A Brief Introduction to Genre

Examples of Six Factual Genres and Their Generic Structures

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to provide a brief introduction to several factual written genres. It contains information about the generic structure and significant language features of:

- Recounts
- Reports
- Procedures
- Explanations
- Expositions
- Discussions

The booklet has been designed as a follow-up to the theoretical and methodological positions outlined in the Language and Social Power Report, Teaching Factual Writing- A Genre Based Approach. It is suggested that this booklet be read in conjunction with that Report and the two booklets The Report Genre and The Discussion Genre and the videos Teaching Factual Writing In The Primary School and Teaching Report Writing: A Genre Based Approach.

All these resources are available from:

D.S.P. Centre Marketing,
Swanson Street,
Erskineville 2043.
Ph. (02) 5176814

The teaching methodology or Curriculum Model proposed in this booklet has been developed and refined over several years. The initial work was done as research by Joan Robery with teachers Lee Pledger and Barbara Ryan at North Sydney Demonstration School in 1985. The model, as it is represented in this booklet, was further developed by Joan Robery, Mike Callaghan (Literacy Consultant, Met East DSP), Sue Doran (Executive Officer, Met. East DSP) and Mary Macken (Studies Directorate, NSW Dept. of Education). The model has been trialled by the teachers who participated in the Language and Social Power Project for Metropolitan East DSP and also teachers who participated in the LERN (Literacy and Education Research Network) Project for the Directorate of Studies, NSW Department of Education. It is being further refined for primary and infant teachers by Louise Drego (Consultant, Met. East DSP) and teachers from Met. East DSP schools. In secondary schools, work is being done by Mike Callaghan with teachers from Marrickville and Ermore High Schools and Mary Macken with teachers from Bankstown Girls and St. Johns Park High Schools.
The Curriculum Cycle

There are three main stages in this curriculum cycle for teaching different written genres.

Stage 1. Modelling
Stage 2. Joint Negotiation of a Text
Stage 3. Independent Construction of a Text

This curriculum model is cyclical and in practice it can be entered at any point. It is useful, however, when introducing a new genre for the first time, to begin with Stage One - Modelling before attempting Stage Two - Joint Negotiation.

Each of these stages comprises a number of activities. When modelling a genre for the first time, it is recommended that teachers concentrate mainly on the context and schematic structure with minimal attention being given to the language features. Following this, some joint construction activities may be useful to reinforce generic purpose and structure. Depending on the students' ability to understand and gain control of these aspects of the genre, it may be advisable to return to the modelling stage and focus more closely on the genre's language features and grammar.

In other words, while the curriculum model is represented by a cycle, it is also multi-layered. It is not necessary to move through it in a clock-wise direction. For example, after students have completed the independent stage, it may be necessary to go back to modelling the language features because a number of students have not gained an adequate understanding of this aspect of the genre. Before students attempt independent construction, they may wish to construct a text in pairs or groups.

Modelling the genre thoroughly may be time consuming at first, but it is fundamental to the development of the students' understanding of the genre.

Some teachers and students may find dealing with the language features and grammar challenging at first. A thorough understanding of these, however, will pay dividends when students are required to independently construct their own texts and teachers have to assess the writing of individual students. For a more thorough account of the language features and grammar see the other publications available through the Language and Social Power Project mentioned on page 1.
RECOUNT GENRE

Social Function
To retell events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. Events are usually arranged in a temporal sequence, e.g. a personal letter.

Generic (Schematic) Structure
- Orientation
- Events
- Re-orientation (optional element)

Language Features
- Focus on individual participants.
- Use of past tense.
- Focus on a temporal sequence of events.
- Use of material (or action) clauses and processes.

Recount Example

13/53 Alice St.,
Lakemba.
29/10/87.

Dear Grandpa and Grandma,

Yesterday at my school we had International Day. We had performances, food stalls, displays, raffle ticket draw and some of us were dressed in costumes.

We started our day off with performances but the one I liked best was the one from fourth grade. It was about games. The performance I was in was called Labamba.

Straight after our performances we had our lunch. There were food stalls. They came from Australia, Asian, Arabic and Greece.

Everyone had a job. These people were from sixth grade. I did my job after I had lunch. My job was to sell International Day books.

We had displays in the hall. These displays were good but I didn't get to see them. The displays came from a lot of countries.

There was also a Trash & Treasure stall where they sell toys. The school got these things by asking the children to bring them in.

