

English Level 1

Film Review

Achievement Standard 90053

Produce formal writing

Resource title: Here's What I Think

3 credits



Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement Standard English 90053: Produce formal writing

Resource reference: English 1.5A v3

Resource title: Here's What I Think

Credits: 3

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Develop and structure ideas in formal writing. Use language features appropriate to audience and purpose in formal writing.	Develop and structure ideas convincingly in formal writing. Use language features appropriate to audience and purpose with control in formal writing.	Develop and structure ideas effectively in formal writing. Use language features appropriate to audience and purpose with control to command attention in formal writing.

Student instructions

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to write a formal essay of at least 800 words that is acceptable to post on an online school community, such as your school website, the school intranet, or a class wiki.

Your piece is to be a critical review of how successful director Todd Millar is at creating atmosphere and using pace to build suspense and tension in the film 'Apollo 11'. Your review should include paragraphs on 3 aspects of the film that deliver on the directors intention.

Your audience will be other students, staff, and the wider community.

You will write your opinion piece at school under supervised conditions.

You will be assessed on how effectively you develop and structure your ideas and your understanding of cinematography techniques that are appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Explanatory Notes

- 1 This achievement standard is derived from the Level 6 Creating Meaning strand [writing] and related achievement objectives in the English learning area of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, Learning Media, Ministry of Education, 2007, and is related to the material in the *Teaching and Learning Guide for English*, Ministry of Education, 2011.
- 2 *Formal writing* text types at this level may include reports, commentaries, text reviews, (auto) biographical profiles, articles, expository essays, digital text forms and other appropriate formal writing text types. Students are required to draft, rework and present at least one piece of formal writing that expresses ideas, information and/or opinions.

- 3 *Ideas* may include facts, information, opinions, observations, and/or arguments.
- 4 *Develop and structure ideas* means to build on a single idea by adding details or examples, linking that idea to other ideas and details, and working towards a coherent planned whole.
- 5 *Develop and structure ideas convincingly* means that the development of the ideas and structure is generally credible and connected.
- 6 *Develop and structure ideas effectively* means that the development of the ideas and structure is compelling and well-organised.
- 7 *Use language features* means that:
 - vocabulary selection, syntax, stylistic features and written text conventions (including spelling, punctuation, grammar) are appropriate to audience and purpose for a selected text type
 - written text conventions are used without intrusive error patterns, such as a pattern of errors in syntax (eg sentence fragments, where structures are not used intentionally; and 'run on' syntax); or a pattern of other significant errors (eg mixed tense sequences, mis-capitalisation, spelling errors).
- 8 *Use language features with control* means that:
 - language features are selected and linked to the intended purpose and audience
 - text conventions are used accurately so that the writing contains only minor errors.
- 9 *Use language features with control to command attention* means:
 - the original and sustained use of language features, vocabulary selection, distinctive personal voice, dimensions or viewpoints
 - text conventions are used accurately so that the writing contains only minor errors.

Task 1: Planning your review

- a) Record important details about the documentary film your class has viewed such as: the title, director, date of production, country of origin, and any other important details such as the names of key people in the documentary film. You should also do some brief research into the topic to understand the context of the documentary film.

Record notes on these questions:

- what is the director's main aim?
- what type of film is it supposed to be?
- who is the target audience?
- how is the film intended to make them feel or think?
- How well are sound, cinematography, atmosphere and pace used to fulfil the director's intention?

Task 2: Write your review

- a)** Write a title for your review.
- b)** Write an introduction that grabs the reader's attention and clearly states:
- the title of the film and the director
 - the genre and the director's intention (To create tension and suspense via the use of cinematography, sound, atmosphere and pace)
 - your opinion of how well the director has fulfilled his intention.
- c)** Write a short paragraph giving an overview of the film.
- d)** Write one paragraph for each aspect we have covered in class.
(Sound – both diegetic and non-diegetic, cinematography and atmosphere/pace)
- e)** Write a concluding paragraph that restates your opinion of how well the director has achieved his intention.

Edit and proof your work. See Resource A.

Publish your review on your English class blog.

Resource A: Editing and proofing

Editing means that you read your work and make improvements to the tone and style of the piece. For example, you might:

- strengthen your opening to command attention
- replace informal words or phrases with words more appropriate for formal writing
- improve the flow of your sentences
- vary the way your sentences start
- improve the links between ideas
- add links, sub-headings, or keywords
- add more supporting evidence
- add explanations to link your evidence to your ideas.

