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Unit 4: Contents Table

	LESSON 1: How and why we communicate	LESSON 2: Communicating to persuade
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a fable (pp. 6 – 7) ■ Reading and analysing an advertisement (pp. 9 – 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a cartoon showing the use of persuasive language (pp. 12, 14) ■ Reading a dialogues about AIDS (pp. 19 – 21)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying reasons for writing (pp. 3 – 5) ■ Comparing messages communicated in a fable and a cartoon (p.7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Answering questions based on a cartoon (p. 13) ■ Completing a table to identify use of persuasive language (p. 16) ■ Identifying persuasive language in a letter (pp. 16 –17) ■ Recognising persuasive language and its effect in a dialogue (pp. 18 – 21)
Listening and speaking		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a dialogue aloud (pp. 19 – 21) ■ Role-playing (p. 21)
Vocabulary development		
Visual Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding the point of view of view communicated in a picture (p. 8) 	
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using language to persuade (pp. 14 – 15)
Critical Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thinking critically about ways of communicating (pp. 2 – 3) ■ Communicating different point of view (p. 7) ■ Identifying persuasive techniques of advertisers (p. 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Looking at how facts can be manipulated to support a point of view (p. 13)
Study Skills		

	LESSON 3: Point of view in the media	LESSON 4: How style tells a story
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading to identify a negative point of view: Low Farce on High Mountain (p. 27) ■ Reading to identify a positive point of view: A Prayer for the Dying (p. 30) ■ Reading to evaluate the truth: Row Brews over Everest Summit Photos and How we planted the Flag for Mandela (p. 31) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a dialogue to identify style of speech (p. 36) ■ Reading extracts to identify formal and informal register (pp. 37 – 38) ■ Reading a letter to the Press to identify a personal style of writing (pp. 40, 42)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying bias in headlines (p. 25) ■ Identifying negative bias in a report (pp. 27 – 28) ■ Look at how quoted and reported speech can be used to persuade (pp. 28 – 29) ■ Identifying positive bias in a report (pp. 29 – 30) ■ Comparing and evaluating the truth in two articles (pp. 30 – 31) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify reasons for using the media (p. 34) ■ Distinguishing between formal and informal style (pp. 35 – 36) ■ Writing an unbiased report (pp. 40 – 41) ■ Writing a letter of complaint (p. 43) ■ Responding to a letter of complaint (p. 43)
Listening and speaking		
Vocabulary development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working out the negative connotations of words (pp. 27 – 30) ■ Working out the positive connotations of words (p. 30) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying words and phrases used in formal and informal language styles (p. 36)
Visual Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Matching photographs with news headlines (pp. 24 – 25) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using a continuum to assess the register of different extracts (p. 39) ■ Using a photograph to identify social problems (p. 42)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying quoted speech and reported speech (pp. 28 – 29) 	
Critical Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Looking at bias and reasons for bias in reports (p. 28) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifying an appropriate style of speaking and writing (pp. 36 – 37, 40, 42 – 43)
Study Skills		

	LESSON 5: Reading the media	LESSON 6: Communicating through art
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading cinema reviews (p. 47) ■ Reading a different point of view: Khayelitsha's Overweight Women Spared Social Pressure (p. 53) ■ Reading to identify good and bad publicity: New-age Messiah or Evil Force and Farrakhan Kiss for Winnie Earns Wrath of Top Imam (p. 56) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a pamphlet to work out your opinions (p. 60)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognising values and bias in reviews (pp.48 – 49) ■ Analysing words and images in an advertisement (pp. 50 – 52) ■ Writing about the use of symbols (pp. 54 – 55) ■ Critically analysing a magazine (p. 57) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describing a series of photographs (p. 68) ■ Analysing the practice of multilingual (pp. 70 – 71) ■ Expressing an emotional response to an image (pp.71 -75)
Listening and Speaking		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working out your opinion in discussion (p. 60)
Vocabulary Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Revising connotation and denotation (p. 67) ■ Using words and phrases from different languages to evoke feelings (p. 71)
Visual Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding how images can be a powerful communication tool (pp. 50 – 52, 55 – 57) ■ Understanding symbols (pp. 54 – 55) ■ Critically analysing images and symbols in a magazine (p. 57) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working out your opinion of some art works (pp. 60 – 62) ■ Connecting art works and their captions (pp. 64 – 65) ■ Understanding how context can change the meaning of an image (pp. 66 – 67) ■ Giving a personal response to a series of photographs (p. 68) ■ Looking at the use of political symbols on posters (pp. 69 – 71) ■ Choosing an image you like (pp. 74 – 76)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling		
Critical Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thinking critically about the media (pp. 48 – 49) ■ Critically analysing advertisements and their purpose (pp. 50 – 52) ■ Identifying how the media can influence values (p. 57) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thinking critically about art and its meaning (p. 63)
Study Skills		

	LESSON 7: Freedom of expression	LESSON 8: Speaking to persuade
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading to work out your opinion: Stone: 'A Repulsive Story ...' (p. 80); The Nation's Prudish Protest ... (p. 81) and Nat Leader Framed, says AG (p. 86) ■ Reading about racist language: The 'n-word' and the meaning of racism (p. 83) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading persuasive speeches by Winston Churchill (p. 96), Martin Luther King (pp. 97 – 99) and Nelson Mandela (p. 101)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Comparing opinions if censorship (p.78) ■ Expressing your reasoned opinion (pp.79, 86) ■ Identifying racist or derogatory language (p. 84) ■ Evaluating the importance of freedom of expression (pp. 86 – 87) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describing politicians' use of body language (pp.90 – 92) ■ Describing a persuasive speaker (p. 93) ■ Completing a table to identify persuasive techniques (p. 94) ■ Critically analysing extracts from speeches (pp. 96 – 102)
Listening and speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discussing censorship (pp. 78, 80) ■ Discussing the use of racist and derogatory language (pp. 82 – 86) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listening to how two politicians use tone of voice and language to persuade (pp. 96 – 100)
Vocabulary development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working out meaning from the context (pp. 78, 87) ■ Identifying racist and derogatory language (pp. 82, 86) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using literal and figurative language (p. 95) ■ Identifying and explaining metaphors (pp. 96 – 100) ■ Analysing emotive words and phrases (p. 102)
Visual Literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysing the body language of politicians (pp. 90 – 92)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling		
Critical Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thinking critically about censorship and freedom of expression (pp. 78 – 82, 87) ■ Thinking critically about racist language (pp. 82 – 86) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Critically analysing political speeches (pp. 96 – 100)
Study Skills		

	LESSON 9: Planning and writing a speech	LESSON 10: What's so funny about jokes?
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading scripts of an interview on radio (pp. 104 – 105) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading humorous extracts (pp. 114 – 115) ■ Reading a humorous article which highlights a serious issue: Suk'geza – Don't Play (pp. 123 – 124)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Preparing your own speech (pp. 106 – 107) ■ Identifying different resources (pp. 107 – 109) ■ Brainstorming ideas (p. 110) ■ Organising ideas (p. 110) ■ Drafting and revising your speech (p. 111) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysing the use of humour in different extracts (pp.114 – 115) ■ Analysing the use of humour in a cartoon (pp.120, 124 – 125) ■ Analysing the use of humour in an article (pp. 123 – 124)
Listening and speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a radio interview aloud (pp. 104 – 105) 	
Vocabulary development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understanding the use of stereotypes to create humour (pp. 117 – 119) ■ Understanding the use of satire (pp. 126 – 127)
Visual Literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Looking at an advertisement and a cartoon to work out how breaking stereotypes can create humour (pp. 119 – 120) ■ Understanding the visual use of humour in advertisements (pp. 121 – 122)
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling		
Critical Thinking Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thinking critically about the use of stereotypes (pp. 117 – 119)
Study Skills		

	LESSON 11: Creative writers of history	LESSON 12 Writers who argue
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading extracts to compare academic and creative writing: Blame Me on History (p. 131) and Black Politics in South Africa (p. 132) ■ Reading poems which describe historical periods (pp. 134 – 135) ■ Reading a poem written from a worker’s perspective: A Worker Reads History (p. 137) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading a cartoon to identify different kinds of reasoning (p. 142)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Answering questions based on a text (pp.131 – 132) ■ Comparing academic and creative writing (p. 132) ■ Completing a table to match poems with periods of history (p. 133) ■ Completing a table to identify what poetic images suggest (p. 136) ■ Adapting a poem to challenge a viewpoint (p. 138) ■ Writing your own poem (pp. 139 – 140) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Writing arguments from different viewpoints (pp. 145 - 146) ■ Supporting your opinion with examples (p. 147) ■ Supporting your opinion with reasons (p. 147) ■ Using a flow chart to show steps in an argument (pp. 148 – 149) ■ Organising paragraphs into correct order (p. 150) ■ Planning, drafting and revising a short, logical argument (pp. 151 – 152)
Listening and speaking		
Vocabulary development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using words and phrases to introduce reasons (p. 146)
Visual Literacy		
Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explaining a metaphor (p. 131) 	
Critical Thinking Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Supporting your opinion with examples and reasons (p. 147) ■ Providing a strong argument (pp. 146 – 147)
Study Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using a flow chart to show steps in an argument (pp. 148 – 149)

Ways of communicating

Here are some ways in which we communicate:

speaking



listening



writing



reading



acting



watching



The arrows show that when communication happens, there are at least two people involved. One speaks while the other listens, or one writes and the other reads, or one watches while the other acts.

Of course, communication can involve many people at once. For example, millions of people listen to the radio, but you can't talk back to a radio. How do you think this affects the communication process? Do you think it adds in any way to the power of this form of communication? What about the many chat shows which invite you to phone in?

ACTIVITY 1

Think about the following questions:

1. How do you communicate with another person? Think of how you make others understand what you mean— at home with your partner or with children, at work or with your friends. How do you communicate your ideas? List, in your notebook, whatever ideas come to mind.
2. How do you communicate with groups of people? Now think about how other people communicate their ideas to you— at meetings, during worship, and so on. Write down all the ideas which you have about this.
3. How do you get news and information? Think about how you get to hear who has won the national soccer-league match, or about a disease which is killing many people, or about a new product on the market. Write down all the ways in which news reaches you.

Share your ideas with your fellow learners.

Reading what others write

When you read, it's like someone speaking to you, except that the other person's voice is on paper. You can decide whether you agree or disagree with the writer, as you do when someone speaks to you. You need to remember that a person has written what you read for specific reasons, and you need to work out what these reasons are and how the writer has communicated his/her ideas.

In the next activity you can identify different reasons for writing and different ways in which writers communicate their ideas.

ACTIVITY 2

Read the following list and see if you can add to it.

1. Writers write in order to:
 - | tell a story
 - | record what happened in a meeting
 - | apply for a job
 - | give information
 - | persuade.

2. Now read the following extracts and use the list on page 3 to help you identify the writers' reasons for writing.

Extract A

Sukela ngantsami Chosi

There was once a woman called Manjuza. She had a strong singing voice and many people loved to hear her sing, but to see her dance was the best thing that could happen to brighten up one's day.

MHLOPE, G. THE SNAKE WITH SEVEN HEADS . SKOTAVILLE PUBLISHERS, BRAAMFONTEIN, 1989

Reason for writing: _____

Extract B

Born in 1870 into a middle class family, Rosa Luxemburg was raised and educated in Warsaw. She was sent to Switzerland at the age of nineteen. In 1897 Rosa obtained a doctorate in law and political science at the University of Zurich. The following year she moved to Germany.

