

6

ENGLISH

TEACHER GUIDELINES



My favourite place

These guidelines provide important information to support administration and implementation of the QCATs.

SECTIONS IN THIS BOOKLET:

Section 1: Understanding QCATs

Section 2: Implementing this QCAT

Section 3: Resources

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Section 1: Understanding QCATs

Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs)

QCATs are one of five components of the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting (QCAR) Framework. They aim to provide:

- a model of authentic, performance-based assessment aligned to a selection of *Essential Learnings* and to the *Standards*
- resources to support consistency in the way teachers make judgments about the qualities in student work
- information for teachers and students relevant to a selection of *Essential Learnings* about what students know, understand and can do, what is working well and what needs attention.

QCATs are assessments that encourage and rely upon interaction between teachers and students. They ask students to use relevant knowledge and skills to respond to a meaningful problem.

These assessments are resources that provide teachers, students and parents or carers with information to contribute to discussions about student learning and to plan for future learning. The effectiveness of these assessments in providing helpful information will depend on the level of interaction teachers have with their students before, during and after implementation.

Teacher preparation

- Check that you have the appropriate number of:
 - *Student booklets* — the assessment to be presented to students (one per student)
 - *Teacher guidelines* (one per teacher).
- Check for any defective *Student booklets*.
- Contact the QSA if any additional booklets are required.
- Read all the materials provided.
- Review the selected *Essential Learnings* listed in Section 3.
- Work through the assessment yourself so that you understand what students are required to do.
- Plan implementation with your colleagues:
 - Set times and dates for implementation.
 - Discuss how you will achieve consistency of teacher judgment.
 - Decide how to select five samples representative of the A to E grades for QSA's random sampling process.

Note: *Sample responses* are available for download from the QSA Assessment Bank <<https://qcar.qsa.qld.edu.au/assessmentbank>>.



(This document)



(Found online in the QSA Assessment Bank)

Student orientation

It is important to set conditions that provide students with the opportunity to do their best work.

- Students should have had opportunities to engage with the selected *Essential Learnings* well in advance of participating in the QCATs. Review and consolidation may be necessary before implementing the QCAT, which assesses students' performance in applying knowledge and understanding in a new context.
- Allow some time to familiarise students with the expectations of the assessment. The time required will depend upon the needs of students.
- Begin each assessment with a teacher-facilitated discussion about the context of the assessment and the problem posed. It is vital that all students are engaged in this discussion.
- Ensure that preparation activities do not involve rehearsal of the actual assessment or a similar one.
- Explain what is being assessed by introducing the students to the Assessable elements. These are provided in the *Guide to making judgments* located on the back page of both the *Teacher guidelines* and the *Student booklet*.
- Discuss with students ways in which this assessment can provide them with information and insight into their strengths and areas for improvement.

QCAT conditions

- You have the flexibility to implement the assessment at any time across the eight school weeks of the nominated implementation period, to suit school timetabling.
- Students need not complete the assessment in a single session. If you choose to implement the assessment over more than one session, ensure that the *Student booklets* are kept in a secure location between sessions.
- All responses must be recorded in the *Student booklet*. Extra paper may be provided to students for drafting purposes.
- *Student booklets* have clearly marked sections with prompts to indicate when students should await further instructions.
- Students should not be disadvantaged because they do not understand the instructions or questions — you may read and clarify the instructions and questions but it is important that you use professional judgment, and do not provide the information required in the response. Responses to individual student questions may be shared with the whole class.
- You may point out to a student if you notice that they have missed a question.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to interact with students during the assessment. This will enable you to gather information about future learning needs while the assessment is being implemented.
- Students absent during the administration of the QCATs should be given an opportunity to complete the assessment upon returning to school.
- Collect all *Student booklets* from students on completion of the assessment.
- Schools are responsible for the safe storage of *Student booklets* until December 2009.

