk students. The teachers who have contributed resources to the study are a recent graduate in their first year of teaching, who stayed after a rural placement, and a teacher with five years' experience at the same school. They also completed both practicums at the school as a result of lack of opportunities at other regional schools. These teachers were interviewed together, and individual interviews were undertaken with the leaders. This team of teachers has collectively presented workshops at the local ETA and at state conferences around the "refinement and reshaping" of programs as part of their professional development throughout curriculum iterations.

### Context

They team-teach at an outer regional state school, at some distance from the metropolitan centre. The teachers are a mix of locals and those who have moved to the area. They find regular opportunities to work with the local ETA branch and their school executive are supportive of professional learning despite the expense, particularly as relating to travel. Their geographical isolation impacts on their teaching and learning practices, not only in terms of students' access to a range of experiences, but also the teachers' access to other schools and a local literary community. The region has a current focus on explicit, direct instruction.

The socio-economic profile of the school and the unstreamed mixed ability classes are considerations for the teachers in planning teaching and learning programs. The school promotes cross-curricular sharing of success stories and professional development and the faculty works together to share structures, routines and resources between teachers of year cohorts.

### Year / Unit

The team discussed units they are currently teaching or have taught in Years 7 to 10. These included a Term One Year 9 News Media Unit, 'Let me represent you'; a Term Four Year 8 Representation unit, 'Your story, my story, our story', with a multimodal (including speaking) presentation assessment task; a Term 4 Year 7

Poetry Analysis unit 'From little things big things grow, Exploring perspectives in poetry and songs' assessed with a spoken presentation of poetry analysis; and a Year 9 Speculative Fiction unit.

## Artefacts

The teachers provided artefacts related to the units that included assessment task notifications, PowerPoint presentations, modified worksheets and reading comprehension tasks. Assessment task notifications were included for both formative and summative tasks for the Year 7 Poetry unit, the Year 8 Representation and the Year 9 Media and Speculative Fiction units. The formative tasks tended to focus on reading, while summative tasks assessed students' compositions through speaking or writing assignments.

Reading comprehension handouts were provided as resources for students to refer to throughout the year and included a Year 8 'Recipe for success' to follow when answering questions about a piece of writing in an exam and a QAR (question-answer relationships) reading comprehension guide. Reading and viewing comprehension activities that emphasised character and affective language guided students to identify emotions and articulate how an author engages readers.

PowerPoint presentations for all year groups included class protocols, language features, text structures, language choices, reading strategies and English textual concepts. Throughout the year, the presentations guided students to analyse language of judgement, language of affect, visual literacy, modality and the message of texts. Year 9 classes also featured lessons related to the analysis of rubrics with model texts; writing consolidations, e.g. nominalisation and sentence expansion activities; and editing and proofreading strategies.

## Interview

### Philosophy / approach to teaching writing

The creation of a 'community of practice', following explicit instructional training has supported this group of teachers. Teachers ceased to make assumptions about what students were able to do and began to focus on a functional grammar approach, and whether students demonstrated what they were taught. The teachers approach the teaching of writing by balancing explicit instruction with the intent of the curriculum and its objectives, and aiming to avoid "predetermining or shaping down and narrowing the opportunity for kids to be able to express that response". In order to encourage student autonomy, teachers will provide feedback on only one "quality draft", although students are supported with explicit teaching of the writing process and "lots of access to those low stakes rehearsals" in class. An awareness of the cognitive demands of tasks and the need for "relatable" writing tasks with a clear audience and purpose underline the teachers' focus on building students' world views. So too does a "fairly formalised writing program with clear processes" and the regular embedding of writing practice. Teachers model self-talk through "writing consolidations" and have adopted the role of facilitator, "making students active and agentic" to overcome a tendency to "underestimate their own cultural value". The principle of student autonomy and control over the writing process emphasises the ability to unpack a task, undertake planning, and edit and refine their work.