Proofing means that you should check your work carefully for errors. Here is a list of some common errors in students' writing:

- missing punctuation (for example, full stops, commas, apostrophes, speech marks)
- missing or misused capital letters
- incomplete or incorrect sentences
- incorrect paragraphing
- misspelt words
- mixed-up tenses
- incorrect use of conventions of online writing.

Assessment schedule: English 90053 Here's What I Think

Evidence/Judgements for Achievement	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence
<p>Students present a formal piece of writing, of at least 350 words, that develops and structures ideas using language features appropriate to audience and purpose by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introducing the topic, the writer's position, and developing relevant ideas such as: facts, information, opinions, observations, arguments • building on an idea by adding details or examples, such as quotations, information, personal viewpoint, observation • linking and organising idea/s to other ideas and details, and working towards a coherent planned whole • using language features appropriate to audience, purpose and selected text type, such as: vocabulary selection, syntax, stylistic features, and written text conventions (including spelling, punctuation, and grammar). • using written text conventions without intrusive error patterns, such as a pattern of errors in syntax (e.g. sentence fragments, where structures are not used intentionally; and 'run on' syntax) or a pattern of other significant errors (e.g. mixed tense sequences, mis-capitalisation, spelling errors). <p>NB: The example below is one student's opinion on a type of pig farming.</p>	<p>Students present a formal piece of writing, of at least 350 words, that develops and structures ideas convincingly using language features appropriate to audience and purpose with control by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introducing the topic, the writer's position, and developing relevant ideas such as: facts, information, opinions, observations, arguments • structuring and building on the ideas so they are generally credible and connected • selecting and linking language features and presentation techniques as appropriate to the intended audience and purpose for the selected text type • using written text conventions accurately so that the writing contains only minor errors. <p>NB: The example below is one student's opinion on a type of pig farming.</p> <p>In this version of the same editorial on pig farming the ideas are sufficiently developed and structured with supporting detail to make the piece convincing. Language is controlled, and the quotations are well selected and integrated.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p><i>I discovered on www.lovepigs.org that they spend their lives in cramped metal pens inside filthy, disgusting sheds. They are given almost no room to move and they are deprived of everything that is</i></p>	<p>Students present a formal piece of writing, of at least 350 words, that develops and structures ideas effectively using language features appropriate to audience and purpose to command attention by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introducing the topic, the writer's position, and developing relevant ideas such as: facts, information, opinions, observations, arguments • structuring and building on the ideas so they are compelling and well-organised • selecting, linking and sustaining language features and presentation techniques in an original manner, or in a distinctive personal voice, dimension or viewpoint as appropriate to their audience and purpose for the selected text type • using text conventions accurately so that the writing contains only minor errors. <p>NB: The example below is one student's opinion on a type of pig farming.</p> <p>In this version of the same editorial on pig farming the ideas with the additional comments and details help make the message compelling and very effective. The language commands attention: 'about turn', 'awareness and education', 'key to changing', 'plight' etc. demonstrate a succinct, personal, but well controlled voice.</p> <p>For example:</p>

<p>The ideas in this editorial on pig farming are sufficiently developed and structured with supporting evidence to clearly establish the writer's purpose and language features have been selected and used appropriately.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p><i>I discovered on www.lovepigs.org that they spend their lives in cramped metal pens inside filthy, disgusting sheds. They are given almost no room to move and they are deprived of everything that is natural to them. Some pens in New Zealand are only 60cm wide and 2m long and the pigs can't turn around. Their living conditions are horrible; imagine sleeping in your own urine and faeces.</i></p>	<p><i>natural to them. Some pens in New Zealand are only 60cm wide and 2m long and the pigs can't turn around. Their living conditions are horrible; imagine sleeping in your own urine and faeces. On 20/20 a television programme Mike King describes the pigs he saw as "unable to move... screaming and frothing at the mouth". After finding out the reality of a farmed pig's life, Mike King joined the campaign to make this practice illegal.</i></p>	<p><i>I discovered on www.lovepigs.org that they spend their lives in cramped metal pens inside filthy, disgusting sheds. They are given almost no room to move and they are deprived of everything that is natural to them. Some pens in New Zealand are only 60cm wide and 2m long and the pigs can't turn around. Their living conditions are horrible; imagine sleeping in your own urine and faeces. On 20/20 a television programme Mike King describes the pigs he saw as "unable to move ... screaming and frothing at the mouth". After finding out the reality of a farmed pig's life, Mike King joined the campaign to make this practice illegal. This is an about turn for this popular NZ comedian who was the face of the NZ pork advertisements until only recently. He stated that he had "no idea what was really happening." I think this shows that a greater awareness and education is the key to changing the plight of the farmed pig.</i></p>
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Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard



Exemplar

MONEY MACHINE

Starts by providing a punchy synopsis of the film and the director's intentions.