Making judgments

- Use the *Guide to making judgments* to grade student responses. Additional resources for your reference are:
 - model response (in this booklet)
 - *Sample responses*, graded A to E and annotated to explain how they demonstrate the qualities described in the *Guide to making judgments*. *Sample responses* are available for download from the QSA Assessment Bank <<https://qcar.qsa.qld.edu.au/assessmentbank>>.
- The model response and *Sample responses* are provided for reference purposes only. They each demonstrate possible responses and should be used to support the *Guide to making judgments*.
- Making judgments is **not** about determining whether one student's work is better than that of another. Rather, make standards-based judgments by matching student responses to the *Guide to making judgments*.
- Read and consider all of the evidence in the *Student booklet* before making and recording a judgment about the quality of the performance for each Assessable element.
- Match the evidence from the *Student booklet* with a task-specific descriptor. Begin at the bottom of each continuum. As you move up the continuum, each task-specific descriptor signposts a discernable difference in the quality of the student performance.
- Consider all the task-specific descriptors on the continuum.
- Record a judgment on the continuum for each Assessable element. A judgment may be recorded anywhere along the length of the continuum.

Note: Refer to the model response and *Sample responses* to support the process of matching student responses to task-specific descriptors in the *Guide to making judgments*.

Step 2: Make an overall on-balance judgment

- Reread the purpose of the assessment as stated at the top of the *Guide to making judgments*.
- Consider the judgments recorded for each Assessable element. Sometimes the on-balance judgment will be an easy fit over one of the A to E grades. However, where there is uneven performance across the Assessable elements, an overall on-balance judgment must be made by considering the significance of each Assessable element in relation to the purpose of the assessment.
- Record the overall grade by circling the relevant letter A to E on the *Guide to making judgments*.
- A nil award of "N" is to be recorded only when there is insufficient evidence to inform a judgment for an overall grade. In some circumstances students completing only part of the task may have their assessment considered complete if there is sufficient evidence of student performance across the Assessable elements to inform an overall on-balance judgment.

The judgment process

Making a judgment about the quality of a student's response to the assessment is a two-step process.

Step 1: Make a judgment about the evidence related to each Assessable element

- Read the purpose statement at the top of the *Guide to making judgments*. This statement describes the focus of the QCAT.
- Read the task-specific Assessable elements in the *Guide to making judgments*. These identify significant and discrete aspects that you will look for in student responses.
- Identify the evidence in the *Student booklet* as indicated in the *Guide to making judgments*.

Consistency of teacher judgment

- The process of achieving consistency of teacher judgment is integral to making judgments about the quality of student responses. This involves teachers consistently applying a shared understanding of those qualities that characterise the *Standards*.
- Consistency of teacher judgment is achieved through engaging in professional conversations about the quality of evidence in student responses using *Standards*, *Assessable elements* and task-specific descriptors as a common language. There are various ways of achieving teacher consensus. Three approaches to professional conversations are suggested on page 15. Schools may also develop their own processes for achieving consensus.
- Teacher consensus will facilitate the process of selecting five student responses considered to be representative of the overall A to E grades. Samples may be required as part of the QSA's random sampling process after implementation. Schools will be advised whether they have been selected to submit their representative samples in May.

Providing feedback

- Effective feedback to students would include reference to the:
 - student responses
 - *Guide to making judgments*
 - *Essential Learnings and Standards*
 - model and *Sample responses*.
- Work with students and discuss information about what they were expected to know, understand and do, and how their responses were judged using the *Guide to making judgments*. Focus this discussion on developing strategies to improve learning.
- Consider strategies that could be used to cater to the needs of students who experienced either low or high levels of success in completing the assessment.

Special consideration

Schools are responsible for determining which students require special provisions. Students should have the opportunity to participate in school-based assessment.