The faculty's shift to providing feedback in conference mode came in response to students not incorporating written feedback successfully in subsequent work. Teachers have moved away from peer editing checklists that focus on the inclusion of a range of elements to comparing student work against the task criteria, with students coming to understand what it takes to move between grades. Helping students to understand the drafting process and explicitly teaching peer editing came with the expectation that drafts would be reviewed by two peers before being handed to the teacher. The reduction of the cognitive load to allow for focus on the writing and to build students' confidence also contributed to improvements in student writing.

### Pedagogical approach in this unit / these lessons

In all classes in the school, students are taught to "tap out a task" by identifying the task, audience and purpose in order to focus them on "bigger orientating ideas about their writing". The explicit teaching of language skills is embedded

in a "contextualising literacy pedagogy". Teaching strategies feature "active participation, multiple opportunities - individual, peer and group" and a variety of writing processes before reaching a final task. A belief in "the students running the lesson virtually (while) you're facilitating" encourages students to "apply their understanding in different ways". Goal setting for students takes place in relation to moving between bands or grades, so teaching related to interpreting task criteria plays a central role. Students are taught to understand the connection between their available resources for a task and what they are expected to demonstrate and are learning to articulate the nuances of the differences between bands.

Conferencing, tied specifically to criteria, has led to "high-level conversations and metalanguage from the kids" so that in a "good lesson" it was apparent what the students had learned and their "thinking behind their writing". For Year 9 students, learning to align specific nuances of the sub-genres of the speculative fiction form with the criteria, highlighted the particular changes required to move up a grade. Their teacher was moving on to trialling students writing "their own rubrics against a criteria stem" and defining their own success criteria, both academic and behavioural. In seeking to make students more independent and responsible and to ensure quality drafts, teachers developed language resources for students to talk and write about each other's writing, encouraging purposeful peer feedback, the use of metalanguage and success criteria related to demonstrated skills in activity, not just the activity itself. A greater understanding of the criteria has built student confidence in their writing as have reading comprehension activities in which students were directed to reflect on writerly choices down to the sentence level.

## Additional comments

The Head Teacher has encouraged the teachers to "start owning back your own professional choices" rather than relying on exemplars produced by the state education department, with a view to ensuring that materials meet the needs of their local students as well as the scope and sequence of the curriculum.

The focus on a community of practice in the faculty has extended to colleagues in other subject areas in order to provide support, "especially in elective subject areas... They have got to feel empowered, so it's baby steps and getting lots of that coaching, that growth coaching where they kind of come up with it themselves to get to that stage". The community of practice language (such as field, tenor, audience) also appeared in the outline of tasks for students.

## NAPLAN

NAPLAN data is used "longitudinally" to check for success in written responses, and to justify changes made to teaching and learning. "We didn't look at the NAPLAN data and think here's the crisis, we've got to address that." The Head of Department expressed some resistance to having "English classes designed to boost NAPLAN" results.

The teachers articulated a belief that "good pedagogical practices for writing and skills transferred across to NAPLAN" so it was unnecessary to convey the importance of a separate set of NAPLAN criteria to students. They are focused on giving students strategies for unpacking the requirements of the writing stimulus as a more transferable skill. However, "we've been told this year we have to explicitly teach... the marking criteria for NAPLAN... and it makes me a little twitchy". Given the faculty's regular practice of analysing task criteria, the teachers had planned to discuss the NAPLAN criteria as just another set of criteria for a stimulus writing task, which is a part of the regular classroom writing practice. "I want them to use the same skills the same way that we approach any writing tasks."

## SCHOOL 3

### Teacher(s)

There are two teachers in this case study: the first is the Head of Department who, after teaching for over seven years, has been at the current school for one term. The Head of English works with a faculty colleague – the second teacher in this study – in the state English Teaching Association, which provides a network for both teachers. The Head of English is also connected with the Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) – which supports their teaching practice. The second teacher in the study began participating in the state ETA when "looking for like-minded colleagues and interesting people and discussions" and appreciates the inspiration provided by ETA meetings. This is their second school; they are also responsible for pastoral care in a head teacher capacity.