ETTINGER, E. ROSA LUXEMBURG: A LIFE . BEACON PRESS, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 1986, P. XIV

Reason for writing: _____

Extract C

After Mr Khumalo's proposal was accepted, it was decided that all the members of the civic organisation would withhold their rent until the council installed electricity in all houses.

Reason for writing: _____

Extract D

Now that I have my Grade 12, I am keen to move into a more challenging position. I am very interested in the commercial field and I would enjoy using my knowledge in a practical way.

Reason for writing: _____

Extract E

Learn the simplest things. For you whose time has already come it is never too late!
Learn your ABCs. It is not enough, but learn them! Do not let it discourage you!
Begin! You must know everything! You must take over the leadership.

BRECHT, B. SELECTED POEMS . GROVE PRESS INC., TORONTO, 1947

Reason for writing: _____ ANSWERS ON PAGE 153

COMMENT

Writers can have more than one purpose when they write. For example, a writer may tell a story in order to teach you something, or tell a joke in order to make a serious comment. You can find out more how writers use these techniques in later lessons in this unit.

Different points of view in texts

You have just looked at the way in which different writers have written for different purposes. In the next activity you'll read a text to see how a writer has used a story in order to teach a lesson. We call this kind of story a fable. Fables are another form of communication. They often use animals as their main characters because some animals can easily be identified with human qualities, for example, a sly fox, a meek lamb, a greedy wolf, a stupid donkey. This kind of story teaches through using an example. It's like the parables Jesus taught, or the stories Mohammed told.



ACTIVITY 3

1. Read the fable below and discuss it with a study partner. What do you think the fable is saying about people? In your notebook, write down what you think the fable means.

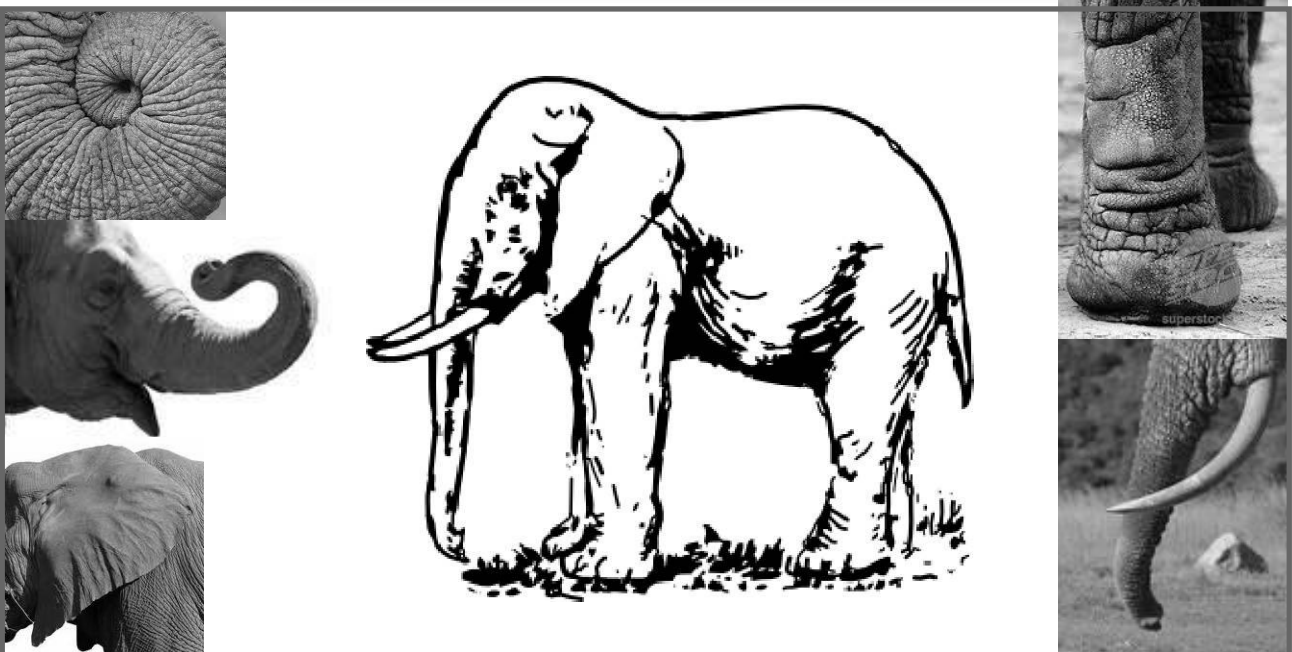
There were six blind people. They heard that the king was visiting the next village, riding on an elephant. None of them had ever seen an elephant, 'An elephant!' they said, 'I wonder what an elephant is like.'

They went to find out. Each of them went alone. The first held the elephant's trunk. The second, a tusk. The third, an ear. The fourth, a leg. The fifth, the stomach. The sixth, the tail. Then they went home, all sure that they now knew exactly what the elephant looked like.

They began to tell each other. 'Oh it's a fantastic elephant,' said the first, 'so slow and soft, long and strong.' 'No,' said the one who had felt the tusk. 'It's quite short, and very hard.' 'You're both wrong,' said the third, who had felt the ear. 'The elephant is flat and thin like a big leaf.' 'Oh no,' said the fourth, who had felt the leg. 'It's like a tree.'

And the other two joined in too. 'It's like a wall.' 'It's like a rope.' They argued and argued, and their argument grew very bitter. They began to fight.

Then someone came up who could see. 'You are all right,' said this person who could see. 'All the parts together are the elephant.'



2. Do you and your partners differ in your understanding of the fable? How do you differ?
3. Now look at the cartoon below. Different people are giving the police officer different descriptions of the same person they all saw. Why do you think they describe the man in different ways?



4. Is the cartoon communicating the same message as the fable? Write down what you think the similarities and differences are between the two.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 153

COMMENT

The fable and the cartoon both illustrate how people see the same things in different ways. They base their different points of view on their experiences, attitudes, cultural backgrounds and interests.

For instance, a worker may think a strike is a necessary weapon in the struggle for a living wage, but from the boss's point of view the strike represents a loss of money for the company. These are two very different points of view of a strike, because the worker and the boss have very different interests.

Writers also have different interests, so they communicate points of view which will best serve their particular interests.

Points of view in pictures and photographs

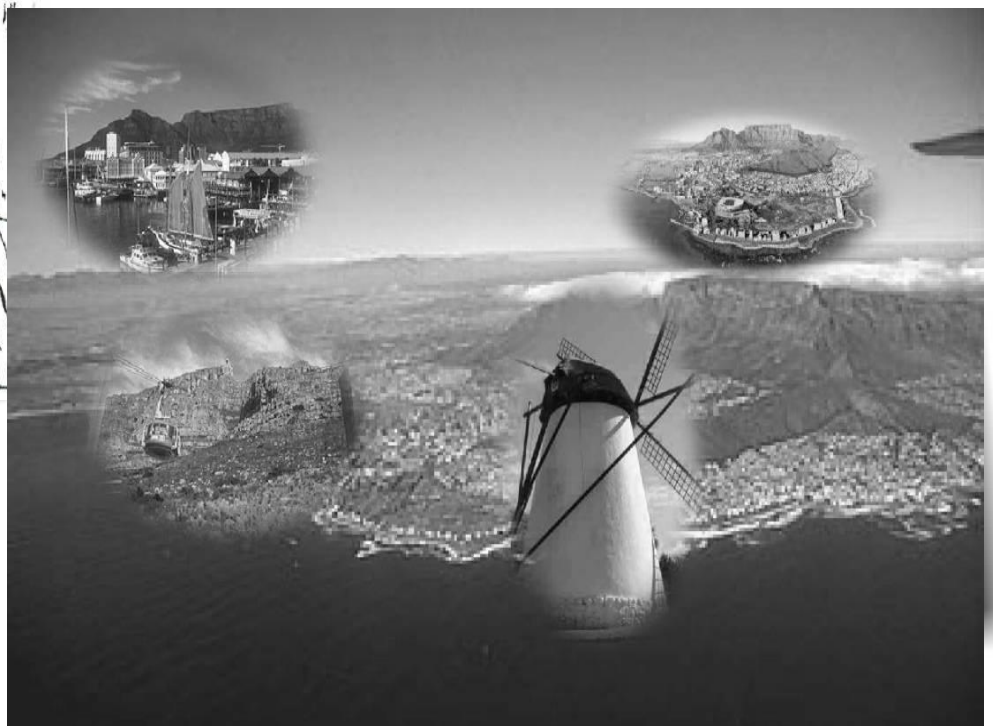
Just as words express different perspectives, so can pictures show a particular point of view. Pictures are a very powerful means of communication.

Sometimes newspaper editors and journalists cut or 'crop' a picture or photograph. This can affect our understanding, or the way we 'read' the picture or photograph.

ACTIVITY 4

1. Look at Picture A below. Think about the woman in the picture. What is she feeling? What is she doing? Where is she?
2. Now give this picture a caption. After you've done this, look at the uncut version of the picture in the Answer Section. See if you still think your caption is right for the picture!
3. Look at this postcard (Picture B). Which parts of Cape Town does it show? Which parts are left out? Why do you think they are left out? Write your answers in your notebook.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 154



COMMENT

Sometimes we see only one point of view. At other times we are given only one point of view. It is important to try to see things from different points of view, to get a better understanding of the whole picture. Think of the fable as an example. The way in which we see things is affected by what we have experienced, or by what we have been told.

The power of advertising

People who write advertisements don't only give us a certain view of what they are trying to sell, they also try to make us think that there is no difference between a fact and a point of view, or an opinion. Advertisers try to inform us about particular products. They often do this by making us believe they are giving us only facts. Have you ever believed an advertisement which turned out to be a lie? What did you do about it? Maybe you took back what you bought and asked for your money back? In the next activity you'll read an advertisement to find out how advertisers try to sell their products.

ACTIVITY 5

1. Read the advertisement for Mabele meal.



MABELE IS HERE

Since early times, our people have known the natural, morning taste of Mabele meal. Throughout the changing times, Mabele meal was there. Natural, nutritious, convenient and affordable . . . Mabele lived side by side with the sounds of Sophiatown. And you can still jive to the natural taste of Mabele meal today.

In times like these, when things have changed — treat your family to a Mabele breakfast — for long-lasting energy.

Some things simply never change

FROM: PACE 1994

THE AGENCY 872

2. Advertisements try to persuade us to buy products. The writers of advertisements usually do this by:
 - | writing opinions as if these were provable facts
 - | giving you selective information, that is, only the information they choose to give you
 - | appealing to our emotions or our feelings and our senses trying to get us to associate, or link, the product with something very pleasant.

Find examples in the advertisement which illustrate each of the above techniques.

3. Why do you think the writer of the advertisement says, 'Since early times, our people...'? How does this make you feel? Write your answer in your notebook.
4. Can any person explain what 'the natural morning taste' is? How does the word 'the' work in this statement?
5. Mabele lived side by side with the sounds of Sophiatown . What are we being asked to link, or associate, this meal with?
6. What else, that is left out of this advertisement, could we associate with or remember about Sophiatown?
7. Has this advertisement given us any facts, or are all these statements just opinions of the advertisers?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 155

COMMENT

In this activity you looked at how advertisers persuade us to buy their products by disguising opinions as facts, using techniques which appeal to our sense and emotions, and leaving out certain information.

CHECKLIST

Are you able to:

- r identify different reasons for and ways of communicating
- r explain how people can have different points of view on the same thing
- r explain how pictures can be used to communicate a certain point of view
- r describe some of the techniques advertisers use to persuade us to buy products.