After lunch we had a raffle ticket draw. I didn't win anything but a lot of people did.

Although I didn't win anything, International Day was still fun.

Love from Huy.
REMOTE CONTROL RACING CARS

On the weekend of the 3rd of March, I went to the Ryde BMX track with Robert and Chris Macdonald. When we got there it was very crowded in the carpark and we wondered where everyone was because there weren't many people on the BMX track.

So we parked the car and then we saw a lot of people surrounding a little track with speeding cars going around it. There were also about five people controlling the cars from a high platform. The cars were about 30 cms long and 15 cms wide with big tread on the tyres and a flap on the front so that they wouldn't tip over.

Then after the races they were awarding trophies to the winners. When we were just going a boy was controlling a car around the track and it was going very fast. Someone else had a three wheeler motorcycle, but it didn't go as fast. Then we had to go, so we packed up the car and then we left.

CROSSING THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

In 1813, the Blue Mountains were crossed by Europeans for the first time. From the first days of the New South Wales colony, people had attempted unsuccessfully to cross this barrier. The coastal plains were rapidly becoming less fertile due to the pressure of droughts, floods and over-stocking. Many settlers, including a Gregory Blaxland, were looking for new pastures to graze their stock.

Driven by these pressures, Blaxland and two of his contemporaries, William Lawson and William Wentworth, decided that they should attempt a crossing of the mountains which had proved such an obstacle to many in the past.

On May 11, 1813 together with four servants, five dogs and four horses, Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth set out. Their progress was slow at first, covering a mere 5 km a day. This was because they had to spend a great deal of time hacking their way through the dense vegetation to find a way for the horses. They had to travel up and down steep, rocky ridges as well as occasionally negotiating swamps. Undaunted however, they continued on where others before them had failed. They finally reached the other side of the Blue Mountains after travelling 90 km in 20 days.

The view across the land beyond the Blue Mountains convinced these explorers that their journey had been economically worthwhile. Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth stood on a hill and surveyed thousands of square kilometres of grasslands and forests suitable for grazing the infant colony's herds for many decades to come.
REPORT GENRE

Social Function

Factual text which describes the way things are, with reference to a whole range of phenomena, natural, cultural and social in our environment.

Generic (Schematic) Structure

- General Classification (can include optional Technical Classification)
- Description
  - parts (and their functions)
  - qualities
  - habits / behaviours
  - or ‘uses’ if non-natural

Language Features

- Focus on Generic Participants (groups of things)
- Use of simple present tense (unless extinct)
- No temporal sequence
- Use of ‘being’ and ‘having’ clause

Report Example

Sea-Lions

Sea-lions are sea-mammals and are warm-blooded. They breathe air with their lungs. The scientific name for the family they belong to is Neopka Cinerea (Nee-o-fo-ka Sin-er-ee-a).

Australian sea-lions are about 2.50 cms long. Adult males (called bulls) grow to about 3 metres and are the largest Australian mammal (they no longer breed in Australia). The female sea-lions are always smaller than the bulls in length and weight. Australian sea-lions have a body shaped for slipping smoothly through the water and a thick layer of fat underneath their skin. They have a covering of hair, large eyes and long stiff whiskers. They have large nostrils, long, sharp teeth and two pairs of short legs with the five-toed feet flattened like paddles or fins.

When Australian sea-lion pups are born they feed on their mothers’ milk. Sea-lions have to come on dry land when they mate and have babies. Bull sea-lions are big and dark and they mate with lots of females. If a baby pup goes near a bull, the bull will kill it. When the pup is trying to look for its mother, no other sea-lion will feed it. If it can’t find its mother, it will starve.

Australian sea-lions are found along the South-Western shores of West Australia and most of the South Australian coastline and off-shore islands. Sea-lions eat fish and squid.

Shamoon Kingi  Yr. 5
Tempe P.S.

Shamoon’s report was written independently for a unit of work on Australian mammals.
LIVING CELLS

Cells are groups of molecules that comprise the units which make up all living organisms. They carry out all the functions of life.

Cells are made up of a number of different parts. They contain a nucleus, a nuclear membrane, a plasma membrane, cytoplasm, and plant cells contain a cell wall.

PARTS OF THE CELL

The nucleus controls the living processes of growth and reproduction. It contains pairs of rod-like structures known as chromosomes. When a cell reproduces, the chromosomes become visible and begin to separate. The nucleus then divides to form two daughter nuclei.