### Context

At this non-state school, there are no Literacy Coach roles as there are in state schools, and the lack of connection between schools in the private system limits opportunities for collaboration, or even celebrating success, across schools. Within the school, a lack of follow-up of writing-focused professional development is exacerbated by an absence of support from the school executive for a broader literacy approach. The interviewed teacher believes that writing in the school is also hindered by the "relatively young department and we've got some teachers teaching in the department out of area" and identified limited attention to the teaching of writing during teacher training, as an additional obstacle to improving student outcomes.

### Year

The Head of English teaches a Year 9 and Year 10 class among others, while the teacher has Years 10, 9 and 8.

### Unit

The units discussed include a Year 10 modern adaptation study of Jane Austen's *Emma,* entitled *Clueless,* a Year 9 *Macbeth* unit, a Year 8 Slam Poetry unit and an earlier Year 10 War Poetry unit, which focused on transforming prose to Poetry. The *Emma* unit highlighted themes and context "and then it's up to them what particular topic" they will use for their first assessment task: writing and recording podcasts using apps such as Audacity and Hokusai. Students were asked to consider purpose and audience to increase the potential for real-life publishing. A final assessment task required students to create a synopsis and 'pitch' for a modern adaptation. The Year 9 unit was assessed by an in-class essay on Macbeth's ambition and choices.

### Artefacts

Year 8 students were provided with a SMILE handout (structure, meaning, imagery, language, effect) for poetic analysis, although the teacher had concerns that this approach failed to encourage students to see elements of poetry as integrated.

The Year 9 *Macbeth* artefacts included writing guidelines for a mini essay, which used the TEEL paragraph structure and comprised an introduction, one body paragraph and a conclusion. This resource was supplemented by teacher notes on the board, written as students worked on their own writing. The scaffold and notes, along with the display of scenes from the play around the room on A3 paper, were designed to overcome students' tendencies to recount, and to demonstrate how to draw evidence from a text. Students were also given a 'Cawdor Castle Chronicle' graphic organiser for Act Two and a model text that was deconstructed in class. Students could either fill in the spaces on the worksheet or "more capable students actually

asked if they could just create one from scratch". The final artefact for this unit was a test in which students chose from three provided soliloquies and responded to comprehension questions related to understanding the language of the play.

The artefacts for Year 10 included a modern adaptation of a short extract from the novel *Emma*, which was written during a lesson and projected for discussion; a War Poetry test; samples of student poems created from key words in a news article about Australia's involvement in WW1; and a poetic devices glossary.

## Interview

## Philosophy / approach to teaching writing

The Head of English's approach to teaching writing includes a strong focus on modelling, followed by deconstruction and scaffolding designed to help students of all levels to organise ideas. They described a need to avoid making assumptions about what students already know about how to write (across all faculties, for example, with essay questions). They note this approach as especially important to support teachers who are teaching English out of their area of expertise. Writers' Notebooks (as suggested by ALEA professional development) are used daily to provide opportunities for low stakes writing. Sometimes topics are provided, sometimes students have free choice, but the emphasis is on fiction writing. However, there is a need for teachers to teach text type demands explicitly and not assume "everyone is fine". Identified goals in terms of writing include independence, building skills for senior English, and writing skills across all subject areas. The Head of English's Year 10 class is "very independent and they want to be left alone or left to their own devices", but ultimately the success of the lesson comes from giving students choices. There is an awareness of the need to look more closely at proofreading and editing, which is also a parent expectation, and which students don't necessarily know how to do. Although peer feedback is practised, it's not always effective if all the students are making the same mistakes, or unable to identify the errors even with teacher-created checklists.

The teacher expressed a range of concerns about the teaching of writing in the school. These included: the relatively inexperienced teaching staff in the English faculty; the absence of specialist English teachers among long-term staff; a lack of teacher mentors; the requirement to teach in ways that keep all classes in one of the year groups "in step" with each other - restricting creativity, the possibility of tangents and opportunities to take longer with something students need more time with; and the constant process of reviewing the curriculum, which means "we're not consolidating anything".

