

**SECTION C – Argument and persuasive language****Instructions for Section C**

Section C requires students to write an analysis of the ways in which argument and language are used to persuade others to share a point(s) of view.

Read the background information on this page and the material on pages 12 and 13, and write an analytical response to the task below.

For the purposes of this task, the term ‘language’ refers to written, spoken and visual language.

Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 14 of this book.

Section C will be worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

**Task**

Write an analysis of the ways in which argument and written and visual language are used in the material on pages 12 and 13 to try to persuade others to share the points of view presented.

**Background information**

The Principal of Spire Primary School writes a weekly message for the school’s website. She invites comments, favourable or unfavourable, to be posted after her message appears. The Principal has been concerned about the amount of packaging waste she has seen around the school. Her message about this concern and a response from one parent are on pages 12 and 13.

# Spire Primary School


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## Newsletter > Principal's Message

Last updated 11:48 AM on 8 July 2017

Dear parents of Spire Primary School,

I write to you this week to introduce a new concept for us all to think about. 'Oh, no!' I hear you say, 'She has got another idea!' It is true that I often take this school down new paths, especially in areas that affect the preservation of our planet. We are the only local school that has a 'Walk/Pedal to School Day' once a week, rather than once a month or even once a term! We have four different bins for our waste products, not just three! Our vegetable garden is truly organic and our pet hens scratch and roam as they wish! But I think we at Spire can do more. We are responsible for the future of our world.



I have become increasingly concerned about the amount of superfluous packaging in our everyday lives. The newspaper in plastic, hamburgers in boxes, individual packets of tissues, little packages of rice crackers and chips. You might say that the material from which these containers are made are biodegradable or recyclable – but they still exist, are still clogging our bins and eventually, our country. If we do not do something positive about this now, the environmental damage will be irreversible.

Last week I walked around the grounds at recess time, talking as I do with any student who wanted to chat – many, I am glad to say. I kept seeing your children holding little plastic packets with a few biscuits in one side and some cheese spread in the other. When the children had eaten, the little packets became waste material! I have found myself wondering why those biscuits could not have been spread with cheese at home and brought to school in a re-usable container. Other children were drinking juice from cardboard boxes. Why not a washable plastic bottle? At our canteen I saw a child buy a sushi roll and apply soy sauce from a cute little plastic fish. That fish ended up on the ground until I asked the student to put it in the bin – more rubbish! Why not use a common flask from which the sauce could be pumped at the counter? (For that matter, how awful are those little tomato sauce containers given with meat pies – lethal if flipped in your eye!)

I am asking (and, in the case of the canteen, insisting) that we do away with unnecessary packaging. I want the canteen to sell products that have no need for it. I hope to influence the staff to replace the coffee pod machine – those multiplying little pods – with a machine that filters the coffee straight into a jug. I might even ask our teachers to bring out our old communal teapot and do away with the pretty teabags!

How many nights a week do you eat takeaway? Plastic boxes of beef in black bean sauce, plastic bags of lettuce for the paper bag of spring rolls, little plastic containers of sauces – all these things increase the mounds of waste products. I am told you can buy carrots ready peeled, washed and sliced – in another plastic bag – but why not prepare your own snacks for the lunch box?

I know reducing our packaging will be a challenge at school and at home but we must confront it for the sake of future generations. I will be implementing a curriculum unit to teach students about sustainability at every year level.

As usual, your comments are welcome.

Denise Walker, Principal

#### **Comments (1)**

Fair go, Denise. My partner and I have always supported your green ideas. We are already doing what we can. Our kids walk to school every day! They are really interested in what rubbish goes where. They love the chooks and the garden. But mornings are chaos in our house as it is. How much worse if we have to spread cheese on biscuits (and won't they go soggy)? Have you any idea how many plastic bottles we have lost over our time at Spire? And filling them also takes time. Both of us parents go to work.

The soy sauce – what a mess little kids will make of pumping that! As I recall, the Parents and Friends donated the coffee pod machine for the staff – do you want it to join the hard rubbish? I would think we had passed the days when civilised people were happy to all drink the same stewed tea.

Finally, why begrudge us all the odd easy night off? Takeaway food is often a lifesaver for busy people.

It is a great shame if, for a vague principle, our lives become more difficult and we can't enjoy the benefits of 21st-century living.

Louise

## Spire School Rubbish

Concerned about the amount of packaging waste she has seen around the school, Principal Denise Walker argues for a reduction in the number of plastic products used. Cordially but firmly addressing the parents of Spire Primary School in an online newsletter, she aims to enlighten them with ways they can limit the amount of plastic in their children's lunches and at school. The links provided at the top of the page offer an easily accessible and interactive forum. Parents are able to learn about the school and its curriculum, and contact the principal with their thoughts and opinions. This creates an inclusive environment that views all comments as "welcome".

