

● UNIT 3&4 · SECTION B DEEP DIVE

The 9–10 Guide to Creating Texts

Section B is marked holistically out of 10 by two independent assessors (20 marks total) against four official VCAA criteria. This guide breaks down exactly what separates a genuine 9–10 response from everything below it — including what the actual 2025 examination report said about what worked and what didn't.

4 FRAMEWORKS OF IDEAS

Country · Protest · Personal Journeys · Play

4 PURPOSES

Explain · Express · Reflect · Argue — you can blend more than one

MARKING

Scored 0–10 by two assessors against 4 criteria (20 marks total)

FORM

Any prose form is open — no song, poetry or verse

THE 4 OFFICIAL VCAA CRITERIA

1. **Use of relevant idea(s)** drawn from one Framework of Ideas, the title provided, and at least one piece of stimulus material.
2. **Creation of a cohesive text** that connects to a clear purpose(s) and incorporates an appropriate voice.
3. **Use of suitable text structures and language features** to create a text.
4. **Use of fluent expression**, including the appropriate use of vocabulary.

Criterion 1 — Insightful Consideration of Title + Stimulus

This is the single biggest differentiator between an 8 and a genuine 9–10. The word VCAA uses at the top band is deliberate: **insightful**. One band down, the same descriptor drops to **astute**. The difference isn't which ideas you explore — it's how deeply the title and stimulus shape the *entire* piece, not just its surface.

The title

✓ INSIGHTFUL (9–10)

The title operates as a conceptual lens for the whole piece — its central tension or image shapes structural choices, symbolism, and how the piece resolves (or deliberately refuses to). By the final line, the title means something the reader didn't expect at first.

✗ SUPERFICIAL (LOWER BANDS)

The title is dropped in once, usually near the end, almost as a checkbox — mentioned literally without having shaped any earlier structural or thematic choice in the piece.

i Assessor tip: the 2025 examination report noted it helped assessors when students wrote the title at the start of their response — a small habit worth building in now.

The stimulus

✓ INSIGHTFUL (9–10)

The concept or tension raised by the stimulus is transformed and reimagined in original content — students take what the stimulus is really about and reconstruct it in their own scenario, form and voice.

✗ SUPERFICIAL (LOWER BANDS)

The piece paraphrases or lightly dramatises the stimulus's actual events — essentially retelling the same scenario with cosmetic changes. Assessors are trained to spot this immediately.

i Assessor tip: the 2025 report flagged sensationalised content, cloying sentiment, and clichéd language, images or tropes as rarely the most effective choice — even when technically well executed.

Criteria 2–4 — The Other Qualities, In Depth

Criterion 2: A cohesive text, clear purpose(s), appropriate voice

✓ 9–10	One clear purpose (or a deliberate blend, e.g. express + reflect) sustained end to end. Every structural choice reinforces it. Voice is consistent and deliberately suited to both the purpose and the Framework.	✗ LOWER BANDS	Purpose drifts or blurs without control. Voice shifts inconsistently without narrative justification. The structure reads like an assembled draft, not a deliberately shaped text.
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Criterion 3: Suitable text structures and language features

✓ 9–10	Form is chosen because it serves the Framework and purpose — e.g. a fragmented structure mirroring disorientation in a personal-journeys piece. Imagery and syntax are purposeful, not decorative.	✗ LOWER BANDS	Default narrative structure regardless of fit. Language features included to look sophisticated rather than to serve meaning — ornamental, not purposeful.
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Criterion 4: Fluent expression and vocabulary

✓ 9–10	Precise, controlled vocabulary. Deliberate sentence variation — short and punchy where it serves tension, longer and complex where it serves reflection. Technically clean, even under first-draft exam conditions.	✗ LOWER BANDS	Thesaurus-driven vocabulary that obscures meaning rather than sharpening it. Repetitive sentence patterns. Errors that disrupt fluency and pull the assessor out of the piece.
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WHAT THE 2025 EXAMINATION REPORT ACTUALLY SAID

- Section B asked students to create one written text exploring meaningful connections with ideas from **one** of the four Frameworks — country, protest, personal journeys or play.
- Responses needed to achieve at least one of four purposes — **explain, express, reflect or argue** — and could legitimately achieve more than one.
- Students needed to use linguistic features deliberately to create a **voice** that connects with the reader, not simply to fill the page.
- Sensationalised content, cloying sentiment, and clichéd language, images or tropes were rarely the most powerful option, even when the writing was technically competent.
- It was administratively helpful — and reflected well-prepared students — when the Framework and stimulus boxes were clearly shaded and the title was written at the start of the response.

The overall guide: how to actually land in the 9–10 range

- ✓ Let the title do conceptual work across the whole piece — not just appear once near the end.
- ✓ Transform the stimulus's idea. Don't retell its events with cosmetic changes.
- ✓ Commit to one purpose (or a deliberate blend) and sustain it from your first line to your last.
- ✓ Choose your form because it serves the Framework and purpose — not because it's familiar.
- ✓ Cut any language or imagery that's there to "sound sophisticated" rather than to mean something.
- ✓ Write your title at the start of your response — it genuinely helps the assessor read your piece the way you intend it.

Knowing the criteria gets you to a 7. Getting to 9–10 needs a second pair of eyes.

Every checklist in this guide describes what a 9–10 response looks like from the outside. What it can't do is tell you whether **your** title is doing conceptual work, whether **your** stimulus transformation actually lands, or whether **your** voice drifts by paragraph three — because that takes someone reading your actual writing against this exact criteria.

WHY TUTORING MOVES THE NEEDLE HERE SPECIFICALLY

- Section B is marked holistically, not against a checklist you can memorise — the gap between an 8 and a 9–10 is **judgement**, and judgement is trained through feedback, not more reading.
- Every Learnify English tutor scored 40+ in the subject themselves — they've been marked against this exact criteria at the level you're aiming for.
- A single mark-up against the 4 official criteria shows you precisely which band your writing sits in right now, and the specific structural change that moves it up one.
- Most students plateau on Section B not from lack of ideas, but from repeating the same structural habit without knowing it — a second pair of eyes catches this in one sitting.

What a Learnify Section B mark-up actually covers

- ✓ Which of the 4 official criteria your piece is currently losing marks on, and why.
- ✓ Whether your title and stimulus are doing real conceptual work, or sitting on the surface.

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40+

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