The teacher described their own approach as one of doing things "by feel" and addressing writing issues as they arise in class - a responsive approach that is possible due to the absence of a set writing program or embedded literacy program. However, this approach was questioned, with the belief that a more structured approach would make the teaching of writing "more straightforward" as well as "establish(ing) some clarity about the importance of being able to write well for everything, not just for this one time English thing you've got to do". Students lack a sense of writing as a skill that requires practice - that builds on itself - and are unable to connect writing practices and forms in one subject with another. The teacher seeks to provide academic and reflective writing experiences for students as well as direction for "everyday" writing such as emails, proposals, resumes and applications for jobs and scholarships. The demands of the curriculum mean that "instead of taking a little tangent and helping them do that in class time, it becomes an additional thing to do". Teachers are challenged by the range of forms required by the syllabus: "there's lots of talk about creative, imaginative and informative texts".

## Pedagogical approach in this unit / these lessons

The Head of English is conscious of their recent arrival and has "tried not to come in and change everything". Rather, their emphasis is on student engagement and building rapport through storytelling and anecdotes, "then kind of peel it back, release the responsibility from me doing all the talking and all the work to give it back to them". They expressed an appreciation for the range of abilities in their classes as contributing to different perspectives. "Verbal and body

clues" provide feedback to this teacher who likes students to learn collaboratively in small to large groups. In these settings, they can have "a range of conversations and gauge the students' understanding".

Lessons planned individually were viewed more positively by the teacher than lesson plans provided for a whole year group, which is the practice for the Year 8 cohort. In planning the individual lessons, the teacher felt more engaged and able to target the specific needs of the students in the class. The teacher referred to the unhelpful and confusing elaborations in the curriculum documents that led to their attempts to make "kid friendly" rubrics. However, they find it challenging to create rubrics that are helpful for both students and teachers. For analytical writing, the teachers are attempting to adopt a consistent approach by using the TEEL (topic, explanation, evidence, link) paragraph structure and insisting all students use the provided scaffolds. They're working to overcome students' need to write the introduction first and are encouraging the students to view the TEEL structure as flexible. "Kids think, 'Oh, I'll put one explanation, one bit of evidence and then I'm on to the next thing.' But it's pretty much like 'e' recurring until you decide if you need any more."

The Year 10s in particular work best to set deadlines. "I am always collecting stuff because it gives them a purpose to get it done." This approach also addresses concerns that the students had been 'trained out of' being able to concentrate on anything they don't want to do because teachers had been so accommodating in terms of allowing them to work on the activities they preferred. The Year 9s, on the other hand, were consistently open to a range of lessons including oral presentations, debates, thinking, jigsaws and creative writing.

Deadlines helped to keep the Year 10s focused on the goal of preparation for senior English literary analysis. During the war poetry unit, "they're like, urgh, it's about war. But we're trying to get them to zoom in to the micro level" of language and texts so they're well prepared for Years 11 and 12. "The last thing I want is for them to get to Year 11 and 12 and have no idea about anything because we've been too busy teaching all these big picture concepts."



## Additional comments

The teachers were enthusiastic about the benefits of having pre-service teachers in their classrooms for fresh ideas.

They expressed concerns that the students and the staff perceived the teaching of writing as the responsibility of the English teachers.

They compared the English syllabus with the History curriculum and wondered if a similar level of specificity would be helpful for English.

## NAPLAN

The teachers described some planning around NAPLAN - because there is an expectation – by including persuasive and / or narrative writing in Term One and integrating the genre and persuasive writing skills required for NAPLAN with the reading and writing required for the planned textual study. The Head of English referred to a sense that "it's my responsibility to teach the writing" due to the absence of a school-wide literacy approach. "All of a sudden it became, well, how can we teach more writing in English?"

## SCHOOL 4

## Teacher(s)

This teacher has worked in several Australian states and always in regional and remote schools. Currently they teach Years 10 to 12, including an extension Year 10 class and have recently undertaken an additional Master of Education degree with a literacy focus.