LESSON 2

Communicating to persuade

About this lesson

Among the different purposes which writers have, persuasion is an important one. For example, advertisers use language persuasively to try to sell products, politicians use language persuasively to gain more support and parents use language persuasively to get their children to co-operate.

In this lesson you'll look at how we use language to persuade others to do as we wish, and how others go about trying to persuade us.

In this lesson you will

- | think about how facts can be manipulated to persuade others
- | analyse persuasive language
- | examine persuasive language used in a formal letter
- | read a dialogue
- | write a dialogue in which one person wins an argument.



Facts and opinions

When last did you need a favour from someone who was not very willing to help you? Did you try to convince her of how badly you wanted her help? How did you make her change her mind? Think about this for a minute. You could have been using a mixture of facts and opinions to persuade that person to accept your argument.

In the last lesson you saw how different people often have different perspectives on the same thing. In the next activity you can see how the way a fact is presented can affect how it is understood.

ACTIVITY 1

1. This activity gives you a chance to decide what you think the difference is between a fact and an opinion. Below is a cartoon of three men, Jabu, Siphon and George. They are having an argument about the results of a soccer match. Read it and try to work out how each person presents the same facts in a different way.



RULE, P. LANGUAGE AND THE NEWS. HODDER AND STOUGHTON, WITS UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1993, P. 2

2. Answer the following questions in your notebook:
- Which soccer team do you think Jabu supports? How do you know this?
 - Which soccer team does George support? What tells you this?
 - Look at these three sentences and decide which you think is a fact and which is an opinion:
 - Chiefs beat Pirates 3-2.
 - Chiefs were the better team.
 - Pirates gave the game away to Chiefs.
 - How do you think a journalist would have reported the result of the match?
 - Think of a newspaper headline which George would have written. Write it down. Remember, a headline is the name which journalists give to their article. For example:



- Now think of a different headline which Jabu would have written because it reflects his point of view. Write this down in your notebook.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 156

COMMENT

Jabu and George support different teams. One supports Chiefs, the other supports Pirates. Each has a different view, or perspective, on the result of the match. One thinks that Chiefs won the match, while the other thinks that Pirates gave away the match.

You can see that facts can be manipulated to suit the speaker's idea of what happened. This happens in almost all kinds of writing. It happens especially when someone wants to persuade another person to accept their point of view.

Ways of using language to persuade

You can use language in different ways to persuade someone to do something. You can:

- | say nice things about them; when compliments are used in this way it is called flattery
- | use the word 'if' to threaten them
- | say something negative or uncomplimentary.

Look at the following examples:



ACTIVITY 2

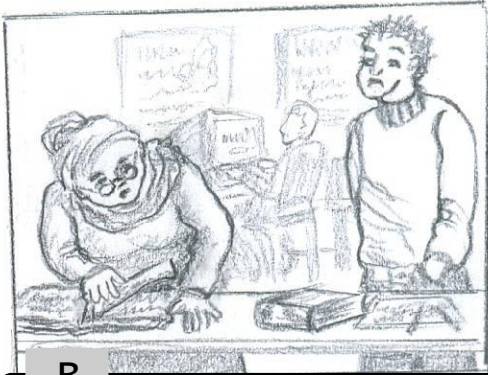
You are now going to read the words of different speakers who try to persuade others to follow their advice. The aim is to examine the different ways in which language can be used to persuade.

1. Read the words in the speech-bubbles below and on the next page.

A

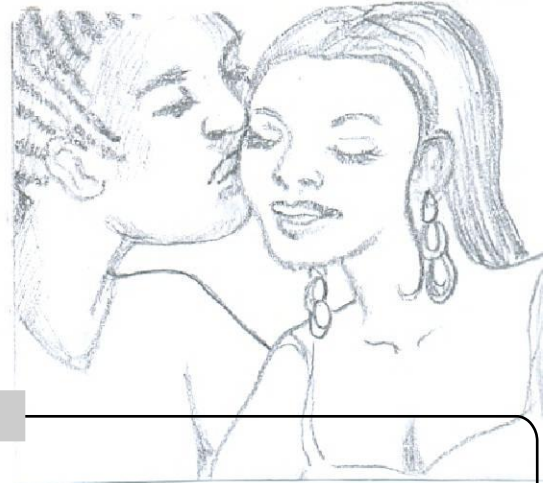
You don't understand that times have changed! We do things differently today to how you did things. If I don't go with her, the others will think I've got no guts.





B

You'll fail if you don't put in at least ten hours of work every week.



C

Let's go to bed, come on! Forget about this AIDS rubbish! Darling, come on, you look so lovely tonight! And you said you loved me.



D

Those who go on strike today need not bother to come to work here again. You people think money should just fall into your laps! Do you know how hard I worked to build this company?



E

You'll never succeed. You're always loafing around! Look at your sister. She knows how to work hard!

2. Now copy the table on the next page into your notebook and complete it:

- | write down what each speaker wants
- | choose the most persuasive words of the speaker, like 'if' or 'need not bother'
- | describe how you think the person who is listening will feel (write down your words for their feelings). The first one has been done for you.

	Who is speaking?	What does he / she want?	Which of his / her words persuade?	How would the listener feel?
a.	a youth	permission to go out with someone	'You don't understand... if I don't, the others will think...'	old fashioned
b.	teacher			
c.	lover			
d.	employer			
e.	parent			

ANSWERS ON PAGE 156

COMMENT

One thing which all these speakers have in common is that they are trying to persuade someone else to see things from their point of view.

As you can see, persuasive language can be very strong. It can cause people to feel so uncomfortable that they may be forced to do something just to get rid of the bad feeling, even if they don't really want to do it. At other times, persuasive language can make someone feel good and they end up doing something for someone just so that the person doesn't change their good opinion of them!

Persuading through writing

As with speaking, when you write you can use different techniques to persuade someone to do something. In the next activity you can analyse a formal letter written by Ms Abrahams to a battery company. Ms Abrahams is dissatisfied with the battery she bought and is trying to persuade the company to replace it.

ACTIVITY 3

1. Read the letter below. Which of the details in this letter are facts? Which of the details are more emotive or persuasive? Think about why you would use facts in a formal letter and write down your ideas in your notebook.
2. Now fill in the missing words, using the list in the margin next to the letter.

1 Band Street
Pinetown
3610
2 March 2011

Sparky Batteries
P.O. Box 31
Pinetown
3600

Dear Sir/Madam

FAULTY BATTERY

This is my (a) _____ appeal to you to replace the faulty battery which you sold me on (b) _____.

After (c) _____ of using it, it went flat. I returned it to you on (d) _____ and I was told by (e) _____ that the manager would telephone my work to tell me when I could fetch (f) _____.

By (g) _____, I had not heard from the manager or anyone else in your company. I then (h) _____ to the manager to remind him/her of your company's promise. Enclosed in my letter was the (i) _____ of the original purchase.

The cost of the battery was (j) _____. I am a mother of seven and it took me many months to save sufficient money to afford this battery.

I therefore insist that you take this matter seriously and (k) _____ to replace it. If you do not respond within a week of receiving this letter, I shall (l) _____ with you only through the organisation, (m) _____.

Yours faithfully,
M Abrahams
M Abrahams (Ms)

third
27 December
Mr Lindique

one month
28 February
31 January
cash slip
wrote
a replacement
R150,00
Legal Aid
take the matter further
keep your promise

ANSWERS ON PAGE 157

COMMENT

Facts are very important in formal letters because they give the recipient (the person who receives the letter) a clear understanding of what happened and why it was unfair. Think about whether this letter would have been as effective if the writer had left out the dates and figures.

Persuading through conversation

You have just worked through a letter where 'facts' like dates, names and exact amounts help to make a strong argument. In the next activity, you will read a dialogue – a conversation between two people. It shows how people use their opinions, feelings and ideas to convince someone of something.

ACTIVITY 4

1. Read through the dialogue on pages 19 - 21 once on your own.
2. Then read it aloud with someone else. Each of you should take one of the parts. (When you read the script aloud, you don't have to read the names of the women aloud.)
3. Think about the conversation between these two women. Do you think Nthombekhaya is persuaded to think about AIDS from a different point of view? Write your answer in your notebook.
4. What does she say which tells us that she is willing to get more information?
5. What worries Nthombekhaya? Do you think this is the reason why she asks Sandra for more information?
6. Underline the words Sandra uses to persuade Nthombekhaya to believe her point of view about AIDS. Then write what Sandra says as a list of facts.



Setting: Nthombekhaya and Sandra are sitting at the bus-stop waiting for a taxi.

Nthombekhaya: Yho! It's hot today! This must be one of the hottest days this year.

Sandra: Yes, I feel like a cabbage with all my layers of clothes sticking to me. And the taxis take forever to come—we've been waiting 20 minutes already.

Nthombekhaya: Ja, but they're better than the buses. If we were waiting for a bus, we'd still be here tomorrow.

Sandra: Hmmm, that's true. I just hope Vuyani is not in a bad mood when I get home. He's always asking me where I was or why I took so long to get home—even when he knows how far my work is, and that sometimes the taxis don't stop because they're too full.

Nthombekhaya: Ah yes, how is it with Vuyani these days? Does he have a job yet?

Sandra: No. That's the problem. Now he takes it out on everyone around him.

Nthombekhaya: He's not doing anything nasty to you, is he, Sandra?

Sandra: No, he wouldn't hurt me (thinking a bit). Anyway, I wouldn't stick around if he did anything funny. That's one thing I won't tolerate—I won't be beaten by anybody—I don't care who it is. There's just another problem—quite a tricky one

Nthombekhaya: Hey, here's the taxi! Quickly, let's try to get good seats!

(They run for the taxi, and are lucky to get two comfortable seats at the back.)



Sandra: This is good- we'll have a nice ride home. It's horrible when we get squashed, because our trip home is so long.

Nthombekhaya: Ja, true. But Sandra, what were you saying about a problem at home?

Sandra: Oh, yes, I don't really feel like talking about it.

Nthombekhaya: Okay.

Sandra: Ag, let me just tell you. Maybe talking about it will help me think. You know, Vuyani and I have only known each other for six months. And I know that he has had other women, just like I've had other men.

Nthombekhaya: Hm?

Sandra: Ja, well, the other day when I went to the clinic, I picked up this pamphlet on AIDS. And I was shocked to read how easily one can get it if you aren't using a condom ... you have heard about it, Nthombi?

Nthombekhaya: Yes, but isn't this whole thing about AIDS just another way of getting us to change our culture? Don't those people at the clinic just talk about AIDS because they want us to have small families? Hayi, hayi, hayi Sandra, I'm very suspicious of all this new talk. AIDS! What in the world is that? Why did we not learn about it ourselves, long ago? You must be careful, Sandra, you mustn't just swallow everything those people in white coats say! Since when do we trust them? Since when, eh?

Sandra: Well, I've read what the pamphlet says, and it sounds as if nobody knew about AIDS until only twelve or fifteen years ago. Now people are really dying from it. And one way to catch it is through having sex without a condom with someone who has had different partners. I tell you, Nthombi, it is happening.

Nthombekhaya: Is this all they say? Sounds like very little to me!

Sandra: No, they also say that you can get it if you use someone else's razor.

Nthombekhaya: Ha, ha, ha, ah! So tell me, Sandra, are women shaving these days? Ha, ha, ha ...

Sandra: Ja, I know it sounds funny to talk of shaving, but if your man uses another man's razor, then he can catch the disease through a cut. You see, it gets passed on through blood too. Then he can give it to you.

