**Added Value Unit – Written Element**

The Task:

The Added Value Unit also has a written part to it which takes the form of an extended essay. Rather than doing more research than you need to, you should use the information you gathered for your talk to write a **functional essay**. This will not be the same as your talk notes, but it will probably use the same main points and evidence. You need to show a range of skills in this task:

* When writing about your evidence, you should show your understanding of the main point the source document was making
* You should show your ability to select ideas and supporting detail by choosing good quote evidence
* You should show your understanding of the language in your source document by explaining how it supports the point you have made
* Your writing skills are a big priority, you should show skill in language choice and your essay should be easy to understand
* Your essay should be structured and be accurate in spelling, punctuation and grammar
* Your essay should be around 800 words in length.

**Planning:**

Your essay would sensible divide into roughly seven paragraphs, this will help you to re-use some of the planning that you have already done. These sections should be: an introduction, five paragraphs of information and opinion followed by your conclusion. If you aim to write 120 words in each of your five main paragraphs that should ensure your essay is of the correct overall length.

The main skill that you need to master is the art of persuasion – you are trying to show that you understand your topic so well that you can convince someone else that your opinion is the right one. There are many careers that require this skill, but one of the most obvious is in journalism – when a journalist writes a newspaper article they are often trying to mix the information they are giving you with their opinion about the topic. For example, when writing about a world event they might tell you what happened but they will also let you know whether they think this is a good or bad thing and by telling you this, try to persuade you to agree.

Look at this extract from an article about healthy eating (I have only used parts of the article):

By teaching our children to cook they are more likely to grow up to be healthy adults because they have a better knowledge of cooking techniques, preparing food and new tastes.

Watching talented amateur cooks on Masterchef and gazing longingly at meals concocted by TV celebrity chefs is fine, but actually doing the cooking ourselves is what matters.

...

The push to get school children to eat more healthily is not new, with Jamie Oliver among many others campaigning against unhealthy 'turkey twizzlers' on school dinner menus for years.

...

At primary level, cooking is still part of the curriculum but the quality of lessons is thought to vary enormously from school to school.

This is where charities and social enterprise initiatives can play an important role, inside and outside school.

Jacqui Lawson, a teacher of food technology at Enterprise South Liverpool Academy, knows how valuable cooking lessons are for school pupils.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-16854572

What does the writer think about food in schools?

What do they think should be happening in schools?

How do we know?

What kinds of words are they using?

When you are trying to persuade someone, you have to give them reasons to agree with you and evidence that there are facts to support your idea. Your biggest task now, is to explain why the facts support your idea – that is where most of the persuading is done.

This writer wants to warn people about something that they think is dangerous:

What do they think is a problem?

In a time-poor society, everyone’s looking for a quick fix. But the reality is you’re not going to find it in a shiny can of energy drink by the cash register.   
  
Consumers need to be aware that these products aren’t going to deliver a miracle. The only thing you’re forking out for is a whole load of marketing guff.   
  
Modern life is tiring. It’s no wonder the promise of quick pick-me-up vitamin-infused miracle drink is so tempting. But what you’re really buying is a massive dose of sugar, salt and caffeine. Drink enough of them, and you’re increasing risk of obesity, stroke and type 2 diabetes.   
  
As reported in the Herald Sun, last year, Australians drank 225 million litres of energy drinks, which is around 10 litres per person. And as they surge in popularity, these products are also rapidly expanding in size.

...

An Australian study of 297 calls made to the Poisons Information Hotline concerning energy drinks from 2004 to 2010, found the most common complaints were heart palpitations, agitation, tremor and upset stomachs. Twenty-one people reported serious cardiac and neurological symptoms, including hallucinations, seizures and heart problems. At least 128 required hospitalisation. A five-fold increase in calls to the Poisons Information Line in just six years related to energy drinks is cause for concern.

http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Media-Centre/Opinion-pieces/Current/Energy-drinks-a-health-hazard-says-VicHealth.aspx

Which pieces of good vocabulary have they used?

What evidence have they included?

Can you see any ways that they are trying to use their evidence to persuade you?