They have four years of teacher training, which includes an undergraduate English Literature degree followed by a Diploma of Education, and are conscious of feeling they have a different body of (literary) knowledge to colleagues with different training (the four-year Education degree). These differences in training are evident in the lack of comfort some colleagues experienced with some aspects of English such as poetry. This difference also led to the feeling that "I'm generally pretty isolated… like all teachers are". Their active involvement in the regional ETA addresses this isolation, despite the difficulty of travelling to the ETA locations from regional areas; it's "my most collegial environment… I love it". The chance for conversation around the teaching of English is seen as lacking in the school and so the ETA provides a valuable forum.

## Context

The school is a large outer regional K-12 school of about 2000 students. They have recent experience with natural disasters, which has impacted on the timing of the delivery of units of work.

## Year

The focus class for this research is a Year 10 extension class undertaking a writing unit. A core Year 10 class, who are preparing for an exam, is also discussed.

## Unit

The unit explored in the research is the 'Epic Hero' as literary figure and as archetype. The students are learning about persuasive writing – in the form of a feature article – and

responding to the question 'Is the Epic Hero dead?'. The teaching and learning artefacts are directed towards modality, the elements of a feature article and how to develop an opinion or argument.
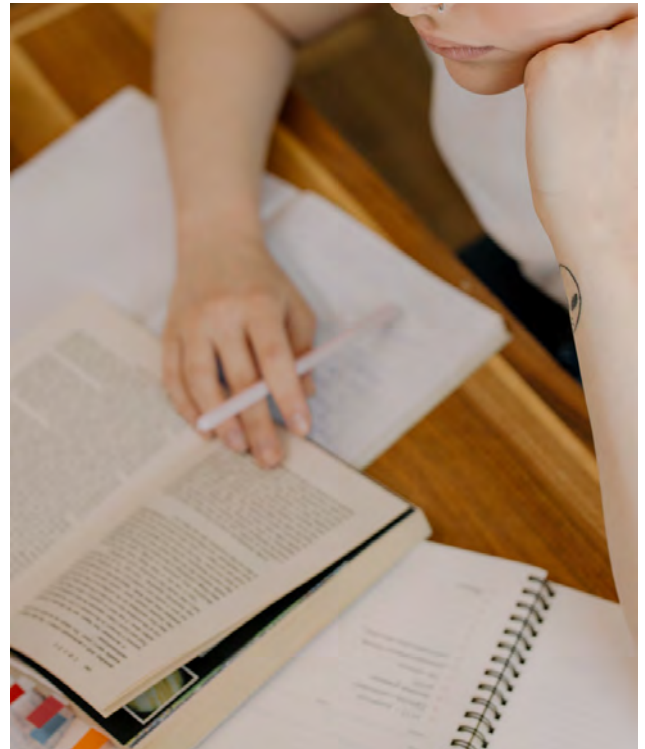


## Artefacts

The teacher provided artefacts that were a mix of whiteboard snapshots, printed student handouts, and tools created by the teacher and by groups of students. These artefacts addressed a range of teaching and learning areas including:

- technical skills, such as, grammatical terms, literary terms, punctuation skills, and vocabulary;
- genre, by using whiteboard scaffolds to demonstrate the structures of text types / forms, in this case, the feature article;
- high expectations, which are conveyed through a process of "unpacking" rubrics.

Other unusual artefacts included paddle pop stick prompts. These were used as independent checklists of features that students could access, and could be added to as new language features were learned through the year, or culled when they were not relevant. Another unusual artefact was co-constructed 'cheat sheets' related to literary features. Also 'Modality maps' were created by students in groups under time

pressure and subtle variations in language made concrete. These artefacts were created with the intention of increasing students' knowledge of language forms and features and at the same time encouraging students to become responsible and independent in groups and as individuals.

## Interview

## Philosophy / approach to teaching writing

The teacher stressed that constant adaptation to the class's needs was necessary and that there was not one approach that would be adequate to teach writing to students. They described an 'old school' or 'hands-on' approach to the creation of teaching and learning tools - "cutting things up" and so on - and a "hodge-podge of strategies" developed in the course of "trying things out". They believe that teachers "can really stagnate if you think the way you always have" or rely on the same strategies and resources, for example, by reusing PowerPoints. Their belief that students need opportunities to build towards independence is supported by encouraging risk taking. The students' need to be perfect in their first attempt is addressed by breaking tasks down to smaller components that students can refine along the way to a larger task.