Nthombekhaya: Blood, really?

Sandra: Why are you looking so worried?

Nthombekhaya: Because I donate blood sometimes.

Sandra: Oh, don't worry about that, they are extremely careful at the clinics, because they know about AIDS. They never use the same needle twice, and they always disinfect everything.

Nthombekhaya: But what has all this got to do with Vuyani, Sandra?

Sandra: Well, he doesn't want to use a condom, you see. He gets very angry when I speak about AIDS and then it spoils everything. But I don't want to speak about AIDS, I just want him to use the condom! It's really upsetting when we quarrel at such times.

Nthombekhaya. Well, I hope you work this business out Do you still have that pamphlet?

Sandra: Yes, I'll give it to you tomorrow. Here's my stop. Bye!



Nthombekhaya : uHambe kakuhle!

ANSWERS ON PAGE 158

COMMENT

Although Nthombekhaya doesn't completely change her ideas about what she believes some doctors have tried to do, she begins to be interested in hearing more about AIDS. She wants to read about it to get another point of view. We know this because she asks Sandra if she still has the pamphlet.

In the next activity you'll have the chance to imagine how Sandra tries to persuade Vuyani, her boyfriend to use condoms.

ACTIVITY 5

The purpose of this activity is for you to write a dialogue in which one person (Sandra) tries to convince the other (Vuyani) to change his mind. A dialogue is something most people have every day. It's a conversation between two people.

1. When you write your dialogue, imagine the two speakers. To help you with this, ask someone to role-play (act) the dialogue with you. This means that one of you pretends to be Sandra, and the other, Vuyani, and you talk to each other. This will make the next step much easier.

2. After role-playing, write the dialogue between Sandra and Vuyani. Here is the beginning of the dialogue. Write the rest to show who won the argument and how.

Vuyani: Hey, my swekhile , howzit tonight?

Sandra: Couldn't be better- we're alone at last.

Vuyani: Hmm, that's just what I was thinking.

Sandra: Come here, my butternut of the summer garden!

3. Once you've written your dialogue, read it to a partner. This will make the dialogue come alive for you. You may want to make some changes to make your dialogue more true to life, and Sandra or Vuyani's argument (for or against the use of condoms) more convincing.

COMMENT

If you found this activity a little difficult, it's probably because you need some practice in writing dialogues. Role-playing before writing a dialogue is a good way to get started.

CHECKLIST

Are you able to:

- r explain how facts and opinions can support a person's point of view, and how facts can be manipulated to suit the speaker's idea of what happened
- r identify how people use emotional persuasion through flattery, threats, and saying negative or uncomplimentary things
- r use facts persuasively in a formal letter or in a dialogue
- r role-play a dialogue with a partner, and then write a script of the dialogue.

Communicating through photographs

In the first activity, you'll match two photographs with two news headlines. This will remind you how photographs convey a particular point of view or bias just as words do.

ACTIVITY 1

1. Look at the two photographs. Both were taken on Mount Everest. Which photograph do you think goes with an article entitled 'At Death's Outdoor Banquet'? What makes you think so?

'AT DEATH'S OUTDOOR BANQUET' BY GRAEME ADDISON, OUT THERE, FEBRUARY 1998, P. 35



2. Which photograph do you think goes with an article entitled 'SA climbers triumph at summit'? Why do you say so?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 158

COMMENT

It was probably clear to you that one photograph showed Everest expeditions in a positive light while the other took a negative view. Just as photographs focus on a certain angle and influence what we see, media headlines also reflect a bias.

Persuasive headlines

Like photographs, headlines immediately attract your attention. It is often clear from a headline what the journalist's point of view is. The aim of the next activity is to show you how headlines are a useful indication of what the writer's bias will be.

ACTIVITY 2

Read the following headlines, both from articles about the 1996 South African team expedition up Mount Everest!

**Low farce on
highest mountain**

**How we planted the
flag for Mandela**

1. Which headline adopts a positive point of view towards the Everest expedition?
2. Which headline adopts a negative point of view towards the Everest expedition?
3. Which article do you think will contain:
 - | criticism of the way the team was chosen
 - | criticism of the team leader
 - | warnings that the expedition might end in disaster?
4. Which article do you think will contain:
 - | the experience and opinions of one of the team members
 - | a description of the triumphant moment of reaching the summit?

farce:
a (laughable,
absurd)
disorganised
situation

ANSWERS ON PAGE 158

COMMENT

Before you even start to read an article, you are influenced by the headline and photograph, which makes you see a story from a particular point of view. The headline 'How we planted the flag for Mandela' has connotations of patriotism (love of one's country) because the words 'flag' and 'for Mandela' suggest that the action was performed for the nation rather than for individual glory.

On the other hand the headline 'Low farce on highest mountain' reflects a negative point of view because the word 'farce' has connotations of something ridiculous or an action you find stupid. In the next activity you will read the article that goes with this headline in order to see how the writer uses words with negative connotations as well as other techniques to criticise the expedition.

Reports with a negative bias

You may have heard the media described as a 'watchdog'. This is because journalists often take on the role of guarding the truth, like a dog that barks when it senses danger. In particular, journalists point out the failures and shortcomings of politicians and other important people. However, it is not always easy to decide whether a reporter is being negative because he or she is criticising someone who has done wrong or because he or she is biased against a particular person or organisation.

In the next three activities you will work out how a journalist conveys a negative point of view and whether the negative point of view is justified.



ACTIVITY 3

Read the article 'Low farce on highest mountain' and answer the questions that follow.

Low farce on highest mountain

by Mike Loewe

The most ambitious public relations stunt by a South African newspaper is degenerating into farce as two ill-prepared women climbers scramble for the top of Mount Everest.

South African mountaineer Cathy O'Dowd will carry with her the hopes of her sponsor, the Sunday Times, some South African mountaineers and people who want her to reach the summit for South Africa.

However, O'Dowd will be only too aware of calls back home for her to resign and join three top South African climbers who quit in protest against the style of expedition leader Ian Woodall, a man nobody in the South African mountaineering world really knows.

The South African mountaineering world is questioning how British ex-patriate Woodall got to lead the trip. Mountain Club of South Africa sources criticised both his leadership and the selection procedures used in selecting the women in the team.

Cathy O'Dowd's black comrade, Deyshun Deysel, is not a mountaineer. In the words of one mountaineer this week, she is 'the victim of

a cynical experiment in political correctness.'

The mountaineers this week warned that with Woodall's questionable leadership qualities, Deysel's safety was likely to rest in the hands of Sherpa mountaineers who are expected to lead the party to the summit.

Deputy president of the Mountain Club, Dries Bekker, warned that if Deysel died on Everest the sponsors and expedition leaders would be guilty of 'gross neglect.' Some mountaineers, such as the Mountain Club's expedition sub-committee head, John Moss, went so far as to worry about whether O'Dowd, a highly respected mountaineer, had notched up enough high-altitude experience for the climb,

O'Dowd's decision to power ahead, presumably for glory and to keep the hopes of a South African ascent alive, while Ed February resigned, could also have repercussions on unity in the South African climbing community.

February is one of three climbers who returned to South Africa in protest at Woodall's 'militaristic, secretive and disempowering' leadership style.

ADAPTED FROM: 'LOW FACE ON HIGHEST MOUNTAIN' BY MIKE LOEWE, MAIL & GUARDIAN, APRIL 19, 1996

1. The word 'ambitious' can sometimes have positive connotations (of someone who is goal-orientated and committed to their career). What are the connotations of 'ambitious' in the first paragraph of this article?
2. List at least four words in the first paragraph that have negative connotations, and in each case try to say what these connotations are.

stunt: something that is done to attract attention and get publicity

cynical: attitude towards people in which you don't believe in their goodness or sincerity

repercussions: the usually unexpected effects of an event, action or decision on something else

3. What newspaper does this journalist write for? What newspaper is sponsoring Cathy O'Dowd? Explain how this difference might lead to bias on the part of the writer.
4. Does the writer give any facts to support his negative opinion of the Everest team and its leader? If so, list these.

COMMENT

Writers use the connotations of words to convey their opinions. This writer thinks that the expedition is badly organised and foolhardy, so he uses words like 'stunt', 'degenerating' and 'scramble' to describe it. His negative opinion may be justified, because he reports the fact that some of the team members 'quit in protest' at the poor leadership of the expedition. On the other hand, he works for a rival newspaper to the one that is sponsoring the expedition. This might lead him to be biased.

So far you've seen how headlines, photographs and the connotations of words can give you a particular point of view. In the next activity you'll examine quoted speech as another method journalists use to persuade you to see one side of the story.

Quotations that persuade

Quoted speech consists of the actual words that a speaker or writer uses. It is different from reported speech, which is put in the past tense and is often a paraphrase or summary of what was said. Reported speech is often introduced by a word like 'said', 'warned' or 'announced'.

When reading, you recognise quotes or quotations because they occur between quotation marks (inverted commas), for example:

In the words of one mountaineer this week, she is 'the victim of a cynical experiment in political correctness'.

In the above example, the actual name of the speaker or source of the quote is not given. A newspaper reporter may refer to 'one mountaineer' or 'a bystander' or 'a doctor' or 'a source that wishes to remain anonymous'. On other occasions, both the name and position held by the person quoted will be given.

A journalist's point of view will seem more convincing if it is backed by quotes, especially if they are the opinions of experts. In the next activity you will study the article *Low farce on highest mountain* again in order to see how the writer uses quotes to support his point of view.

ACTIVITY 4

1. What does the statement that Deyshun Deysel is 'the victim of a cynical experiment in political correctness' imply about the reasons for her selection?
2. Is the following sentence quoted speech, reported speech or neither? Give a reason for your answer.

The mountaineers this week warned that with Woodall's questionable leadership qualities, Deysel's safety was likely to rest in the hands of Sherpa mountaineers who are expected to lead the party to the summit.

3. Find a quote that explains why Woodall's leadership abilities may be considered 'questionable' (i.e. open to doubt and criticism).
4. Look at the sources this writer reports and quotes. Would you say that he has relied on expert, trustworthy opinions or not? Give a reason for your answer.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 159

COMMENT

A report with a negative bias may not necessarily be unfounded (unjustified). Although words with negative connotations may persuade you to be critical, you are more likely to be convinced of a writer's point of view if it is supported by facts or expert opinions.

Reports with a positive bias

Bias is not always negative. You can also be biased in favour of someone or something. Media reports often use techniques to persuade the audience to support a person, a decision or an action. Someone who shows a positive bias towards something or someone else, will use words and descriptions that create a favourable picture in the reader or listener's mind. In the next activity you'll pick out words with positive connotations that persuade you to admire or appreciate someone or something.

ACTIVITY 5

Read the following report of the Everest expedition and answer the questions that follow.

A prayer for the dying

At 9:52 am on 25 May 1996, the South African flag flew proudly on the summit of the world's highest mountain. It was planted there by a man consumed by his passion to conquer the 8 848 metre Mount Everest. A short while later, he was joined by another South African climber, the first African woman to stand on top of the world. Broadcasts were made from the summit, the President congratulated them and the two

moved down the mountain.

Ian Woodall and Cathy O'Dowd had performed a textbook operation in securing South Africa's first ascent of Everest. Bruce Herrod, hours slower than his team mates and the Sherpas, had departed from the textbook style, summiting too late to return to the tent at Camp 4, the only sanctuary in a white, lifeless hell. Everest is unforgiving to climbers like Herrod.