The QCATs are designed to be part of a classroom assessment program, and principles of participation and equity apply. The QSA offers this general advice about including all students:

- Students who have been identified as having specific educational needs may be assisted using those adjustments and supports usually available in the classroom. To make participation possible in all or part of the assessment task, such help may be in the form of assistive technologies, teacher-aid time or reading support.
- Students for whom English is not their first language, and who are assessed as not achieving a reading level appropriate to complete the task, may be assisted by an interpreter or educational devices (e.g. pictures, electronic whiteboards, interactive devices) to allow participation in all or part of the task.
- In exceptional circumstances where undertaking the task may be a traumatic experience for a student, the principal (in consultation with specialist and support staff and parents/carers) may make a decision regarding the participation of that student in the tasks.

Important dates

16 March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QCATs arrive in schools.
16 March – 18 May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement QCATs. Note: Schools have the flexibility to implement at any time across the eight school weeks of this period. • Submit student data. • Select five student samples that are representative of grades awarded. Where a school is unable to select student samples representative of all grades (A to E), they are to select five student samples representing the awarded range of grades.
18 May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final day to submit student data. • Schools notified if they have been randomly selected to submit their five representative samples.
December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools retain all <i>Student booklets</i> until the end of the school year.

Section 2: Implementing this QCAT

Read this section in conjunction with the *Student booklet*.

The purpose of this QCAT is for students to demonstrate how well they can construct texts for different purposes and that match their audience.

Getting ready

Students should have had an opportunity to cover the targeted selection of *Essential Learnings* as listed in Section 3.

On the day

This section describes the organisation and procedures that teachers are expected to follow in the administration of this QCAT.

Setting the scene: Group discussion <i>approximately 20 minutes (at teacher's discretion)</i>		
Teacher	Student	Materials
<p>Engage students in a whole-class discussion to focus their thinking on the context and the task requirements.</p> <p>Suggested steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read with the class <i>Setting the scene: Group discussion</i> (<i>Student booklet</i> p. 3). • Read out the description of a favourite place overleaf and discuss with your class what makes it an interesting description. The discussion should not take longer than 15 minutes. Further readings of the description may be given. Students may only listen to the description — teachers should not copy to the blackboard or distribute a printed copy. • Discuss the features of the description. Highlight the use of adjectives, verbs, adverbs and the variety of sentence structures. Ask the students to consider how the writer has used vocabulary to create images and feelings. • Engage the class in a brief discussion about favourite places they have visited. What made these visits so memorable? • Prompt students to discuss the context of the task to ensure their understanding. This includes their favourite local places and different examples of timetables, itineraries and travel planning documents with which they may be familiar. • Discuss important details that need to be considered when visiting interesting places, e.g. transport, meals, sight-seeing, time management. • Work through the <i>Guide to making judgments</i> with students to highlight the Assessable elements for this QCAT. Explain, in student-friendly terms, the task-specific Assessable elements. These identify what is being valued in the student responses. • Instruct students that they must stop and wait for your directions at the bottom of page 3. 	<p>Students read <i>Setting the scene: Group discussion</i> and respond to teacher's questions.</p> <p>Students listen to task expectations and description of a favourite place, discuss the context and issues, and ask clarifying questions.</p>	<p><i>Student booklet</i></p>

Description of a favourite place

A favourite place of mine is down by the creek, just a few hundred metres from where I live. I ride my bike there to get lost among the tall trees that stretch up to the sky. Shafts of light come through the canopy of green leaves, joining to make a huge green umbrella. I love catching the sun streaming down to the water, blazing through the greens and the browns. I get on my bike and crash through the leaves and mud, leaving deep ruts that cover over as quickly as I make them, but I never catch the sunbeams.

When I get too sticky and sweaty, I jump into the cool and inviting water. Feeling refreshed, I might ride further along the little dips in the path and the clearings too. There I'll come to a tree stump or two, just in the right place for sitting and watching my friends as they catch up with me.

So that's my place. Why not join me there sometime?

STOP

Describing your favourite place, Q 1

Suggested time: 40 minutes

Allow 5 minutes for reading and clarification of the requirements of this section.