The nuclear membrane surrounds the nucleus and forms a protective skin. Animal cells are enclosed within a protective membrane known as the plasma membrane. Plant cells contain a cell wall outside the plasma membrane. It forms a tough 'skeleton' made of non-living material, mostly cellulose, which gives the plant cell its shape.

The plasma membrane surrounds the living matter of the cell known as the cytoplasm. The cytoplasm consists of the nucleus and the cytoplasm. The cytoplasm is largely composed of water, but it contains large protein molecules and small sugar and amino acid molecules. The large protein molecules cannot pass through the plasma membrane, although the small sugar and amino acid molecules can.

TYPES OF CELLS

There are many different varieties of cells. Each type is specialised to perform different functions. For example, skin cells protect the body, blood cells transport food and waste, sperm and ova cells control reproduction, muscle cells contract and extend. Cells have different shapes to enable them to perform their different functions. The blood cell is round to allow it to move freely, skin cells are block-like to form a protective layer.

Most cells are between 10 and 100 microns across, (a micron is equal to one millionth of a metre) although a few are exceptional in size. The hen's egg for example is a single cell.

STATE GOVERNMENT

State government is the second tier of government. It is run by a Premier. At present, the Premier of N.S.W. is Nick Greiner.

State governments are responsible for the police, and emergency services, health services, including hospitals, and the supply of water. Other services include transport, education, agriculture and national parks and wildlife.

The R.S. P.C.A., the Maritime Services Board, Sport and Leisure, Corrective Services and the Department of Motor Transport are also controlled by State Governments. Areas of responsibility within the government are run by their own Minister. The Ministers form the cabinet. The Premier ensures that the Ministers are running their services efficiently.

Year 6.
PROCEDURE GENRE

Social Function

Factual text designed to describe how something is accomplished through a sequence of actions or steps. This genre often occurs as recipes and instructions.

Generic (Schematic) Structure

- Goal
- Steps 1 - n (ie. goal followed by a series of steps oriented to achieving the goal)

Language Features

- Focus on generalised human agents
- Use of simple present tense (plus sometimes imperative)
- Use of mainly temporal conjunctions
- Use of mainly material (action) clauses

Procedure Example

To Make Stained Glass Figures.

1. First you take a piece of cardboard and one piece of chalk.
2. Then you draw something on the cardboard.
3. Next you cut it out where you want light to go through.
4. Then use a texta to trace around the thing you drew.
5. Stick different coloured cellophane paper over the areas that have a hole.
6. When you have finished this, stick it on the window.
SRI LANKAN EGG CURRY

This curry borrows the Sri Lankan idea of using coconut to thicken and flavour it. You need to use creamed coconut, which is unsweetened and contains all the natural coconut oil. It’s available at most supermarkets.

The eggs need to be hardboiled, so cover them with cold water in a small saucepan, then bring them up to the boil and give them 7 minutes from then. Next take them off the heat and run them under cold water to cool them.

Meanwhile, heat the butter and oil in a small caserole or frying-pan with a lid, then add the prepared onion, carrot, pepper and celery and stir them around to get them nicely coated. Cook for 5 minutes before adding the garlic and ginger and continue to cook for another couple of minutes. Then stir in the turmeric, curry powder and flour and stir to soak up the juice. Now gradually add the hot water, stirring after each addition to make a smooth sauce. Season with salt and pepper, then stir in the creamed coconut. Cover the pan and simmer the vegetables gently for 20 minutes or until they are all tender. Then taste to check the seasoning and add a tiny bit of lemon juice to sharpen it.

Finally, peel the hard-boiled eggs, slice them in half lengthways, then arrange them in the curry making sure they are covered by the sauce. Simmer for just a minute more to heat them through, then serve with rice and chutney.

REPLACING CONTACT POINTS

1. To replace a set of points if badly burnt or pitted is a simple matter. Release the lock nut from the fixed point with a spanner.
2. Remove the plastic collar, then lift off the low tension and condenser leads.
3. The long curved spring and contact point can now be lifted clear.
4. To remove the second part, unscrew the locking screw and lift clear. Note the positions of the insulation washers for reassembly.
5. Clean the base with a rag ready for fixing the new set of points. Then place the fixed contact point on the pivot pin and position the screw. Replace the insulation washers in the correct position.
6. Place the moving contact over the pins, replace the condenser and low tension lead. Push the plastic collar through the lead ends on to the pin, retighten the nut. The points can now be set as shown before. A simple one-piece contact set is available, which can be used to replace the two-piece set.