ADAPTED FROM: 'A PRAYER FOR THE DYING'
BY DUNCAN ELLIOTT IN OUT THERE JULY 1996, P. 54

1. List four words in the first paragraph of the article that have positive connotations and briefly explain what these connotations are.
2. In the second paragraph, what are the connotations of the word 'textbook' and what does the journalist want to persuade you to believe by using this word?
3. The writer of this article uses negative connotations to describe one thing. List the words with negative connotations and say what they describe, Why do you think the journalist describes this thing so negatively?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 159

Evaluating the truth in the media

In this lesson you have looked at reports written from both a positive and a negative point of view. It's important to recognise the point of view because the bias of a writer may affect the way you see an incident or person, and the truth may be lost in the process. To eliminate bias completely would be impossible because every report is written from a point of view. However, it is possible to be aware that there is always another side to a story.

eliminate:
get rid of

ACTIVITY 6

In the final activity of this lesson, you'll compare reports from two different points of view in order to evaluate the truth they contain.

Read the two reports below and answer the questions that follow:

Row brews over Everest summit photos

Mountaineers question whether the South African Everest team ever really reached the summit. Justin Pearce and Gaye Davis report.

At a press conference this week, UCT Sports scientist Professor Tim Noakes said until Woodall and fellow-climber Cathy O'Dowd produced pictures, they could not be considered to have reached the summit. 'It is not an established fact that there was a South

African flag flying from the summit,' he said.

Asked whether the photos would eventually be published, Woodall joked, 'We'll probably get around to it.' The Mail & Guardian understands Woodall is negotiating with one or more book publishers, which may be offering a higher fee than the newspapers for previously unpublished photos.

Ian Woodall laughed out loud at the suggestion that there were no photos of the team at the summit.

ADAPTED FROM: 'ROW BREWS OVER EVEREST SUMMIT PHOTOS' BY JUSTIN PEARCE AND GAYE DAVIS IN THE MAIL & GUARDIAN, JULY 5 1996.

How we planted the flag for Mandela

As told to David Beresford by Cathy O'Dowd

I came over the last false summit and there was a burst of colour. It was the prayer flags the Sherpas leave on the summit – incredibly vivid blues and yellows and reds and greens. Woodall and Pemba were sitting there, just under the flags. I still wasn't quite sure if it was the summit or not and then Pemba turned

around and he just had this huge grin on his face...

He began waving his arms at me. Then I knew I'd climbed Everest. I joined them.

Woodall had been talking on the radio and he gave it to me. They had my mother in the studio in Johannesburg. She wanted to know what it looked like. I did a terrible job describing it because it was so difficult.

You are standing on this

point, higher than anything on earth, with this 360-degree panorama of mountains everywhere. You can see right over the Himalayas into the back end of India. You can see right across the Tibetan plateau. You are so high you can see the earth beginning to curve. It was difficult to try and put it into words.

We took the summit pictures. And finally Woodall and I planted the South African flag.

ADAPTED FROM 'HOW WE PLANTED THE FLAG FOR MANDELA' BY CATHY O'DOWD AND DAVID BERESFORD IN THE MAIL & GUARDIAN, NOVEMBER 1, 1996

1. In a sentence, explain the different points of view presented in these two reports.
2. Can the point of view expressed in the first article be justified? Give a reason for your answer.
3. Imagine that the camera used to take pictures on this expedition was lost. Would you believe that Cathy O'Dowd reached the summit? Write a paragraph giving your opinion and explaining why you find her description in the second report convincing or unconvincing.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 160

COMMENT

In the activity you have just completed, you may have approved of the factual need for photographic evidence or you may have been convinced by O'Dowd's eyewitness account of reaching the summit. You probably realised that ultimately (in the end) you have to use your own judgement to decide the value of a report. However, it is important to remember that there are many ways in which the truth may be affected or disguised by the way in which an event is depicted (shown) in the media.

CHECKLIST

Are you able to:

- r recognise how photos and headlines influence your understanding
- r identify negative and positive points of view and how these are conveyed
- r recognise the way quotations are used to persuade and justify a particular point of view
- r evaluate the truth of information using your own point of view.

LESSON 4

How style tells a story

About this lesson

In Lesson 3 you examined ways in which reporters show their point of view. In this lesson, you'll look at other ways in which language can be used to influence our understanding. You'll compare different styles of communicating, for example formal or informal, creative or analytical.

In this lesson you will

- | describe how and why you use the media
- | categorise different styles of writing and speaking
- | read a job interview to decide which style of speaking is appropriate
- | read different extracts and rate them according to how formal or informal you think they are
- | read a letter to the press to explore bias in formal writing
- | write an official report
- | use a photo to explore different styles of communication.

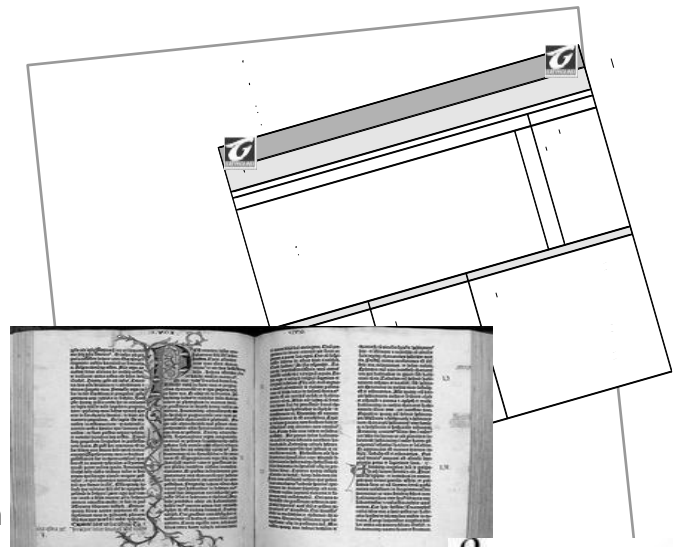


Why do we use the media?

Why do we use the media? 'Why do you read? Why do you watch TV or listen to the radio? To answer these questions, you need to think about what you read, or watch, or listen to. Look at the lists below and spend a few minutes thinking about whether these are things you listen to read, or watch, and why you use the media in this way. Add to the list if you like.

What do I read?

- | news
- | stories
- | letters
- | advertisements
- | train/bus time-tables
- | names of places
- | road signs
- | instructions
- | recipes
- | hymns/songs
- | the Bible or the Quran
- | horoscopes
- | agony columns
- | jokes.



What do I listen to on the radio or watch on television?

- | news
- | weather reports
- | serials (stories in episodes)
- | music
- | discussions (a group talking about one topic)
- | interviews (a person who is asked questions)
- | films
- | documentaries (information about history or science or the lives of people or animals)
- | advertisements.



We use the media for many different reasons: to relax, to get information, to provide us with ideas, etc. When we turn on the television to watch a sitcom (situation comedy), for example, we expect to be entertained with humour. When we listen to a radio programme about reasons for the rising crime rate, we expect to be informed.

Style, purpose and audience

Each thing you read, watch or listen to in the media is presented in a particular style. Here are some definitions of 'style':

The style of something is the general way in which it is done or presented, which often shows the attitudes of the people involved.

Someone's style of writing is their choice of words and the way in which they structure sentences, use punctuation, etc.

COLLINS COBUILD ENGLISH LANGUAGE DICTIONARY . HARPER COLLINS PUBLISHERS, LONDON, 1993

In order to achieve its aim, a piece of writing or a speech or programme on the radio or television has to suit the audience and purpose. It has to be appropriate. You would not expect your favourite sitcom to provide statistics on crime, for example, or serious commentary on crime to be peppered with jokes. The way in which people use language, changes to suit the different circumstances or situations.

When we talk about language and style we often distinguish between informal and formal writing and speaking.

In the first activity, you'll look at what falls under the categories of formal and informal writing and speaking.

ACTIVITY 1

The aim of this activity is to categorise, or distinguish between different kinds of formal and informal writing and speaking.

1. Look up the meaning of the word 'formal' in your dictionary. Then write down the dictionary definition.
2. Here is a list of examples of a certain type of writing. Decide whether you think these fall under the category of formal or informal writing, and fill in the spaces next to a. and b.

a. _____	b. _____
government documents minutes of meetings conference reports political papers instructions job applications newspaper reports	letters to magazines letters to friends newspaper articles which are funny some light-hearted magazine articles shopping lists jokes or cartoons

3. Now read the interview below carefully to decide which speaker is using formal language, which speaker is using informal language, and which kind of style is appropriate in this context.

(Setting: Cynthia Peni has gone for a job interview. Sindile Mathaba, her employer-to-be, is interviewing her.)

Cynthia Peni: Good morning, Mr Mathaba.

Sindile Mathaba: Hello my dear. Please make yourself comfortable ... Oh, why don't you sit down?

Cynthia Peni: Thank you.

Sindile Mathaba: Well, well ... so you want to work here with us, hmmm?

Cynthia Peni: Yes, I've applied for the position of Laboratory Worker.

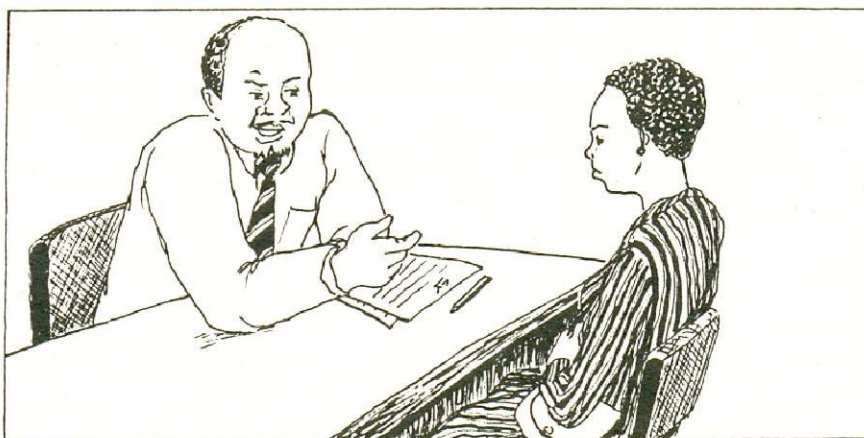
Sindile Mathaba: (smiling) Ahmm ... I see you like the idea of wearing a white coat. I must say you look very attractive in that purple outfit!

Cynthia Peni: No, my interest is in laboratory work— that is why I came here, for a job interview. I would like my job application to be successful.

Sindile Mathaba: We'll see about that. Maybe you'll get more than you bargained for, sweetheart!

4. Now answer these questions about the interview:
- Which of the two speakers uses formal language?
 - Which of the two speakers uses informal language?
 - Write down an example of each.
 - What language style should both have used? Give reasons for your answer.
 - What is Mathaba doing by using the kind of language he does?
 - What is your opinion of this? Have you experienced a situation where someone has used an inappropriate language style? How did it make you feel?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 161



COMMENT

You have just explored how an informal language style was used in a situation where only formal language was appropriate. You saw how Mathaba abuses his position of power by using informal language inappropriately. He harasses Peni by calling her 'dear' and 'sweetheart' when he doesn't even know her. She addresses him as 'Mr Mathaba', which is a sign of respect, and appropriate for a job interview.

When a language style is used inappropriately, and does not suit a particular context (audience or purpose) communication can become difficult or can break down altogether.

Different audiences different registers

Another way of talking about a style of writing or speaking is to talk about the 'tone' or 'register' of a text.

In the next activity, you'll read extracts from different publications to decide whether they use a formal or informal register.

resilience:
ability to
recover
quickly from
misfortune or
a setback

ACTIVITY 2

1. Read the following extracts carefully and decide where each one comes from. The first one has been done as an example.