Teacher	Student	Materials
<p>Instruct students to read everything carefully.</p> <p>Where necessary, assist students with reading to clarify understanding.</p> <p>Allow students at least 10 minutes to complete the planning table.</p> <p>Instruct students that they must stop and wait for your directions at the bottom of page 4.</p> <p>Remind students to use their planning table to help them write their description.</p> <p>Instruct students that they must stop and wait for your directions at the bottom of page 6.</p>	<p>Students listen to the expectations and ask any clarifying questions.</p> <p>Students work independently to complete the planning table and Question 1.</p>	<p><i>Student booklet</i></p> <p>extra paper for drafting</p> <p>HB pencil</p> <p>sharpener</p> <p>eraser</p>

Entertaining your visitor, Q 2, 3

Suggested time: 40 minutes

Allow 5 minutes for reading and clarification of the requirements of this section.

Teacher	Student	Materials
<p>Instruct students to read everything carefully.</p> <p>Where necessary, clarify the instructions.</p> <p>Students should use the diagram on page 7 to help them plan their itinerary.</p> <p>It is not necessary for students to establish a particular identity for their sporting visitor to prepare the itinerary. It is sufficient that students know that the visitor is in the same age group and is interested in sport. It is the selection and sequencing of times, places and activities in their local community that need consideration.</p>	<p>Students read the expectations and ask any clarifying questions.</p> <p>Students work independently to complete the itinerary and justification.</p>	<p><i>Student booklet</i></p> <p>extra paper for drafting</p> <p>HB pencil</p> <p>sharpener</p> <p>eraser</p>

Feedback

This QCAT has been trialled at a number of schools across Queensland. Feedback from the trials showed that these are the most common areas for follow-up with students:

- constructing texts using a variety of sentence structures
- constructing descriptive texts using evocative vocabulary
- constructing texts that describe a subject rather than just recount events
- constructing non-literary texts that present information to match a particular purpose and an audience.

Section 3: Resources

The selected *Essential Learnings*

The 2009 QCATs will assess what students know, understand and can do. The following selection of Year 5 English *Essential Learnings* form the basis of the 2009 assessment.

English *Essential Learnings* by the end of Year 5

Ways of working

Ways of working describes processes students use to develop and demonstrate their *knowledge and understanding*.

Students are able to:

- identify main ideas and the sequence of events, and make inferences
- construct literary and non-literary texts by planning and developing subject matter, using personal, cultural and social experiences that match an audience and purpose.

Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge and understanding describes essential concepts, facts and procedures.

Writing and designing

Writing and designing involve using language elements to construct literary and non-literary texts for audiences in personal and community contexts.

- The purpose of writing and designing includes entertaining, informing and describing.
- Writers and designers can adopt different roles, and make language choices appropriate to the audience.
- Text users make choices about grammar and punctuation, to make meaning.

Language elements

Interpreting and constructing texts involve making choices about grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, audio and visual elements in print-based, electronic and face-to-face modes (speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and designing) in personal and community contexts.

- A sentence can be simple, compound or complex.
- Sentences can indicate what is happening (verbs), who or what is taking part (nouns), what it looks like (adjectives), and the circumstances surrounding the action (prepositional phrases and adverbs).
- Vocabulary is chosen to express ideas and information in a commonsense or technical way

Literary and non-literary texts

Making choices about literary and non-literary texts involves identifying the purpose, audience, subject matter and text structure.

- Non-literary texts report, inform, present and seek opinions, present arguments, persuade and negotiate.
- Main ideas are established by identifying who, what, where, when, how and why.

Assessable elements

Assessable elements identify the valued features of the key learning area about which evidence of learning is collected and assessed.

- Knowledge and understanding
- Constructing texts

Standards

Standards are integral to the alignment of curriculum, assessment and reporting. For teachers, parents and students, they provide a shared language for describing the quality of student achievement.

The *Standards* are achievement standards linked to the *Essential Learnings*. Using a five-point scale, the *Standards* describe how well a student has demonstrated their learning based on a collection of evidence. They can also be used to report student progress and achievement.

Standards

Standards describe how well a student has demonstrated their learning based on a collection of evidence.

