

LANGUAGE FEATURES

To compose and comprehend texts, students need an understanding of genres and appropriateness of language use as well as familiarity with textual features. In fact, the greater the control over language features, the more effective the communication is likely to be.

ASPECT

Purpose

Social Context

which comprises:

Subject Matter

Roles and relationships

Mode of communication

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

What are you hoping to achieve?

What is the social situation in which language is being used?



What things, people, events, ideas and feelings are being referred to?

Who is the audience? What are the social roles and relationships between the author and audience?

Whose interests are being served?

Whose point of view is not being promoted?

What choices are to be made between spoken or written mode and between print, sound, stage, screen or electronic media?

Students need to be able to answer these questions and to tailor their use of language appropriately to fit their particular situation.

The term “language features” is used to describe particular aspects or elements of language that are used within genres to convey meaning.

They include:

ASPECT

Generic Structure

Cohesive Ties

Grammar



Vocabulary

Graphic Features

Spelling and Handwriting

Other visual aspects

DETAILS

The selection and sequencing of the information within the genre.

Linking words and phrases e.g. however, because, consequently, in contrast, which make clear the logical relationships between ideas and can often signal the genre (e.g. because often appears in the explanation genre.)

The elements of language that carry meaning in the text. These include:

The participants, i.e. the people, things, places, referred to in the text, are expressed by nouns.

The attributes i.e., what the participants are like, are expressed by adjectives.

The process, i.e. the happenings referred to in the text, are expressed by verbs.

The circumstances that refer to how, when, where or why are expressed by adverbs or phrases.

Words appropriate to the context and the subject matter terminology.

Punctuation and paragraph markers.

Examples are illustrations, tables, diagrams.