By opening her newsletter with "Dear parents", Walker immediately establishes her amicable and approachable demeanour that strives to show respect for the parents of her school, so they may be more inclined to adhere to her message. She introduces "a new concept for us all to think about", including herself and the parents on the same level, as her equals. However, as she acknowledges her frequently implemented "new paths" that "affect the preservation of our planet", parents may either be excited by the prospect of another unique, green idea, or exasperated by her constant need to change the school's routine. Nonetheless, she points out that Spire is the "only local school" to have a weekly walk or ride day, "four different bins", a "truly organic" vegetable garden and hens that "roam as they wish". Accordingly, parents are likely to commend her tremendous efforts to maintain the school's innovative and unique ideas that help promote an environmentally friendly lifestyle, as their kids are instilled with the value of looking after the planet. This may bolster their sense of pride in being part of a high-achieving community. Linking the "about us" and "curriculum" tabs, the school's logo of a tree and leaves facing different directions portrays Spire's emphasis on growth and care for the environment. Furthermore, the slogan, "Lead & InSpire" encapsulates the school's ethos of ingenuity and breeding role models who are capable of leading the community. And yet, asserting, "we at Spire can do more" the principal emphasises that there is still room for improvement, targeting both the staff and parents' moral responsibility to further contribute to a sustainable lifestyle. Declaring, "we are responsible for the future of our world", she insinuates that the onus is on the school

community to provide future generations opportunities to thrive and succeed. In this way, teachers and parents might be propelled to further educate their students and children about the significance of caring for the planet.

Through her emphasis on “superfluous packaging”, Walker encourages parents to recognise the redundancy of the accumulation of plastic products. Referring to the “newspaper in plastic”, “hamburgers in boxes”, “packets of tissues” and “packages of rice crackers and chips”, she presses her readers to reflect on their own reliance on plastic and consider the cumulative implications. As she challenges the “biodegradable or recyclable” nature of these waste products, the parents may be ashamed of their tendency to lazily justify their overuse of plastic. The adjacent image features a colossal mountain of swollen black garbage bags, completely spilling into the horizon and surrounded by thick grey clouds. This offers a visual representation of Walker’s comment that plastic products “are still clogging our binds and eventually, our country”, thereby reinforcing the power of mounds of rubbish to rid the world of its colour and its beauty. Parents might be repulsed by the possibility of a rubbish-filled future, which in turn could elicit anger and guilt about their current inaction. Subsequently, they may be more inclined to take action immediately, in order to avoid “irreversible” environmental damage that threatens the certainty and quality of their children’s futures.

Compounding her passion for green-living, the principal anecdotally recounts her stroll at recess around the school yard, “talking...with any student who wanted to chat”, assuring parents that she is devoted to and in touch with her students. Reflecting, “I kept seeing your children holding little plastic packets”, she separates herself from the parents and directly places responsibility on them to change the way school lunches are prepared. Walker implies that it is a parent’s duty to set a positive example at home for their children from a young age, as just like school lunches, children bring lessons learnt at home into school. Offering suggestions such as a ‘re-useable container”, a “washable plastic bottle” and a “common flask” for soy sauce, she maintains that there are simple solutions that can be implemented at home. Furthermore, she attacks those parents who eat takeaway, by reiterating the “plastic boxes”, “plastic bags” and “plastic containers” that “increase the mounds of waste products”. Consequently, parents who pack their children’s lunches and order takeaway for their family might feel guilty about their lack of effort to limit the amount of plastic used, and may be inspired to start making a change now. Decisively averring that the school community “do

away with unnecessary packaging”, Walker calls on parents, teachers and other staff to help convert the school to completely eco-friendly for the sake of future wellbeing. By including her intentions to “replace the coffee pod machine”, bring back the “communal teapot” and “teach students about sustainability”, she ultimately demonstrates her proactive nature to do her part, thereby leading by example and encouraging others to follow in her path.

In response to the principal’s newsletter, a parent, Louise, suggests that her ideas are unrealistic and ignore the busy and stressful nature of many parents’ lives. Initially claiming that she and her partner have “always supported” Walker’s ideas and are “already doing what we can”, she commends the principal’s past decisions and shows appreciation for her care and passion about improving the environment. As she includes that her kids “walk to school every day”, “are really interested in what rubbish goes where” and “love the chooks and the garden”, she boasts about her personal contribution to bettering the environment. Other parents may also be reassured that the school’s values are positively impacting their children.

However, Louise matter-of-factly points out that “mornings are chaos” and “both parents go to work”, insinuating that Walker cannot expect busy parents to neglect their responsibilities solely for the sake of being completely green. Highlighting that takeaway is “a lifesaver for busy people” she underscores the stress that is relieved by the occasional ordering in. Subsequently, other working parents can resonate with this argument, and recognise that fulfilling all of the principal’s requests at home may be irrational.

Additionally, recalling that “the Parents and Friends donated the coffee pod machine”, she questions whether the principal more strongly values a plastic-free school or the parents’ appreciation. Those who donated the coffee machine or other gifts may feel disrespected, and consequently turn to rejecting the principal’s argument. Louise assumes that the old-fashioned days of drinking “the same stewed tea” “had passed”, mocking the principal’s desire for a more communal school environment. Hoping that parents can continue to “enjoy the benefits of 21st-century living”, she endeavours to rally the other parents’ support for a lifestyle that aims to minimise stress. Walker may accordingly come to understand that she needs to reach a balance between an environmentally-friendly school and one that still stays at pace with modern times and keeps all parents happy.

Nevertheless, the principal acknowledges that it will be a “challenge at school and at home”, reassuring parents that she does indeed understand their lives may be busy and stressful. However, conclusively justifying her decisions “for the sake of future generations”, the principal urges parents to consider the prospect of humanity’s continuity. Those parents who are perhaps more considerate of their actions and the way they treat the environment are likely to accept Walker’s argument and drastically reduce their plastic use. And yet, busy parents who value their routine and minimising their stress will probably receive Louise’s argument as more significant, and refrain from implementing any radical environmental changes. Nonetheless, most parents are expected to harness their hopes for their children to prosper and achieve fulfilling and enriched lives, and accordingly make decisions that best enable this.