FOR MULTIPLE BACKUP COPYING

Important points to remember:

- The copies come out facing in the opposite direction to the original. If the original is facing the wall the copy will be facing you.
- The maximum number that can be backed up at one time is 20 copies of a 10 page document.

STEPS FOR BACKING UP COPIES

1. Place originals face down in the Automatic Feed Tray, with the top of the page facing the wall.
2. Set number of copies required.
3. Set Collater selection to GROUPING.
5. Press oblong Auto Start button on the Automatic Feed Tray.

FOR BACKUP.

6. Remove copies from Sort Trays, in order from Top to Bottom.
7. Turn copies over and place in paper cassette, with the top of the paper facing you.
8. Slide originals across to Auto Feed Tray, exactly as they come out of top bin.
9. Check number of copies required.
10. Set Collater Selection to SORT.
11. Press oblong Auto Start button.
EXPLANATION GENRE

Social Function
Factual text used to explain the processes involved in the evolution of natural and social phenomena or how something works. Explanations are used to account for why things are as they are. Explanations are more about processes than things. In the school curriculum, explanations are often found in Science and Social Studies.

Generic (Schematic) Structure
- A general statement to position the reader
- Then sequenced explanation of why/how something occurs (usually a series of logical steps in the process)

This sequence continues till final state of being or thing is produced.

Language Features
- Focus on Generic, non-human participants.
- Use of simple present tense.
- Use of temporal and causal conjunctive relations:
- Use of mainly material (action) processes, some passives used to get Theme right. The Theme is what comes first in the clause and is what the clause (or message) is about.

Explanation Example

Explain How Deserts Remain Dry.

There are three possible reasons why deserts remain dry. These are high mountain barriers, cold ocean currents and high pressure systems.

Mountain Barriers:
When warm air passes over the ocean it picks up moisture in the form of water vapour. As this moist air travels over the land, it rises to pass over mountain ranges. When it begins to rise, the air cools and this causes the water vapour to condense into droplets which fall as rain. When the air reaches the other side of the mountain barrier, it has lost all its moisture and so the other side of the mountain remains dry.

Cold Ocean Currents:
Air passing over cold ocean currents is cooled and therefore is unable to pick up and hold much moisture. When this cold air mass reaches the warm desert, any moisture in the air is evaporated and so does not fall as rain and so the desert remains dry.

High Pressure Systems:
In a high pressure system, the air is dry and is moving downwards. As this system moves over the land it draws in moisture from the land surface. Consequently the moisture does not fall as rain and so the desert remains dry.
Cross Bedding

When a current slackens and the larger particles are suddenly dropped they often roll over the edge of previously deposited material and accumulate at the bottom of the slope. The slope is thus built out forwards, parallel to itself, but at an angle to the surface of the water. Thus the succeeding layers are built at an angle to the main bedding of the whole layer. This is known as cross-bedding. It occurs in streams on the inside of bends, on the foreset edge of deltas, in front of sand and gravel bars, and in the front of sand dunes. The presence of an obstacle such as a sand bar causes a shadow on its lee side. The current is turned upwards and checked to deposit material on the top of the obstacle which can roll down the lee side and accumulate at its angle of rest. These cross beds can vary greatly in thicknesses from a fraction of an inch to a few feet when laid down in water, or many tens of feet in dune sand. Since the inclination of the layers is always downstream or in the direction of the wind, cross bedding gives valuable information as to the direction from which the sediments have been transported.

How Does An Oil Refinery Work?

Before crude oil can be used it has to be processed in a refinery and converted into many different products. Oil is first distilled, which breaks it down into gas, petrol, paraffin, lubricating oils, diesel and other fuel oils and asphalt. This is done by heating the crude oil, which is then pumped to the bottom of a tall steel tube called a ‘fractionating tower.’ This tower is divided into compartments all the way up and the very hot petroleum enters the bottom of the tower as a vapour. Crude oil is made up of a number of different ingredients and each of these boils and vaporises at a different temperature. The vapours at the bottom of the tower are the hottest, and those at the higher levels are cooler. At the bottom of each compartment in the tower are trays, and the different vapours condense, or turn into liquid, on the trays at different levels.