A: Social studies book

The West African savannah stretches from the Atlantic coast of Senegal to the shores of Lake Chad in central Africa, and separates the Sahara from the equatorial forest belt. The vast areas of savannah south of the Sahara demand the utmost in resilience and the will to survive. Despite its scarce pastures and infertile land, the savannah boasts a colourful history of wealthy and powerful empires which flourished for more than a thousand years before the arrival of the first Europeans.

B:

Melt the butter and pour it into an ovenproof dish, turning the dish to coat the sides and bottom.
Arrange the cooked rice, onions and cheese in layers in the dish. Season each layer and end with a generous layer of grated cheese.
Cover and cook in a moderate oven (180°C, 350°F, Gas Mark 4) for 1 hour, removing the lid for the last 15 minutes of cooking time. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve from the dish.

C:

The process which all the facilitators went through was an initial workshop which served to raise awareness about racism on a personal and structural level. After this we decided to take the model of understanding racism, which was used in that workshop, as a starting point – that there is no scientific evidence to suggest that separate races exist, but that racism does.

E:

Steve Biko was born in 1946 in King William's Town in the Eastern Cape. After being forced out of university, Biko organised community projects for the Black People's Convention. He was detained in 1977. While in detention, he was brutally beaten by security policemen. He died as a result of the assaults on 12 September 1977.

D:

Q: What are the aims of the course?

A: Firstly, to place youth in a better position to contribute positively to the democratisation of South Africa. The second aim is to equip youth with the skills needed to initiate and run development projects.

Q: Why have you decided on this focus?

A: The youth have played a crucial role in the struggle – defending their communities, resisting attacks, and also starting community development projects. But there is a high level of frustration and bitterness. More than 90% of people entering the job market over the past ten years have been unable to find jobs.

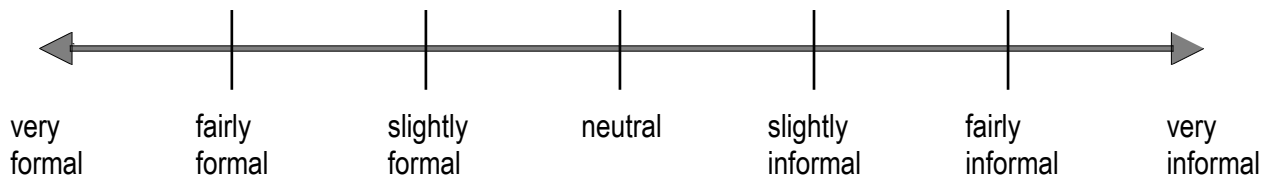
F:

Forget Michael Jackson's moonwalk or the hip-hop moves of Hammer. Traditional dance, such as the xincayincai, is gradually becoming the hottest trend in the country.

'Sure, I enjoy Michael Jackson,' says 17-year-old Fanikie Ngobeni of Gazankulu, 'but I prefer dancing to our traditional music. It's exciting and it's good for your muscles as well as your mind!'

2. Below is a continuum. Rate each extract by placing it on the continuum. You need write only the letter-name of the extract (for example A or B) on the continuum.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 161



COMMENT

To decide whether the register of an extract was formal or informal, you probably thought about the style, audience and purpose. An awareness of these factors will help you to use formal and informal language appropriately when you write and speak.

Bias in formal reports

Formal styles are used to convey information in textbooks, reports, interviews, lectures and official documents. Perhaps you believe that formal writing is always unbiased because it gives facts and information. However, as you saw in Lesson 3, a formal report can choose to tell only one side of the story.

Formal writing often contains a point of view or conveys a bias. When this happens in a newspaper report, after a couple of days you might find an angry or critical response on the Letters page, showing the other point of view. But in police reports and work reports there is less chance of a wrong or unfair report being corrected. So it's important that the facts get presented fairly.

In the next activity you'll try to extract only the unbiased (factual) information from a formal letter to the press in order to draw up a police report.

ACTIVITY 3

Read the letter to the press printed below.

Drunken teens finished last at the Met

I was astonished to read various reports in the press as to how splendid and elegant the Cape Metropolitan was this year.

I have attended the Met for many years and attend several of the race meetings during the year. This year, however, the event was totally ruined for most punters and, in fact, anyone over the age of 25.

The entire grassed portion between the picnic sites, day members' stand and parade ring was covered with blankets, sleeping bags, cooler bags and drunken teenagers.

One had to mountaineer over comatose bodies and debris to get from one place to another, and be bumped by under age revellers in various stages of intoxication, swigging vodka from plastic bottles.

I overheard a group of young people discussing how they had entered the racecourse without tickets as there was no ticket control at one entrance.

What was most shocking to me were the large number of inebriated girls, several just lying passed out on the lawn and one simply vomiting where she was sitting.

This is a shocking indictment of our youth. That this crowd, most of whom have attended or do attend the so-called 'elite' southern suburbs schools and who have every privilege, can behave or be allowed to behave in this way is very

alarming.

It gives one little faith in the future of this country if the 'cream of our youth' display so little in morals and standards. Teenage drinking is out of control. Nightclubs have become the scourge of our generation and the young are simply doing as they please.

They have no respect for property, authority or the law— there are hundreds of young people over the legal alcohol limit on the roads every night and nothing is being done to stop it. They have too much money to spend and no boundaries are set.

Are parents too scared to discipline their teenagers or do they just not care?

Must their daughters be raped or murdered or their sons die in drink-related incidents before they get a wake-up call?

There is much talk of the 'drug-culture' but alcohol abuse is even more insidious and peer pressure is reaching alarming heights.

Poor parents like myself who do try to set standards and restrict their children are having an uphill battle, with constant conflict.

I would be interested in other readers' comments.

Concerned Parent
Newlands

1. Imagine that you were a police officer on duty at the Kenilworth Police Station on 31 January 2011 when you received a complaint from the writer of the letter you have just read. You visited Kenilworth Race Course in order to investigate her claim that teenagers were disturbing the peace.

2. Fill in the following police report, trying to be as factual and unbiased as possible.

Investigation of a complaint from a member of the public

1. Nature of the complaint: _____

2. Date investigated: _____

3. Place where alleged misdemeanour took place:

4. Investigating officer's observations:

5. Action taken (specify):

ANSWERS ON PAGE 162

COMMENT

Your police report was much shorter than the letter to the press because you only had to include facts, not opinions or personal judgements. A police officer cannot arrest children because they are behaving badly; he has to judge whether or not they are breaking the law.

Personal versus impersonal styles

Did you notice that the letter to the press contained many words that expressed and emphasised the writer's point of view, feelings and reactions? She used adjectives like 'shocking', 'drunken' and 'alarming' which have negative connotations. She also added emphasis to her adjectives by using words like 'totally', 'too much', 'most' and 'entire' which show how strongly she felt. This descriptive, personal style of writing is suitable for occasions when you want to convince or persuade somebody of your point of view.

A descriptive, personal style is not suitable for occasions when you have to show fairness or speak on behalf of an institution. Big organisations and public services (hospitals, schools, banks, etc.) have to serve the broad community and must try not to show a very strong bias. They have to be very careful how they word their reports and statements for fear of offending one of the many groups they serve. The person who writes a letter on behalf of the organisation must not express his or her private, personal opinions but the company policy.

In the last activity of this lesson, you'll see how different styles suit different occasions and purposes.

ACTIVITY 4

1. Study the photograph below. With your study group or learning partner, discuss the following questions:
 - | where are these people?
 - | what are some of their problems?
 - | what kinds of things happen on public transport?



2. Imagine you are one of the people in the photograph. You want to write a letter to Spoornet complaining about overcrowding on trains and expressing your view on the topic. Which of the following sentences would you include in the first paragraph of your letter?
- a. The damn overcrowded trains ruin my day.
 - b. Overcrowding tends to occur at rush hour when commuters are trying to get to work.
 - c. I am frightened and sickened by the crush of people who force their way past me to get onto the train, showing no respect for my age.
3. Imagine you are a Spoornet official responding to a letter of complaint from the public. Which of the following sentences would you choose to put in the opening paragraph of your letter?
- a. I don't agree with your complaint because I have never seen commuters behaving in this way.
 - b. Why the hell don't you get out of bed earlier so you can avoid the rush hour?
 - c. Spoornet acknowledges your complaint and assures you that it is doing everything in its power to improve the quality of its service.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 163

COMMENT

You have just used a range of styles to communicate about a single topic. In your discussion, you may have mixed languages, e.g. English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa or isiZulu, as you spoke. You may have used slang or swear words. You may have told little stories (anecdotes) of your transport experiences or you may have told jokes. All these are indicators of an informal, conversational style. When you chose sentences that would fit in with the letter of complaint to the press and the official response, you showed your awareness of the different kinds of formal writing styles.

A letter to the press is less formal than the official response. The letter to the press is personal (you write it from your point of view) and the official response is impersonal (it is written from the point of view of a company rather than an individual). But both of these letters have a more formal style than your conversation.

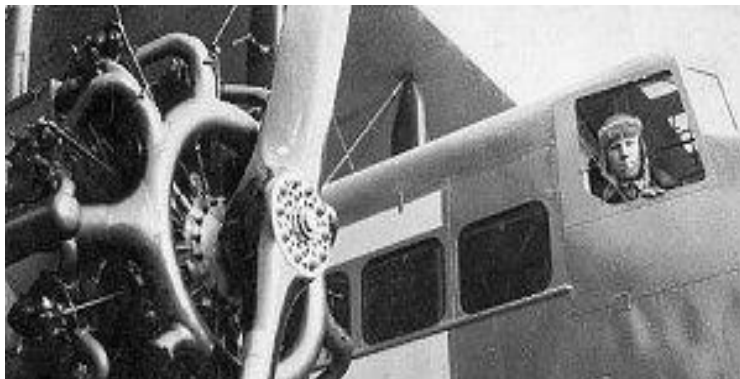
CHECKLIST

Are you able to:

- r describe how and why you use the media
- r categorise different kinds of writing and speaking styles as formal or informal
- r explain how audience and purpose influence style
- r identify the contexts in which very formal, less formal and informal styles are appropriate
- r extract facts for use in a formal report
- r recognise the way adjectives and descriptive writing make a text more personal and less formal
- r distinguish between personal and impersonal styles of communicating.

Matching the media product to the audience

Almost every product on earth is aimed at a market. The same is true of the media. Every magazine, advert, pamphlet, greeting card, film, cartoon or newspaper is aimed at a particular audience. The audience may be narrowly defined (for example pregnant women) or very broad (for example, all adults with secondary school education). The ability to identify audience is important in reading the media. You can test this skill in Activity 1.



COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT GRASSCYCLING

Does Grasscycling Cause Thatch Build Up?



Research has shown that grass roots are the primary cause of thatch, not grass clippings. Thatch is composed primarily of roots, stems, rhizomes, and other plant materials. These plant materials contain large amounts of lignin (fibrous material) and decompose slowly. Grass clippings are approximately 80 percent water with only small amounts of lignin, and decompose rapidly. Some turf grasses such as Bermuda grass and kikuyu grasses are thickly grassed areas. A small amount of thatch (approximately 1/2 inch) is actually beneficial to a lawn, providing insulation to roots and serving as a mulch to prevent excessive water evaporation and soil compaction. It may also create a cushioning effect for lawn play.

Does Grasscycling Spread Lawn Disease?



Improper watering and fertilizing have a much greater impact on disease spread than grasscycling. If a desirable environment for your grass disease is present, disease will occur whether clippings are collected or not.