Read these two examples of pupil paragraphs on healthy diet (I have made these up, so don’t worry about offending anyone):

There is a growing problem in schools with pupils being unable to concentrate in class and a steady fall in exam results in areas where pupils are not as health conscious. There has been a clear link established between poor diet and a lack of concentration, nutritionist Yvonne Wake says: “Children who lack essential vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids have shown to perform worse academically at school and are seen to be more aggressive in their outward behaviour” (2). The research that Yvonne Wake has done has shown a link between children who did not have a balanced diet and children who were disciplined at school and did not achieve exam success. It is clear that having a positive impact on the diet of young people can have a positive impact on their school success. I think it is essential that young people have access to fruit and vegetables and believe that these should be provided free of charge to children in school.

(2) http://www.supernanny.co.uk/Advice/-/Food-and-Nutrition/-/4-to-13-years/Meal-Deal-the-facts-about-a-balanced-diet.aspx

I think that young people should have at least five portions of fruit and vegetables per day because that is what is healthy for them. The government have said “**Fruit and vegetables: e**at plenty, at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day.” (1). I think that is what we should do. If young people don’t have these things, they could be unhealthy and not be able to concentrate at school. This would mean that exam results are not as good and that would be unfair. I think children should get free fruit at school to help them get five a day.

(1) http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/06/about-the-eatwell-plate/

Which paragraph is better? Why?

What points do these paragraphs make?

What do you think about the evidence that they have used?

What differences are there in the kinds of language that the two writers have used?

These paragraphs should help you to decide on the kinds of evidence you will use and the detail that you will include when explaining your evidence.



Writing Your Essay

Once you have used the planning sheets to help you structure your essay, you should think about the kinds of vocabulary you might use that is specific to this type of writing. You should think about including such phrases as: **Despite** any evidence to the **contrary** … / **In contrast** to this … / **Similarly**, the argument for … / **Nevertheless**, it is still widely believed … / **In addition** to … / **Supporting** this opinion … / **Even though** this was …

Remember to include more advanced examples of Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation and to check that it makes sense before you hand it in.

Here is one last example paragraph, this time from a pupil essay on whether or not Eminem is a good role model for young people.

**Despite** becoming a **global presence** in the music industry, Eminem has often faced **criticism** for the lyrics that have made him famous. **It has been argued** that he should be held responsible for the effect that his songs have on the people who listen to them. He has made a number of public apologies over the years when people have been upset by his outspoken approach. **For example**, his album ‘Relapse’ contains references to Mariah Carey which her husband objected to, forcing Eminem to make a public apology for any offence caused. It was reported in MTV news that: “Dissing is his main thing, Eminem says, but he’s still extremely sorry if he caused any offence to Mariah or her husband Nick, because that was never his intention.” ([www.softpedia.com](http://www.softpedia.com)). It is this kind of media attention that has created such a **negative** image of the rap star. **I believe** that the kind of music he produces is intended to shock and that people are being naïve to expect it to praise other public figures, it doesn’t prevent him from being a positive role model to young people – many of them may see this as encouraging them to speak about their opinions.

This person has a clear structure and has included the elements of PEER that were explained in the planning section. They have used some vocabulary to show their opinion and to give quote a formal tone to their writing.

Now it’s your turn.

Sources Record Sheet Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Sources Record Sheet Name: Teacher Example

Topic: \_\_\_Computer Games Bad for Teens\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Source 1: www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/191171.php \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Information / quote from that source: "Violent video games are like peanut butter," said Ferguson. "They are harmless for the vast majority of kids but are harmful to a small minority with pre-existing personality or mental health problems."

Source 2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Essay Planning Sheet Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Point 1 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 2 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 3 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 4 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 5 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

Essay Planning Sheet - example

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| Point 1 | Children with behavioural difficulties are made worse by games |
| Example | "Violent video games are like peanut butter," said Ferguson. "They are harmless for the vast majority of kids but are harmful to a small minority with pre-existing personality or mental health problems." |
| Explain | * You don’t recommend sugar for a child who is hyperactive so games shouldn’t be given to young people who already have difficulties with violent reactions * Lots of things are only dangerous if used without care, but we restrict them too – like selling knives to children |
| Response | I think restrictions shouldn’t be left to parents to manage – games creators should find ways to make sure their product doesn’t harm children |

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| Point 2 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 3 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 4 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |

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| Point 5 |  |
| Example |  |
| Explain |  |
| Response |  |