Petrol collects in the top trays, paraffin condenses a little lower down and the other oils become liquids at even lower levels. In this way, the crude oil is separated into the various fractions, which are drawn off ready for further refining.

From Lesson Notes: Year 10 Teacher.

StartupDisks

Because the information in the System Folder is essential to the operating system, the computer cannot complete its startup procedure without it. Accordingly, disks that contain a system folder are called startup disks. It’s possible to have more than one startup disk in your system's disk drives, but the computer will use only one to start itself up. When you switch on your computer, the operating system searches through the disk drives for a startup disk, and uses the system folder on the first startup disk it finds.

Scanning Order.

In searching for a startup disk, the operating system scans the available disk drives in a particular order. First it looks in the internal floppy disk drive. If it finds none there, it searches in any external floppy disk drive connected through the disk drive port. Then it looks for SCSI drives. First it checks to see if a device has been selected as a startup device in the Control Panel disk accessory. If none is selected, it looks for an internal hard disk, waiting 15 seconds for the disk to respond. If the operating system receives no response after 15 seconds, then it searches for external devices attached through the SCSI port. If it still receives no response from the hard disk, the operating system waits for the user to insert a floppy disk in the floppy disk drive.
EXPOSITION GENRE

Social Function

Factual text used to put forward a point of view, or argument.
e.g. essay, letter to the editor. Use of logical rather than temporal sequencing.

Generic (Schematic) Structure

- Thesis
  - Position
  - Preview

- Arguments (1 - n)
  - Point
  - Elaboration

- Reiteration (restatement of Thesis)

Language Features

- Focus on generic human and non-human participants.
- Use of simple present tense.
- Few temporal conjunctive relations (mostly logical relations)
- Use of material, relational and mental processes.

Example of Exposition

I think the Canterbury Council should construct more Activity Centres in most local areas.

Firstly, children can keep busy as well as have fun in the holidays. Secondly, they learn a lot about how to do certain things. Finally, it might stop children vandalising properties that don’t belong to them because they can go to the Activity Centres.

During the school holidays, many children who don’t have much on their minds can attend their local Activity Centre. It will keep them busy and they can also learn to do lots of different things.

Another reason is children can encourage others to attend the local Activity Centre. This way children will not get so bored because they can have lots of fun.

Moreover, it could stop children from vandalising others’ property because they have better things to do like going to the Activity Centre and having fun and enjoying themselves.

These are the main reasons why I think we should have more Activity Centres. It will be very educational and a very good experience for lots of children.

by Nha Vyen Chau
6C Lakemba.
Causes of the French Revolution.

The French Revolution was brought about by a combination of economic problems, social problems and the demands of the French people and their dissatisfaction with the rule of Louis XVI. While some would argue the revolution was caused by Louis calling the Estates-General, this was merely a trigger, not the cause.

The French economy in 1789 was at crisis point. The monarch had invested large amounts of money in the American Civil War and consequently the treasury was facing a shortage of funds to which it had no real answer. The King was faced with three options to save the economy, all of which had serious consequences leading to resentment amongst the population. They were to tax the peasantry even further which was not possible as they were already taxed at 85% and in a state of poverty; to reduce the privileges of the nobility or to refuse to repay loans borrowed for the war in America. The last option would cause much anger and resentment among the bourgeoisie of the third estate as they lent most of the money to the King. The decision of Louis in the end was to reduce the privileges of the nobles which triggered the calling of the Estates-General.

Combined with the economic crisis there were many long-standing social problems that needed to be resolved. One of these was the spread of revolutionary ideas amongst the bourgeoisie. Ironically, these ideas had been instilled by philosophers whose revolutionary idealism was based on the American Civil War. Another of the obstacles facing Louis was the entrenched position of the nobility who strongly opposed any reduction in their privileges. Finally, the peasantry were down-trodden and disenchanted with the social system as a whole. Louis was faced with a seemingly insoluble problem.

The French Revolution is often described as a ‘bourgeois revolution’. The bourgeoisie had assumed a position of great economic power as a result of expanding world trade throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. Many of the bourgeoisie, who were shopkeepers and tradespeople, controlled trade links. Notwithstanding this, however, they had no real say in the government of France, even though they paid most in taxes and occupied many important positions, such as lawyers and accountants. They saw the crisis and demanded a fair administration system. While it is true the bourgeoisie operated Parliaments, these were really only lending institutions for the monarch, who could always demand a loan. When he finally demanded a loan, it was refused.