Their teaching practice relies on relationships that build a sense of 'obligation' or 'contract' between teacher and students; students feel accountable to the teacher who has "put in the effort". This contract is further reinforced by the teacher's approach to feedback, which is personalised and explicit; "if all I'm going to do is circle some punctuation, then what's the point? ... I really invest and then they just have to (incorporate the feedback) or they really stand out" among their peers. The feedback is also given in a way that is "just really straightforward. Who cares about being nice? ...they liked it". The students' awareness that the teacher has their best interests in mind and is supporting them to achieve their goals of grade As and Bs highlights the importance of relationships. As a result of the teacher's feedback style, the students' peer feedback skills have also developed, with students copying their teacher's approach of personalised, detailed feedback when providing constructive criticism to each other.

## Pedagogical approach in this unit / these lessons

The teacher uses a range of teaching strategies including direct instruction, guided activities, collaborative activities and independent work, particularly as homework. In the lead up to assessment tasks, students have the opportunity to email their thesis statements to the teacher after-hours for checking and individual feedback. In class, the teacher attempts to balance the need to manage the requirements of the curriculum with their desire to include group work. The protracted nature of group work means it is not always possible; "when I'm rushed, I tend to take out the group work, which I hate about myself but... it's so time consuming". Similarly, the teacher seeks a balance between quickly completing class activities and knowing when "they needed more thinking time". Laptops are used for assignments and during peer feedback activities. All theory is done as bookwork and, particularly when students are preparing for an exam, all work is handwritten.

In the writing unit for the Year 10 Extension class, the teacher sought to foster independence, risk-taking and the development of a personal writing style. Attempts were made to challenge the students, who tended to feel comfortable with analytical writing due to the perception of a reduced need to consider the audience and the reliance on "popping a quote in". Instead, the teacher highlighted the importance of being able to adapt to audiences, particularly in examinations. The teacher "always writes models" themselves, due to the difficulty of finding appropriate and relevant models, and provides a range of models so students don't feel obliged to "do it one way". This also entails modelling risk-taking to students, that it means "you've probably gone wrong the first time" and "you've got to make yourself feel uncomfortable" to make progress. Students were encouraged to play to their strengths and use their skills in a range of situations, without needing to be perfect at everything. By breaking the habits of safety, repetition and anticipating what the marker wants to hear, students were supported "to have power in your arguments ... your voice sounds like you, not like somebody else's". In order to motivate the students to generate an individual thesis, the teacher had to challenge the students' tendency to demonstrate "politeness over picking a side."

A range of specific teaching and learning strategies used by the teacher was discussed. Students are taught complex punctuation "in the context of the task", including sentence structure, the creation and use of more complex sentences, and how to adjust punctuation according to the genre or writing form being taught. In the Epic Hero unit, vocabulary lists were supplied to encourage students away from simplistic conceptions of "good" and "bad" in their argument formation. Time in class was intentionally not provided for students to define the words on the list as a demonstration of a strategy for independent learning. The explicit deconstruction of rubrics through student annotation on laminated rubric sheets helped students understand the specific elements they needed to include for a desired grade range.

## Additional comments

The teacher modelled risk-taking by trialling new ideas and activities in class "where you will probably go wrong the first time". They believe that their own risk-taking is valuable "because then they'll (the students) follow you". They enjoy sharing these new ideas with colleagues, although few opportunities to do so exist. Participation in this research project provided a chance to share pedagogical approaches (through the research e-portfolio) and encouraged reflection, not only solitary reflection but also in the form of asking students if certain resources or strategies were helpful. "Because if it's not going to suit them, if they're not going to learn, then - you know, I do have a lot of ways of doing things."

They expressed concerns about rubrics being the same for different genres, and the restrictive nature of that, however, they addressed this concern through explicit deconstruction in class.