Reviewer establishes a clear and definite point of view.

Use of rhetorical questions to cast doubt on the director's success in achieving their intentions.

Use of strong metaphors to reinforce the reviewer's points.

Specific references to cinematographic effects

Selective use of quotations from the film's

The reviewer begins to develop a more derisory tone through the careful use of pejorative words like "toss"

Director Ramsey Denison clearly cares a great deal about his home city of Las Vegas. His film "Money Machine" seeks to expose inept leadership that at least exacerbated the pain following the worst mass shooting in the history of the country, arguably rushed to cover up what happened with a Sin City sheen. However, intentions only go so far, and Denison's documentary about the October 1st shooting at Mandalay Bay in 2017 is frustratingly unfocused and surprisingly thin on facts or even conclusions. After the horror that Stephen Paddock inflicted on people attending a concert outside of the casino, officials like the Governor of Nevada and Chief of Police worked to make people feel safe enough to return to the city. **Doesn't this happen after every major tragedy?** People were encouraged to go to NYC shortly after 9/11. People can't stop themselves from going outside in Summer 2020. The idea that life goes on too quickly after a national tragedy is an intriguing one, but that's not this movie. "Money Machine" is **laser-focused** on this specific case, and the notion that the Nevada Powers That Be wanted people to feel safe in the city that drives their economy strikes me as a particularly thin concept for a documentary.

Denison opens "Money Machine" with harrowing footage of the Route 91 concert that turned into a nightmare. **With cell phone video shot as the mass shooting was underway,** "Money Machine" doesn't shy away from showing and detailing the brutality of what happened on a night when Stephen Paddock fired so many bullets from his hotel room window that killed over 50 people and injured hundreds more. Concert goers who barely escaped with their lives are interviewed (in bizarre extreme close-up) and share terrifying stories, including one who speaks about falling into a victim who had just been shot and having her finger enter his head **"like a pump-kin."**

Despite the strange choice of angle in the interviews, "Money Machine" could have worked if it had focused on the people there that day, but Denison loses focus almost immediately. Even as he's essentially recreating the shooting through footage, **he's starting to toss some conspiracy theories into the mix,** including a famous one spawned by a cab driver who happened to be recording that day and seems to pick up multiple shooters. At first, the shots sound very distant, but the next round seems to come from much closer. To his credit, Denison does eventually get around to debunk-



Reviewer sets up an insight into what the director is trying to achieve and then knocks it down using the word “**but**”.

ing most of the conspiracy theories about a second shooter, even having a forensics audio expert examine the footage for evidence of shots being fired at the same time by two or more people, **but he allows them to hang in the air for most of the movie.**

From the beginning of "Money Machine," Denison is all over the place in terms of subject focus. He jumps from survivors to a commentary on the structure of Vegas to a suggestion that Paddock acted out because of the way he had been treated. Once a high roller, Paddock had suffered serious losses recently, and his brother suggests that the casinos that once treated him like a King had tossed him aside. The implication is that Paddock killed dozens of people to get back at Vegas, knowing the horror of that night would impact the bottom line of the casinos that had betrayed him.

The final paragraph reinforces the reviewer's opinion of the piece with the greatest clarity, having the effect of 'hammering home' the critique through the process of summarising and condensing the critical argument that was built throughout the review.

“Money Machine” points out how much that didn’t happen but it does so with an angry, one-sided slam piece that accuses the Governor of turning the event into a political opportunity and the Sheriff into just wishing it would go away. Over a shot of Joe Lombardo crying and the Governor placing a caring hand on his shoulder, Denison adopts a “how dare they” tone and “Money Machine” loses any remaining focus it had. Yes, the casinos and power structure could have acted more empathetically and been more transparent about mistakes that were made that night. But none of this is weighty enough for a documentary. It feels like Denison went digging for evidence of evil and unchecked corruption, but he didn’t come up with enough, and so the lack of depth forced him into a scattershot approach, hoping something would stick. It’s like listening to someone at a bar who’s had a few too many and can’t maintain a train of thought to reach a conclusion. And that bar is definitely in Vegas.