Grass clippings are a valuable resource and simply should not be thrown away!

Will Grasscycling Make My Lawn Look Bad?



If a lawn is properly mowed, watered, and fertilized, grasscycling can actually produce a healthier-looking lawn. It is important to cut the lawn frequently to produce small clippings that will decompose quickly. If a lawn is not cut frequently and clippings are left on the lawn, it will produce an unsightly "hay-like" look. Most local parks, including **Pop Moser Park** in Durville, **Waterfront Park** in Martinsburg, **Crest Park** in Walnut Creek, **Burham Community Park** in Pittsburg, **PA**, **Pineale Regional Shoreline** in Richmond, and the **Meeco Commons** in Moraga, grasscycle and have lush lawns to show for it. Many golf courses also grasscycle, including **Boundary Hills** in Walnut Creek and **Burham Fields** in Concord. If you have concerns about the appearance of grasscycling, visit one of these locations!

Are There Alternatives To Grasscycling Besides Landfill Disposal?



Grass clippings make excellent additions to a backyard compost pile. Because clippings are high in nitrogen, they can "heat up" your compost pile. You can also store and dry grass clippings for use as your carbon component when building a compost pile. Grass clippings can be used as mulch to provide weed control and prevent moisture loss around flower beds, trees, and shrubs. However, mulching with clippings should be avoided if clippings are of an invasive variety such as Bermuda grass, or if herbicides have been applied recently to the lawn.

Do you want to learn more?

For additional information on Grasscycling or services offered by the Grasscycle! Clip Your Waste Campaign, call 725-966-1804 or check the grasscycling webpage at <http://grasscycle.abag.ca.gov>

If you'd like more information about composting or mulching grass clippings, call the home composting education program serving your community. Here is a listing of programs serving Contra Costa and Alameda counties:

Home Composting for Busy People! . . . 925-966-1106
 Alameda, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, and unincorporated central Contra Costa County
The Compost Consortium 866-750-4394
 Antioch, Concord, Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Pittsburg and unincorporated Contra Costa County
West County Home Compost Program 510-215-3321
 El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Pinole, and Richmond
Alameda County Home Composting Program 510-444-9011
 All of Alameda County



Brochure Text adopted (with permission) from a brochure by the Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Board. Special thanks to Dr. Jill Mennard of the University of California, Davis for her contribution to this brochure.

Sponsored by Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa County Solid Waste Authority, the West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority and the Cities of Concord, Martinez, Pittsburg, Shasta Hill, El Sobrante.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

GRASS CLIPPINGS make up a substantially **large portion of our waste** during the growing season. **CONTRA COSTA COUNTY** and its cities would like you to consider **"Grasscycling"** as a way to help **reduce** the amount of **WASTE** going to our landfill. Take a moment to review this brochure and learn how **Grasscycling** not only reduces waste but can **benefit your LAWN**.

ACTIVITY 1

Skim the reviews on page 47 in order to find appropriate movies to recommend to the following people:

1. a conservative older relative
2. a friend who likes action films
3. a friend with a good sense of humour.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 163

cinema

Au Petit Marguery

The chef at a Paris restaurant is losing his sense of smell and has to retire. His son arranges a farewell dinner for all the people connected with Au Petit Marguery. Directed by Laurent Bénégui, it's a nostalgic film that celebrates memories, good food and wine and laughter. —Olivia Strange

Bean: The Ultimate Disaster Movie has been made for stupid American audiences. The usually wickedly funny Mr Bean TV character (Rowan Atkinson) comes across as predictable. — Andrew Worsdale

Beaumarchais

Accurate social commentary makes this film a return to form for director Edouard Molinaro. It's the tale of Beaumarchais who tricks his way into Louis XV's royal court. An entertaining look at the French way of life, love and politics. — AW

Copland

Sylvester Stallone gives a fabulous performance as a fat, small town sheriff who uncovers a web of police corruption. Director James Mangold has created a solidly paced thriller. — AW

The Ice Storm

is set on Thanksgiving weekend and portrays two suburban families who despite their smiling faces, are falling to pieces. Ben Hood (Kevin Kline), his wife Elena (Joan Allen) and their two teenage kids are searching for answers in a slow, character study of an unhappy family. No one in this film is perfect but it's great to spend time with them. — AW

The Full Monty

The plot revolves around a group of unemployed steel workers in Sheffield who decide to become male strippers. This simple idea leads to an explosion of inventiveness in the face of unemployment and provides a look at working class values. Director Peter Cattaneo has made a warm and affectionate comedy. — AW

Brassed Off

Set in the early 1990s, this is the story of a North Yorkshire band with an uncertain future. The film could have been far more realistic, but director Mark Herman constructs a romantic comedy which puts across its social cause. — Derek Malcolm



Devil's Advocate

Taylor Hackford directs a lustful Al Pacino, an arrogant Keanu Reeves and an aggressive Charlize Theron in a frightening tale of evil activities in a New York law firm. Complex, rewarding and beautifully shot. — AW

I Know What You Did Last Summer

A shocking, violent teenage film in which people have their heads chopped off. Absolute trash. — AW

Jerusalem

This film from Bille August is about a group of ordinary farmers who fall under the spell of an American missionary and follow him to Jerusalem. Despite a running time of three hours, it shows intelligence and an understanding of what a film should be. — AW

How does the media treat you? As the difference between 'target' and 'cater for' suggests, there are two ways of looking at what the media does. The verb 'target' suggests that the media aims at an audience that is a passive victim. The verb 'cater for' suggests that the media treats its audiences with respect. Which verb do you think is most appropriate?

COMMENT

Movie producers, like advertisers and magazine editors, target or cater for different audiences. Movie reviewers identify this market or audience and pass the message on to the public. The reviewers guide the public with words and phrases like 'social commentary', 'romantic comedy' or 'character study' that indicate what type of movie it is.

As you read the reviews, you probably identified 'nostalgic', 'entertaining', 'fabulous' and 'rewarding' as words which have positive connotations. These words tell you that the reviewer thought the film had merit. By contrast, words like 'stupid', 'predictable' and 'trash' have negative connotations.

Reviewers judge the worth or merit of the film, play or book they are reviewing. But what criteria do they use to judge whether something is good or bad?

Recognising values and bias in reviews

All statements of opinion, judgements and evaluations are subjective, which means that they are influenced by personal feelings and values. To give a simple example, a teenage boy who loves action thrillers might give a very bad review to a prize-winning film about an historical figure.

It is very important to read with an awareness of the writer's bias or attitude. Ask yourself:

- | what does this writer value?
- | what does he or she despise?
- | does the writer have any obvious political, moral or cultural beliefs?

Identifying images that sell

Open any magazine and look at the advertisements. Pictures of young, beautiful and athletic people are used to advertise cigarettes. Pictures of happy, healthy families are used to advertise margarine. Pictures of nuns (associated with purity and cleanliness) are used to advertise bleach.

Looking at these images should help you to realise that it is not just words that convey messages. Images are a powerful tool in communicating ideas and desires. In fact, many advertisements appeal to basic human needs and desires. These include the need for security and happiness and the desire for sex and status. The activities in the rest of this unit will concentrate on the use of images in the media.

ACTIVITY 2

1. Re-read the review of the film *The Ice Storm* in the movie guide in Activity 1.
2. Now read the following review of the same film:

HEAVEN: THE CATHOLIC DIGEST. (TAKEN FROM THE INTERNET).

The Ice Storm is a serious drama set in 1973 in a wealthy suburb where wife (Joan Allen) learns that her husband (Kevin Kline) is having an affair with the neighbour (Sigourney Weaver). At the same time, their adolescent children secretly explore their own sexuality. These physical pleasures are interrupted by a sobering tragedy caused by a sudden ice storm. The unhappiness of Americans in the 1970s is reflected in the confused emotional lives of the characters and the terrible consequences of parental neglect. [A-IV (adults, with reservations) because of numerous sexual situations, occasional profanity, and some rough language.]

3. What is similar about the two reviews?
4. What is different about the two reviews?
5. What values are important to the writer of the second review?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 163

COMMENT

The review printed in Activity 2 comes from a Catholic magazine called *Heaven*. It offers movie reviews to people who don't want to see sex, violence or swearing on the screen. The writer thus has a religious or moral purpose.

It is interesting to read a review from this point of view because for many people, sex and violence actually make a film more exciting. What is your opinion of films that contain scenes of nudity or violence? Perhaps you feel that these things are always wrong, or perhaps you believe that in certain contexts they are acceptable and even necessary.

Whatever your opinion, you need to think critically about the way the media uses certain images, such as women dressed in revealing clothes, to sell products.

ACTIVITY 3

Look at the advertisement below and answer the questions that follow.

*Without quality, style means nothing.
At Sterns, we've built our reputation on this.*

For over a hundred years Sterns quality has always been at the forefront of style. Now you can get the style you've always wanted AND receive your free golden gift on a huge range of watches. But only until 19 July.

Free Golden Gifts
worth up to R348 with any watch purchased over R499.



LORUS
The International Brand
By Sewid Corporation
1 YEAR GUARANTEE
R599
R90pm x 6
Dep R60



ORIENT
UNCONDITIONAL
1 YEAR GUARANTEE
R799
R55pm x 18
Dep R80



ICON
Exclusive to Sterns
3 Year Guarantee
R799
R55pm x 18
Dep R80



HALLMARK
1 YEAR GUARANTEE
R499
R75pm x 6
Dep R50



PULSAR
1 YEAR GUARANTEE
R1099
R75pm x 18
Dep R110



CITIZEN
3 YEAR GUARANTEE
R999
R65pm x 18
Dep R100



Address: West Street, Grahamstown, JMW 13095



STERNS
FOR NOW. FOREVER.



0% Interest over 6 months.

1. Find two words that are repeated in this advertisement. According to the advertisement, which of these two words refers to something you have always 'wanted' or 'needed'? Do you agree that you have always wanted or needed this thing? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Look at the woman in the photograph. In a paragraph, write down everything you notice about her. Ask yourself:
 - | what is she wearing?
 - | is she at home or at work?
 - | what kind of work does she do?
 - | is she happy or sad?
 - | who/what is she looking at?
3. Now that you have studied the photograph, try to explain in one or two sentences why the advertiser used this photograph to sell the product.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 164

COMMENT

The advertisement on page 50 you've just described is a good example of the kinds of images used in the media to convey a particular message.

The woman in the photograph is young and pretty and she is smiling straight at the camera, so we feel as though she is smiling at us. This makes us feel good. She is sitting in a swivel chair at a drawing table with a lamp. She is wearing pants and a shirt which are traditionally seen as men's clothing, but she still looks feminine because the shirt is open and the material looks soft. Most important, she is wearing jewellery. Her office is light and sunny and there is an indoor plant next to her desk. These details suggest that the woman in the picture has a good job as an architect or a draughts woman; she is successful.

The hidden message behind the image is that it is possible for a woman to achieve success without losing her feminine qualities and that an important way to do this is by wearing the right kind of jewellery. We only detect the hidden message when we look at each detail and ask ourselves why it was included in the photograph. When you look quickly at a photograph, you don't analyse these separate details. Nevertheless, the hidden message is still communicated.

Some people are strongly opposed to the way women are portrayed in the media. Advertisers often use pictures of pretty and slim young women to sell products which are not even aimed at them, for example, cars or aftershave lotion. This makes women look like objects or possessions.