A standard

Evidence in a student's work typically demonstrates a very high level of knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts and procedures, and application of processes.

B standard

Evidence in a student's work typically demonstrates a high level of knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts and procedures, and application of processes.

C standard

Evidence in a student's work typically demonstrates a sound level of knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts and procedures, and application of processes.

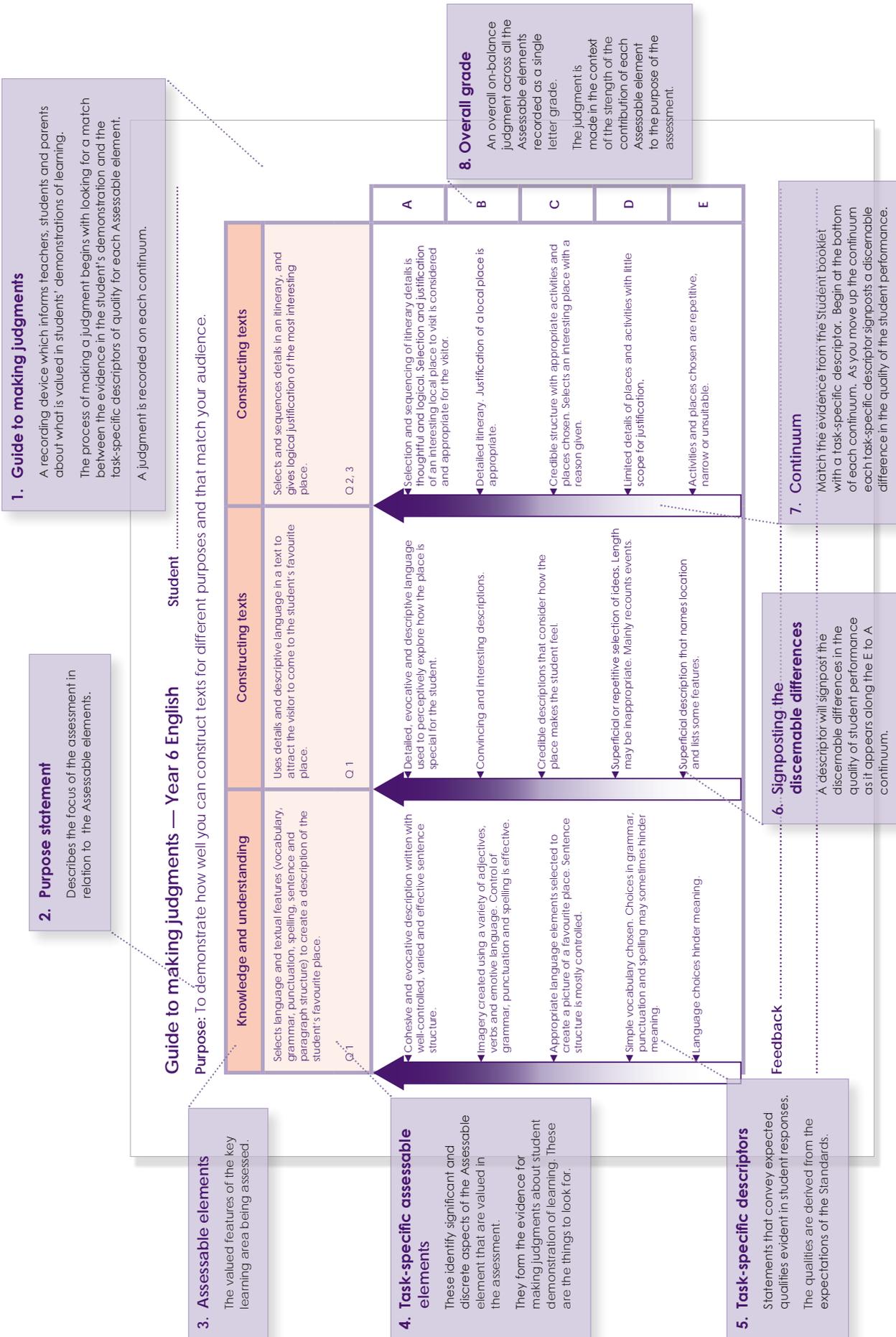
D standard

Evidence in a student's work typically demonstrates a limited level of knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts and procedures, and application of processes.