The nobles were suspicious of the revolutionary sentiments and resented any suggestion of a reduction in their privileges. The peasants in turn, who were controlled and ordered about by the nobles, strongly opposed and resented it. Both the peasants and bourgeoisie were opposed to privilege by birth.

In summary, it can be argued that the combination of economic and social problems facing France in 1789 caused the French Revolution and that it was not caused by a single incident. Each problem inextricably involved the other and each social group had fundamentally conflicting opinions and desires. It would appear however, that without the economic power and influence of the bourgeoisie and their strong revolutionary beliefs, the French Revolution of 1789 may not have occurred.

WEARING SHOES AT SCHOOL

You should wear shoes at school because you will get dirty feet and get into trouble by your mum and dad.

If you don’t wear shoes you can’t go anywhere and you will get blisters in your feet.

If you don’t wear shoes when you run, you will get hurt.

I want people to wear shoes.

Thao.

Year 2 Mt. Pritchard East P.S.

PROTECT OUR NATIONAL PARKS

Trail bikes and the damage they cause have become a major problem for rangers in our National Parks. There are many reasons for this.

Firstly, bikes ridden in the same area again and again, cause severe damage to the native plants in the area. Tracks made through the bush also add to the problem of soil erosion.

Secondly, the noise from trail bikes spoils the peace and quiet of the bush for other visitors. As well as this, native animals that inhabit these parks are scared away from their natural environment and often die before they find shelter.

In order to try and solve this problem, rangers could impose higher fines for people caught riding in the park, as well as confiscating their bikes.

Another solution would be to have more rangers patrolling the areas that have become popular bike trails.

Finally, an additional way of helping the situation would be to make the public more aware of the damage caused by bikes by putting announcements on the television and signs or posters throughout the parks.

Year 6
DISCUSSION GENRE

Social Function
To present information about and arguments for both sides of a topical issue, concluding with a recommendation based on the weight of evidence. Discussions are commonly used by Royal Commissions, local Councils and School bodies to look at two sides of an issue.

Generic (Schematic) Structure

- ISSUE
  - Statement of Issue
  - Preview
- ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST
  - Point
  - Elaboration
- STATEMENTS OF VARIOUS VIEWPOINTS
- RECOMMENDATION
  - Summary
  - Conclusion

Language Features

- Focus on generic human and non-human participants
- Use of simple present tense
- Use of logical conjunctions
- Use of material, relational and mental processes

Discussion Example

There are many reasons for both sides of the question, "Should we have printed advertisements?"
Many people have strong views and feel that ads are nothing more than useless junk mail, while other people feel they are an important source of information.

Here are some reasons why we should have advertisements in newspapers and magazines. One reason is ads give us information about what is available. Looking at ads we can find out what is on sale and what is new in the market. This is an easy way of shopping. Another reason is that advertisements promote business. When shop owners compete against each other the buyer saves money, more people come to their shops and they sell more goods.

On the other hand, some people argue ads should not be put in newspapers and magazines for these various reasons. Firstly, ads cost the shopkeepers a lot of money to print onto paper. Also some people don't like finding junk mail in their letter boxes. People may also find the ads not very interesting. Ads also influence people to buy items they don't need and can't really afford. Ads use up a lot of space and a lot of effort has to be made to make the ads eye catching. Ads also take up a lot of room in the papers and I don't think I find some of them interesting.

In summary, although ads provide people with information, they cost a lot of money to print. Therefore I think we should not have printed advertisements.
LOGGING THE RAINFORESTS.

There is increasing debate as to whether rainforests in Queensland and Tasmania should be given over to the forest industry for logging and woodchipping. Both conservationists and forest industry representatives have put forward powerful arguments to support their cases.

Forest industry representatives argue that perhaps no other material is as useful as timber. Trees are the raw materials for everyday wood products that provide us with warmth and shelter, as well as paper. It is also argued that if the rate of logging was reduced, Australia would have to import expensive timbers from overseas and building prices would increase.

Furthermore, it is argued that timber is renewable; every log taken can be replaced by a program of replanting. Alternatives to timber such as bricks, plastics, concrete and steel have to be manufactured and in the process contribute to the Greenhouse effect.

In addition to this forest industry representatives point to the fact that they employ over 300,000 people and contribute about $327 million to the Australian economy each year.

