ILLUSTRATING THE WRITING STANDARD

My Room Makeover

By the end of year 7, students are required to create a variety of texts in order to think about, record, and communicate experiences, ideas, and information across the curriculum. To meet the standard, students draw on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for writing described in the Literacy Learning Progressions for students at this level.

The difference in the standard for year 8 [as compared with year 7] is the students' increased **accuracy** and **fluency** in writing a variety of texts across the curriculum, their **level of control** and **independence** in **selecting writing processes and strategies**, and the range of texts they write. In particular, by the end of year 8, students need to be **confidently and deliberately choosing the most appropriate processes and strategies** for writing in different learning areas. (*Reading and Writing Standards,* page 35)

As part of a technology unit, the students in a year 7–8 class are identifying an aspect of their life and how it could be improved. To introduce the unit and engage the students, the teacher has invented an imaginary radio station competition in which the competitors have to describe their dream room makeover. In the example below, the student independently plans and writes a description of how she would transform her bedroom into her "dream" bedroom.

The following example illustrates aspects of the task and text and demonstrates how a student engages with both task and text to meet the writing demands of the curriculum. A number of such examples would be used to inform the overall teacher judgment for this student.

Transcript: My Room Makeover

My room currently has a plain desk in it. If I won, I would upgrade to a bigger size, so it would fit a laptop and my homework on it, at the same time. I would up-size my bookshelf, as I am an avid reader and are running out of room for storage.

I'm sure my cat would love her own personalised area. It would need to be in line with my windows, so she could spend all her summer afternoons dreaming of jellymeat fantasies in the sunlight.

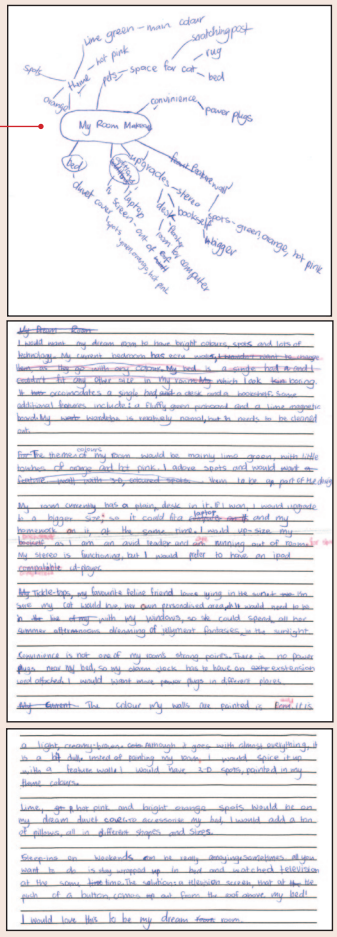
Convinience is not one of my room's strong points. There is no power plugs near my bed, so my alarm clock has to have an exstension cord attached. I would want more power plugs in different places.

I adore spots and would want them to be a part of the design.

The student uses a mind-map as a framework for planning – recording her key ideas about the changes she would make and some details about each. Her writing shows evidence of this planning: she has organised and developed the content into paragraphs around each main area of "desired" change and has included details to support the description of her dream room.

The student uses a compare and contrast structure, describing elements of her existing room and comparing them with the upgraded aspects of her dream room. The tone of the student's writing shows some understanding of the purpose and audience, by providing explicit examples that demonstrate realistic demands, for example, "I would upgrade to a bigger size, so it would fit a laptop and my homework on it, at the same time." The student also includes her cat's requirements in the dream bedroom, which gives it an amusing personal touch. She carefully chooses and uses a range of correctly spelt topic-specific vocabulary and phrases ("plain desk", "upgrade", "up-size my bookshelf", "an avid reader", "her own personalised area"), which provide the reader with a clear picture of her current and "improved" bedroom. She uses the subordinating conjunction "If" to introduce the effect of winning the competition and continues this conditional theme in the following sentences by using the modal verbs "would" and "could".

The student uses a range of mostly correct sentences, including simple, compound, and complex. She also uses a variety of sentence beginnings for effect ("Convinience is", "There is", "I would"). The student shows fairly effective control of tenses, moving between timeless present and conditional future with only some minor errors, and she has attempted some complex punctuation. She deliberately uses alliteration in the phrase "Tickle-tops, my favourite feline friend" to engage the reader with humour. She revises and recrafts to clarify her ideas and to correct spelling.



This writing is aligned to year 7 rather than year 8 because of the inaccuracy of the student's grammar (she doesn't always manage to make verbs agree with subjects) and the fact that she does not clarify her purpose for writing, as the task demands at level 4 of the English curriculum.