Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Sample assessment task

Year level	6
Learning area	English
Subject	Reading
Title of task	Feature Article

Task details

Description of task	Students analyse, and develop a response, to the information in a printed feature article. They identify and discuss how language features are used to represent ideas.
Type of assessment	Summative
Purpose of assessment	To assess students' understanding of how language is used in a text and how the choice of language features and vocabulary affect the meaning.
Assessment strategy	Written response to feature article
Evidence to be collected	Written response
Suggested time	50 minutes

Content description

Content from the Western Australian Curriculum	<u>Language</u> *Language for Interaction* Understand the uses of objective and subjective language and bias *Text Structure and Organisation* Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects *Expressing and developing ideas* Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion <u>Literacy</u> *Responding to literature* Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts *Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating* Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers

Task preparation

Prior learning	Students have explored literal and implied meaning. They have completed tasks involving persuasive techniques and the analysis of images and text. They have explored a variety of different text types and are familiar with a range of language features that are used by authors for different effects.

Assessment differentiation	Teachers should differentiate their teaching and assessment to meet the specific learning needs of their students, based on their level of readiness to learn and their need to be challenged.
	Where appropriate, teachers may either scaffold or extend the scope of the assessment tasks.

Assessment task

Assessment conditions	This is an individual, in-class assessment.
Resources	Feature article

Instructions for teacher

Explain to students that they will be reading a feature article and writing a response. In it, they will be required to answer the following questions.

1. How does the writer try to 'hook' or attract the interest of the reader?
2. What is the main idea or issue discussed in the article? Explain.
3. What viewpoint or opinion does the writer put forward about this issue?
4. Identify specific words that the writer has used and explain how effectively they support the writer's viewpoint.
5. What is their response to this issue? Discuss whether they agree or disagree with the writer by using specific details from the text to justify their opinion. They can also refer to other sources, such as their own experience or their wider reading to support their ideas.

Instructions to students

Read the feature article carefully. Write a response, using the following questions as a guide.

1. How does the writer try to 'hook' or attract the interest of the reader?
2. What is the main idea or issue discussed in the article? Explain.
3. What viewpoint or opinion does the writer put forward about this issue?
4. Identify specific words that the writer has used and explain how effectively they support the writer's viewpoint.
5. What is your response to this issue? Discuss whether you agree or disagree with the writer by using specific details from the text to justify your opinion. You can also refer to other sources, such as your own experience or your wider reading to support your ideas.

How many visitors can a koala bear? Not many, it seems

Article by Jean-Loup Rault, Research Fellow, University of Melbourne, and Sally Sherwen, University of Melbourne; published in *The Conversation*

Everyone loves to get close to a koala. They are an Australian icon and a major ecotourism attraction. A photo with a koala is a holiday must for many overseas visitors.

But how well do these celebrity koalas cope with frequent, up-close or intense interactions from unfamiliar humans?

A study we conducted at the Animal Welfare Science Centre, University of Melbourne, showed that koalas displayed to the public are disturbed by noisy and up-close encounters with human visitors. The results are published this month in Applied Animal Behaviour Science.

The more visitors within a five-metre radius of the koalas, the more vigilant behaviour koalas displayed, which puts them in an alert state.

Image: Kim [Starrate]. (2005). *Sleeping koala*. Retrieved February, 2015, from https://www.flickr.com/photos/starrarte/3236865657 Used under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic licence.

Even in captivity a koala needs to sleep much of the day. Flickr/Kim, CC BY-NC-SA ImaRaR

But our research showed just the contrary: people *can* disturb koalas. If visitors get too close to them, or if they are too loud, koalas interrupt their normal activity.

In some cases, this is probably encouraging for visitors: it makes for a much better picture when the koala is looking at you, right?

Why does increased vigilance in koalas matter? Vigilance is quite a normal behaviour. Remaining alert to their surroundings allow animals to detect threat, and decide how to act appropriately.

But problems occur when that alert response is triggered too often, which can result in chronic stress. Vigilance is usually linked to the fight-or-flight response, one of the main mechanisms of the stress response.

This stress response is often an energy-costly mechanism too. This may be a more serious issue for koalas than for other species, since koalas have evolved on an extremely low energy diet of eucalyptus leaves, so minimise energy expenditure by sleeping 18 to 20 hours a day.

In fact, in this study, the koalas spent half as much time vigilant as they spent looking for food. Hence, this higher time spent vigilant may come at the cost of less time left to forage.

Not enough energy is a problem

These results provided interesting practical knowledge for the Koala Conservation Centre, at Phillip Island, Victoria, with whom we worked. Recording koala behaviour proved to be a valuable, non-invasive monitoring tool to assess visitor-related disturbance in captive koalas.

This means the rangers can act to try to reduce disturbances as much as possible by adopting different visitor management strategies.

This study is only a first step into a complex topic. Further research is needed to determine whether those frequent disturbances actually impact koala welfare. It may, or it may not, but science-based knowledge is required in the field of animal welfare science.

Other factors may also need to be considered, such as previous experiences and the way animals are raised.

Koalas on public display

Some studies on this so-called 'visitor effect' raise an ethical dilemma for establishments that display animals to the public. A balance needs to be achieved between visitor experience and education on one hand and animal welfare on the other. Other studies suggest a positive effect on animal welfare from such human encounters.

Our study was done in semi-captive settings, with koalas able to roam freely in large boardwalk enclosures.

Some wildlife parks allow hands-on experiences with koalas. The impact of these practices on the koalas' behaviour and welfare has not been scientifically assessed, but it does remain a crucial question if we aim to protect our must-see native fauna.

In the meantime, the best attitude may be to keep a distance with this wonderful animal, so that both parties can continue to enjoy living together in a sustainable way.

Sample marking key

Description	Marks
Analysis and response	
Analyses and compares the information and main idea in the feature article. Completes a detailed response to the viewpoint presented in the feature article, using specific evidence to explain his/her response.	5-6
Analyses the information and main idea in the feature article and provides a response to the viewpoint presented, identifying examples from the text to explain his/her response.	3-4
Identifies the main idea/issue in the feature article and provides a simple response to the viewpoint presented.	1-2
Subtotal	**6**
Description	**Marks**
Analysis	
Identifies a range of language features that are used by the author. Discusses, in detail, the purpose of the language features and how they support the point of view presented.	5-6
Identifies language features that are used by the author and discusses how they support the point of view presented.	3-4
Identifies language features that are used by the author to support the point of view presented.	1-2
Subtotal	**6**
Total	**12**