Conservationists claim however, that the forest industry is destroying our natural environment. Tree logging affects both the flora and fauna in the forests. Trees help protect the soil from erosion and they provide habitats for many forms of wildlife. Many species of plants and animals can only be found in these wilderness areas and they will probably become extinct if the logging is allowed to continue.

As well as this, rainforests supply our polluted world with fresh air and oxygen. They also provide people with a variety of recreational activities such as bushwalking, camping, bird watching, canoeing and abseiling.

In summary, while the timber industry does produce a valuable commodity and provide employment and economic growth the costs to the rainforest environment are perhaps too great. Furthermore there are alternatives to logging the rainforest timber, but there are no alternatives to our natural environment. In conclusion then, we strongly recommend that the remaining rainforests be protected from further logging.

NUCLEAR POWER

In discussing whether nuclear power does more harm than good it is necessary to examine a number of arguments for and against before making a decision. These arguments involve assessing the relative merits of nuclear power and conventional, or coal or oil generated, power in the areas of cost, safety (potential for warfare) and pollution.

In terms of cost, nuclear power is cheap. Admittedly building nuclear power stations is expensive but the running costs are low and the fuel costs are cheaper than for conventional power. This is because the fuel, based on uranium, is cheap and abundant. Conventional power stations, on the other hand, are expensive both to build and to run. Fuel costs are high and the source of fuel - coal and oil - will eventually run out. They will become more expensive as they are used up.

However, in the area of safety, conventional power has the advantage. If there is an accident at a nuclear power station contamination can spread far and wide as happened at Three Mile Island in the U.S.A. and, more recently, at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union. Nuclear power stations don't have accidents often but when they do it's disastrous. An accident at a conventional power station may cause local damage but there is no risk of wider contamination. It may be unfortunate to those working there but on a world scale it is no great disaster.

Furthermore, it can be argued that nuclear power can provide the raw materials for nuclear weapons. Admittedly nuclear weapons are a serious threat to humanity but, by the same token, they have only ever been used twice in warfare whereas conventional weapons have killed millions of people in warfare and in peacetime.

Finally, in the case of pollution, unless there is an accident - which is rare - nuclear power does not cause pollution in its day to day running. Alternatively, burning fossil fuels causes widespread pollution every day. The consequences of this can be more disastrous in the long term than a nuclear accident. For instance, 'acid rain' caused by fossil fuels is responsible for ruining large areas of forest and poisoning lakes in the Northern Hemisphere. Many people die each year from respiratory diseases caused by smog. Nuclear power pollutes once every ten years or so; fossil fuels pollute every day.

Thus, in summary, we can see that in terms of cost, nuclear power has the advantage. However, when it comes to safety and the risk of contamination from an accident then conventional power has the advantage. On the other hand, when you look at pollution, provided adequate safety precautions are in use, nuclear power is much cleaner. Therefore after examining all the arguments, the statement that nuclear power does more harm than good cannot be supported.

*This Discussion example is taken from "EXPLAIN, ARGUE, DISCUSS WRITING FOR EXAMS AND ESSAYS" by Mary Kalantzis and Peter Wignell.*
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Conjunctions.
Conjunctions are the words which build the logical relationships of time, cause, comparison and addition between clauses. They are sometimes referred to as 'joining words'.

Genre.
The term genre refers to any staged purposeful cultural activity in which language is used, and this includes oral language genres as well as written ones. A genre is said to be characterised by having a distinctive schematic structure - a distinctive beginning, middle and end. Genres evolve as the demands of the culture change. They have been developed over time to achieve specific social purposes and are constantly evolving. Examples include: sales exchange, interviews, letters, essays, political speeches, meetings, lectures, novels, operas, pop songs, horse-racing commentaries, and jokes.

Participants.
Refers to the elements that are involved in the 'goings on' in the text, i.e. the people, places and things. Because they 'participate' in whatever is going on, they are given the functional label, participant. Participants roughly correspond to what in traditional grammar is referred to as nouns. For our purposes here, participants can be specific or generic.

Processes.
Refers to the representation in language of culturally organised actions or 'goings on' and 'states of being' in the world. In grammar, processes are categorised under three main types (doing, meaning and relational):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>doing</td>
<td>She jumped out the window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meaning</td>
<td>She didn't realise it was so high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relational</td>
<td>It was a dreadful mistake.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>