ACTIVITY 4

1. Look at the advert for HomeX-Ciser .



The way to slim-

HOMEXCISER

Now you can have incredible results in slimming and body toning in the comfort and privacy of your own home - **safely and ultra fast** with HomeX-Ciser.

Dieting and exercise can help you lose weight, but it won't get rid of cellulite and ugly bulges that ruin your figure. HomeX-Ciser firms your body, smoothes away facial lines, wrinkles and crows feet, making you look years younger. Flattens and firms your tummy too. The **free** bust kit tightens muscles which support your breasts, giving a firmer, beautiful bust.

HomeX-ciser activates the muscle groups electronically, causing rhythmic contraction and relaxation. The same effect as exercise but without the sweat!

With our weight-loss programme, you will have **great results in only 3 weeks**

From R950 (or only R54 per month over 24 months) incl. VAT.

Phone or fax us right now!

We can despatch immediately when you order your system by phone or fax.

You can pay by credit card, postal order or bank guaranteed cheque.



Tel (011) 673-3877 or fax (011) 673-7564

HOMEXCISER HOMEX-CISER, P.O.Box 5, Greyfont 2035
Tel : 011-673 3877 or 673 3867
Fax : 011-673 7564
Showroom : 188 Long Street, Newlands.

Please rush me a free brochure on the whole range of products

Name :

Postal Address :

..... code

Daytime Telephone :

2. According to this advert, how should a woman's body look?
3. What words does this advert use to describe excess weight?
4. What is your opinion of the way the media portray women? How do you think it affects women to see youth and thinness as the ideal? Answer in a paragraph.

5. Now read the following newspaper article:

Khayelitsha's overweight women spared social pressure

Overweight black women in Khayelitsha have little knowledge about the health problems of obesity and generally want to lose weight for practical rather than health reasons.

There is also little social pressure from their families and communities to lose excess weight.

These are among the findings of a study by Zodumo Mvo, Judy Dick and Krisela Steyn of the Medical Research Centre, reported in the Urbanisation and Health Newsletter.

The study found that some women were unhappy about their size, citing reasons such as

discomfort when walking, clothes not fitting and feeling extremely hot on summer days.

The women's only health concern related to their big body size was hypertension.

The study concluded that the lack of social pressure to lose weight could complicate the design of effective health promotion strategies to normalise and maintain ideal body weight.

All the participants of the study had recently moved from the Eastern Cape, were new city dwellers and mothers and most were unmarried and unemployed.

Although unhappy about their size, most had not

attempted to lose weight.

All the women came from disadvantaged communities where food was highly valued.

The concept of a person voluntarily regulating their intake of nutrients when food was available was unacceptable to the women, the study found.

Increased body mass was regarded by some as a token of well-being: marital harmony or happy circumstances such as getting a job or living with a generous relative.

Others put on weight when they were worried or upset.

Guest editor of the newsletter Rachel Jewkes said nutritionists should be encouraged to work in collaboration with sociologists and anthropologists for appropriate targeting and implementation of nutrition policies.

obesity: the condition of being unhealthily fat

citing: listing

hypertension: illness caused by high blood pressure

in collaboration: together

ARGUS WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 1998

6. Why are the women described in the article not very worried about their weight?
7. What is 'social pressure' and in what way would social pressure make someone want to lose weight?
8. Do you think these women should be told to lose weight? Give reasons for your answer.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 164

COMMENT

The media has been blamed for women's dissatisfaction with their weight. Unhappiness about one's weight or appearance can lead to serious psychological problems as well as eating disorders. The problem is that women tend to compare themselves with the slim, young models they see in magazines. But the average woman's body is in fact much larger than the bodies displayed in the media.

Today, advertisements also tend to associate slimness with success, happiness, wealth and attractiveness. But in the past, round tummies and big hips were associated with fertility, and artists depicted fatter women as the ideal. An image that is used to 'stand for' an idea in this way is called a symbol.

Understanding symbols

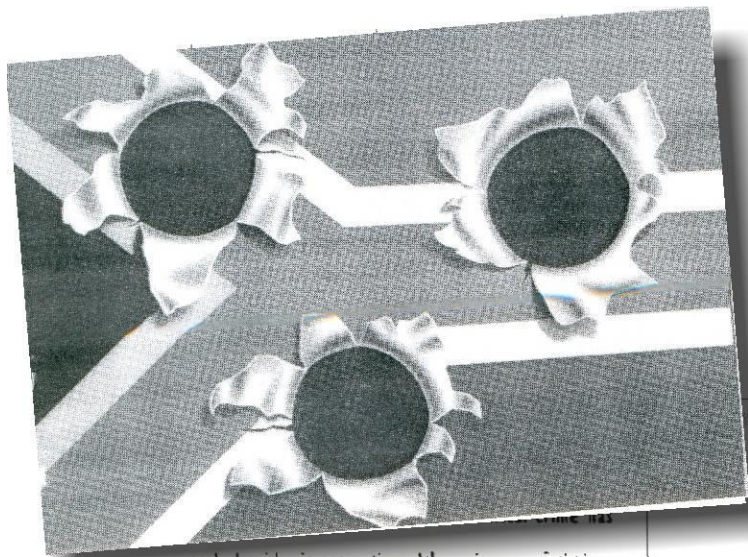
Artists and photographers use small details to communicate quite complex messages. A certain kind of car represents success; a gold ring worn on the ring finger of the left hand can stand for, or symbolise marriage.

A symbol is an image (for example, a ring, a rose or a dove) that stands for something else (love or peace). Some symbols are universally accepted. The flag of each country is a symbol that represents that nation or culture. Traffic and information signs often make use of internationally recognised symbols.

In the next activity you will see how a symbol is used to convey a strikingly effective message.

ACTIVITY 5

Look at the postcard below and answer the questions that follow.



reached epidemic proportions. It's raping our optimism. It's murdering our hope. It's tearing at the fabric of our society. You have sacrificed all to achieve 'One nation, one soul' and now it's being gunned down in cold blood. Out of desperation, fear and anxiety I am writing to you on behalf of my family, my friends and all the innocent people of South Africa. Please make crime your priority today!

Your signature _____

Once you have signed this postcard, place it back in the allocated space on the rack. These postcards will be delivered by Grapevine Postcards to President Mandela as South Africa's united nation's collective plea to put an end to crime.

Grapevine Postcards: 011 784 1545, Box 101, 191.

Postage:
R1.00 Local
R1.20 International

1. Which flag is represented on the postcard, and what has happened to that flag?
2. Write a paragraph explaining the symbolic meaning of the picture on the front of the postcard.
3. List five words in the postcard that have very negative connotations. Why do you think the writer chose those words?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 165

COMMENT

Pictures have a powerful effect on readers and public figures (for example, politicians and community leaders) often make use of this power. That is why you will often see pictures of famous or powerful people doing good works, visiting the sick or kissing babies. They might do these things because they really care. But they also know the public will see these photographs and form a favourable impression of them as caring figures.

However, the power of photographs can also harm or even destroy public figures. In Activity 6 you can read about a controversy caused by a newspaper photograph.

ACTIVITY 6

1. Look at the photograph below and read the two articles that accompany it.



ARGUS SATURDAY 10/11 JANUARY 1998 P.5

Article 1

New-age messiah or evil force?

Staff Reporter

Some call him a new-age messiah or saviour. Others see him as an evil force determined to create a world order based on his bizarre beliefs.

But on South African soil this week the man who wants to create the Nation of Islam made his message quite clear: Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has been wronged.

On television and in newspapers photographs of the controversial pair showed Winnie looking at him with 'a warmth' that some may find disturbing.

Little is known about the

shadowy Louis Farrakhan, who visits countries on his fundamentalist mission, making racial statements that send shudders up the backs of anyone who is not dark-skinned.

When statements such as 'the paler the skin colour, the more evil the person', became part of his campaign manifesto, the warning bells began to ring.

Little is known of his private life, because he seldom answers questions about himself or his family.

It is known that he has a wife, Kadijah, and nine children, but they are seldom seen with him on his travels. He likes to be known as a man for

the people.

He is without doubt one of the world's richest men. It is estimated that he owes a total of \$ 1,5 million in unpaid taxes.

In his teachings Farrakhan states: 'The black race is divine and superior to all other races. Modern-day blacks came into existence 66 trillion years ago when a great explosion ripped the moon from the earth. All black people are angelic gods.'

Among Farrakhan's other bizarre teachings are that a UFO, designed 66 trillion years ago by black scientists will soon enter earth's atmosphere to bomb all cities populated by white people and take followers of the Nation of Islam to heaven.

ADAPTED FROM: ARGUS, SATURDAY 10/11 JANUARY, 1998, P. 5

Article 2

Farrakhan kiss for Winnie earns wrath of top imam

Staff Reporter

American Nation of Islam leader, Louis Farrakhan, breached Islamic protocol by kissing Winnie Madikizela-Mandela during the Ramadan fast, says Muslim theologian Sheikh Achmat Sedick. Mr Farrakhan, a Sunni Muslim, embraced and kissed Mrs Madikizela-Mandela at a press conference at her Soweto home during his visit to Johannesburg as part of a world friendship tour. A photograph of the

kiss was published in the Cape Argus yesterday. Sheikh Sedick, secretary of the Muslim Judicial Council, said kissing somebody other than your wife, husband or a non-marriageable relative was not permissible (haram) for Muslims. As the imam of the Kalksteentfontein Mosque, he stressed that such an act was frowned on, especially during Ramadan. It was 'out of the question' in terms of the Islamic faith, and magnified when done in public at a press conference, he said.

CAPE ARGUS, 7 JANUARY 1998

2. The writer of the first article says that people either see Farrakhan as a messiah or as an evil force. Which of these two views does the writer hold, and what brings you to this conclusion?
3. Do you think the photographed kiss gave these two public figures good or bad publicity? Give your opinion in two paragraphs. Use your own words, but make use of the articles in your answer.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 165

COMMENT

Photographs published in the media do not simply brighten the page. They are a powerful media tool that affect public opinion in important ways. If you see a photograph of a public figure doing something of which you disapprove, you may withdraw your support (including your vote) from that person. But the opposite is also true: a photograph showing a public figure doing something you think is good may convince you to support that person.

Why read critically?

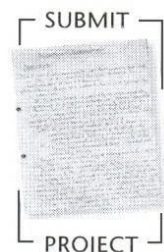
The newspapers, magazines, books, films, advertisements and television programmes that we enjoy are not only sources of entertainment or information. They can influence our values and our ways of seeing ourselves and the world. For this reason, we need to read the media critically. In the last activity in this lesson you will put all your critical reading skills into practice. You'll need to use a magazine to answer the questions.

ACTIVITY 7

Find a magazine and take time to go through it, skimming the articles and advertisements and stopping to read anything that interests you. Then answer the following questions:

1. Who do you think this magazine is aimed at (who is its audience)?
2. What values are important, according to this magazine?
3. What kinds of images are used to sell products in this magazine?
4. Can you recognise any use of symbols in the magazine, particularly in the adverts?
5. Are there any photographs of or interviews with important or famous people in this magazine? Is the attention they get in this magazine positive or negative publicity?

Write your answers in several short paragraphs and give them to your tutor for assessment.



CHECKLIST

Are you able to:

- r identify at whom (what audience) a particular media product is being aimed
- r critically examine how particular images are exploited in the media
- r recognise the biases or value systems that lie behind reviews, articles, television programmes, advertisements, etc.
- r identify the symbolic meaning of some images
- r appreciate the power of photographs and other images
- r apply critical reading and observation skills to different forms of the media.

Please remember to hand in your paragraphs to your tutor for assessment.