E standard

Evidence in a student's work typically demonstrates a very limited level of knowledge and understanding of concepts, facts and procedures, and application of processes.

Explanation of the Guide to making judgments



Three approaches for consistency of teacher judgment

Calibration model

A facilitator selects samples deemed to be of a certain standard to be used in the calibration process. Teachers individually grade the samples and then compare their judgment with the grade nominated for the sample. Task-specific descriptors are used as the basis for common and explicit language for teachers to use in their discussions about the quality of student performance. These discussions are based on evidence provided in student responses.

Through this professional dialogue, teachers aim to adjust their interpretation and application of the *Standards* to reach consensus about the quality of the sample. This process is repeated for all the student samples. Teachers then individually grade all student responses, applying the shared understanding achieved through this calibration process.

Advantage — Saves time because it focuses on establishing a common understanding of the *Standards* in context, before marking all of the student responses.

Disadvantage — Making the initial quality judgments in isolation can be difficult.

Conferencing model

Teachers grade student responses individually and then select student samples representative of their application or understanding of the A to E qualities. A meeting is convened in which a conferencing process is employed to enable teachers to share samples and discuss their judgments. Task-specific descriptors are used as the basis for a common and explicit language for teachers to use during discussions about the quality of student performance. These discussions are based on the evidence provided in student responses.

Through professional dialogue, teachers aim to reach consensus on the interpretation and application of the *Standards*. Teachers review judgments about their previously graded student responses, applying the shared understanding achieved through this conferencing process.

Advantage — Teachers are involved in professional dialogue with other teachers to reach consensus.

Disadvantage — Establishes a common interpretation and application of the *Standards* after student work has been allocated a grade. Extra time is needed to review and adjust previously graded work.

Expert model

Teachers grade all student responses and then submit selected samples representative of their application or understanding of the A to E qualities to an expert. Advice is provided by the expert confirming whether there is consistency in the way the *Standards* are interpreted and applied, or whether teachers need to adjust their understanding, and why. This advice is used by teachers when reviewing judgments about their previously graded student responses.

Advantage — Imposes a common school-based view of the interpretation and application of the *Standards*.

Disadvantage — Teachers are not involved in the rich professional dialogue of reaching consensus with other teachers. This model can be used to reach consistency within a school, but does not best support consistency of teacher judgments across the state.

Model response

1. Describe your favourite place in 150 to 200 words. Use descriptions that would attract your visitor to your favourite place. Use your planning table to help you. **The first sentence has been started for you.**



Remember to:

- use a variety of sentence structures
- write in paragraphs
- use vocabulary that creates images and feelings.

A favourite place of mine is Gundalah Homestead, a property owned by my grandparents near Warwick. As soon as we arrive there by car, my body relaxes and my mind is at peace. The view before me as we enter through the rusty iron gate reminds me of the movie, The Man from Snowy River. Five hundred acres of rugged land stretch before me, with horses and cattle grazing the rocky ground around a dam near a cluster of old sheds. I feel like I have travelled back in time. Every morning as I awake, I hear the laugh of the kookaburras ringing through the hills and the echoes of horses' hooves on the rough ground. The smell of bark and morning dew lingers in the clear air. I feel excited to be away from the noisy cars and blaring music. This is what makes it so special.

There is so much to do here at my favourite place. Ride a horse, herd the cattle, crack a stockwhip with my grandfather. The hours seem to slow down out here. When night falls like a blanket, my grandfather uses the inside of an old washing machine for a barbecue. I collect wood for the fire, and chase away leathery cane toads. The aroma of sizzling sausages fills the clear air, teasing my empty stomach. At night, you can see the blazing stars. Really see them. It's like a piece of black velvet studded with diamonds. I feel like I am in another world. Can it get much better than this?