## NAPLAN / External assessment

The teacher did not make any comments regarding NAPLAN as it is not relevant to the year groups they teach. However, they did offer comments about exam expectations for senior English, describing their teaching of audience awareness as preparing students for external examinations; "when there are external markers, you want to impress them".

A paper is currently under review with Australian Educational Researcher as:

Gannon, S & Dove. J. *Artefacts, practices, Pedagogies: Teaching Writing in English in the NAPLAN era.*

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1:  Wordclouds of text responses

In relation to the most recent unit completed:

Your concerns about student writing after marking:



How the unit contributed to growing a sense of themselves as writers:

# APPENDIX 2: Artefact collection (consolidated across four schools)

| Year | Artefact |
|------|----------|
| **7** | Summative task for 'From little things big things grow' unit (poetry & song) |
| | Photograph of classroom display: 'Anchor chart' of 'What good writers do!' |
| | Student work sample: 'Rover' |
| | History of a name |
| | Writer's Notebook and guidelines |
| | Personification – definitions and original examples (Student notebook) |
| | Cross curricular 'Aqua Vitae' task description |
| | Cross curricular 'Aqua Vitae' final task rubric |
| | Student work sample: poem draft with teacher comments |

| Year | Artefact |
|------|----------|
| **8** | PowerPoint: 'Let me represent you' media unit Week 1 |
| | PowerPoint: 'Let me represent you' media unit Week 2 |
| | PowerPoint: 'Let me represent you' media unit Week 3 |
| | Class resource: Newspaper front page and article |
| | Reading resource: Newspaper article |
| | Worksheet / table: 'Representations of teenagers in the media' |
| | Formative task for 'Let me represent you' unit: Reading comprehension |
| | Summative task: Persuasive speech for 'Let me represent you' unit |
| | Summative task for 'Your story, my story, our story' unit: Multimodal presentation (spoken and visual) includes drafting writing process |
| | Handout: Reading comprehension 'Recipe for success' |
| | Handout: QAR (question / answer relationship) questions list |
| | Class activity: 'Nanberry' modified reading comprehension |
| | Worksheet: *Rabbit-Proof Fence* transcript and language analysis table |
| | PowerPoint: 'Your story, My story, Our story' Week 6 |
| | PowerPoint: 'Your story, My story, Our story' Week 7 |

| Year | Artefact |
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| **9** | Formative task: Reading comprehension text for 'Speculative fiction' unit |
| | Summative task: 'Create a speculative short story' |
| | PowerPoint: 'Speculative fiction' unit writing consolidations |
| | PowerPoint: 'Speculative fiction' unit - genre |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: *Macbeth* scene summary |
| | Scaffold: 'Cawdor Castle Chronicle' news article structure |
| | Handout: TEEL planning sheet for *Macbeth* response |
| | Worksheet: Translation of soliloquies in *Macbeth* |

| Year | Artefact |
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| **10** | Photograph of whiteboard: Learning intentions ('The Epic Hero' Unit) |
| | Photograph: Modality collaborative activity |
| | Screenshot: Modality 'flipgrid' |
| | Modality handout: High, medium and low modality words |
| | Student work samples x 2: Completed modality collaborative activity |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: High, medium, low modality words |

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| | Photograph: Modality prompt |
| | Handout: 'Writing an argument' guide |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: 'Features of a feature article 1' |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: 'Features of a feature article 2' |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: 'Features of a feature article 3' |
| | Class resource: Language feature paddle-pops |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: Vocabulary list |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: Punctuation |
| | Handout: Punctuation for effect |
| | Student work sample and teacher feedback |
| | Class resource: Annotated marking rubric |
| | Peer feedback |
| | Student created resource: Language cheat sheet |
| | Photograph of whiteboard: TEEL paragraph modelled by teacher for 'War Poetry' unit |
| | Handout: SMILE analysis scaffold |
| | Assessment task: War Poetry analysis test |
| | Photographs of whiteboard: Writing guidelines TEEL and structure of introduction and conclusion |
| | Student work sample: Poetry to prose task |
| | Model text: *Emma* modern adaptation |