 Use this editing checklist to help you check your work.

Have you:

- used a variety of sentence structures?
- used correct spelling, punctuation and grammar?
- used paragraphs?

STOP HERE: WAIT FOR YOUR TEACHER'S DIRECTIONS

Model response

2. Create a one-day itinerary for your visitor that includes:
- some interesting places around your local community
 - details of any activities your visitor may find interesting
 - time for travel between places and for meal breaks.

The pick-up and departure times have been done for you.

ITINERARY	
TIME	ACTIVITY
7:00 am	Pick up visitor from school.
7:30 am	Arrive at Gundalah family property for breakfast. Get ready for the day's activities.
8:00 am	Tour of the property in 4WD, including the dam and creek bed where the animals drink.
8:45 am	Ride a horse together to help feed the cattle. Watch my brother Jason crack a stockwhip.
10:00 am	Return to house for morning tea. Pack a picnic lunch.
10:30 am	Climb to Hanging Rock, stopping to take photos and rest along the way.
12:00 pm	Lunch at Hanging Rock. Use binoculars to look at landmarks — Eagle Mountain and Big Rock waterfall.
2:00 pm	Travel to town for a tour of the local historical village.
3:00 pm	Refreshment at Ric's Cafe.
3:30 pm	Game of tennis on the school courts with my friends.
4:30 pm	Swim at the town pool. Ice cream at the pool café.
6:00 pm	Return home to Gundalah. Relax and talk with the family.
6:30 pm	BBQ dinner next to the dam to watch the sunset.
8:00 pm	Visitor departs.

8

3. Consider all the places and activities listed in your itinerary. Which do you think your visitor will enjoy the most? Justify your decision based on what you think your visitor will find the most interesting.

..... The most interesting place and activity for my sporting visitor.....
 would be the climb to Hanging Rock. I believe my guest will.....
 enjoy the challenge of climbing to the top of the rock where.....
 you can see all the special places and animals in my local.....
 area. It is a unique place to visit that you would not find.....
 anywhere else. My visitor would be fit enough to enjoy the.....
 climb with me because of all the sport they must play.....

9

Notes

Notes

Guide to making judgments — Year 6 English

Student

Purpose: To demonstrate how well you can construct texts for different purposes and that match your audience.

Knowledge and understanding	Constructing texts	Constructing texts
<p>Q 1</p> <p>Selects language and textual features (vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling, sentence and paragraph structure) to create a description of the student's favourite place.</p>	<p>Q 1</p> <p>Uses details and descriptive language in a text to attract the visitor to come to the student's favourite place.</p>	<p>Q 2, 3</p> <p>Selects and sequences details in an itinerary, and gives logical justification of the most interesting place.</p>
<p>Q 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Cohesive and evocative description written with well-controlled, varied and effective sentence structure. ◀ Imagery created using a variety of adjectives, verbs and emotive language. Control of grammar, punctuation and spelling is effective. ◀ Appropriate language elements selected to create a picture of a favourite place. Sentence structure is mostly controlled. ◀ Simple vocabulary chosen. Choices in grammar, punctuation and spelling may sometimes hinder meaning. ◀ Language choices hinder meaning. 	<p>Q 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Detailed, evocative and descriptive language used to perceptively explore how the place is special for the student. ◀ Convincing and interesting descriptions. ◀ Credible descriptions that consider how the place makes the student feel. ◀ Superficial or repetitive selection of ideas. Length may be inappropriate. Mainly recounts events. ◀ Superficial description that names location and lists some features. 	<p>A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Selection and sequencing of itinerary details is thoughtful and logical. Selection and justification of an interesting local place to visit is considered and appropriate for the visitor. <p>B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Detailed itinerary. Justification of a local place is appropriate. <p>C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Credible structure with appropriate activities and places chosen. Selects an interesting place with a reason given. <p>D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Limited details of places and activities with little scope for justification. <p>E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Activities and places chosen are repetitive, narrow or unsuitable.

Feedback