

# Year 6 Sample Lesson

Essay Writing: Is Technology Making Us Less Human?

## Lesson Overview

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| Year Level      | Year 6 (Stage 3)                                                           |
| Term / Unit     | Term 4 — Selective & Scholarship Mastery                                   |
| Text Type       | Persuasive / Discursive Essay                                              |
| Duration        | 60 minutes                                                                 |
| Curriculum Link | Australian Curriculum — Literacy / Writing / Text Structure & Organisation |

## Learning Intentions

**By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- ✓ Construct a clear, debatable thesis statement for a discursive essay.
- ✓ Build structured body paragraphs with evidence, elaboration and counterargument.
- ✓ Apply formal academic language and sophisticated vocabulary with precision.
- ✓ Plan and write a complete essay under selective exam time conditions.

## Warm-Up: Unpacking the Question (8 minutes)

### What Is the Question Really Asking?

Before writing, students must deconstruct the prompt. Display the question and annotate it together:

| Exam Prompt                                                                                                           |                                                                             |
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| <i>"Technology is making us less human." Do you agree or disagree? Write a persuasive essay presenting your view.</i> |                                                                             |
| Keyword                                                                                                               | What it means for your essay                                                |
| Technology                                                                                                            | Define your scope — all technology? Screens? AI? Social media? Be specific. |
| Less human                                                                                                            | What does 'human' mean? Empathy, creativity, connection, free will?         |

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| Agree / disagree | You must take a clear position. A strong essay commits — it does not sit on the fence.      |
| Persuasive essay | Structure: introduction with thesis, 2–3 TEEL body paragraphs, counterargument, conclusion. |

## Direct Teaching: Essay Architecture (15 minutes)

### The Selective Essay Structure

| Section          | Function                                                                                           | Word Count (Guide) |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Introduction     | Hook the reader. Define key terms. State your thesis clearly. Present your arguments.              | 60–80 words        |
| Body Paragraph 1 | Strongest argument — TEEL structure. Topic sentence, evidence, elaboration, link.                  | 80–100 words       |
| Body Paragraph 2 | Second argument — TEEL structure. Build on or contrast with paragraph 1.                           | 80–100 words       |
| Counterargument  | Acknowledge the opposing view, then rebut it firmly using evidence and logic.                      | 60–80 words        |
| Conclusion       | Restate your thesis (not repeat it). Synthesise key points. End with a compelling final statement. | 50–70 words        |

### Thesis Craft — Three Levels

| Level              | Example Thesis                                                                                                                                                  | Why It Works (or Doesn't)                                                                                                |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Weak               | "I think technology is making us less human because of phones and social media."                                                                                | Informal register. Vague. No specific argument. Starts with 'I think'.                                                   |
| Developing         | "Technology is making us less human because it reduces face-to-face communication and makes people lonely."                                                     | Clearer position. Some reasoning stated. But still lacks sophistication and evidence.                                    |
| Strong (Selective) | "While technology has undeniably expanded human capabilities, its pervasive presence in daily life is eroding the empathy that is fundamental to our humanity." | Ability to see both sides. Precise vocabulary. My life is teaching me Empathy is the foundation of all human connection. |

## Model Essay — Read & Annotate (10 minutes)

Students read the model introduction and first body paragraph. Annotate: thesis, hook, topic sentence, evidence, elaboration, link.

| Model Essay — Introduction & Body Paragraph 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| There is a quiet crisis unfolding in the spaces between people — in the silence at dinner tables illuminated by screen light, in the hurried glances at smartphones while standing in line. We are losing the art of being present.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| The most immediate casualty of our technological age is empathy. Research conducted at the University of Michigan found that individuals who spend more time on social media are less likely to engage in face-to-face conversations that foster emotional connection. This is not just a statistical trend; it is a lived experience. I have seen friends who once shared their deepest thoughts over coffee now only communicate through text, where the nuances of tone and expression are lost. |

## Independent Task — Exam Conditions (20 minutes)

| Your Turn — Write a Complete Essay (Selective Exam Conditions) |
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Prompt: 'Technology is making us less human.' Do you agree or disagree?

Planning time: 5 minutes (use the planning scaffold below)

Writing time: 15 minutes

Planning Scaffold:

My position (agree / disagree): \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Argument 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

Argument 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence: \_\_\_\_\_

Counterargument: \_\_\_\_\_ My rebuttal: \_\_\_\_\_

Your essay must include:

- ✓ A formal introduction with a sophisticated thesis
- ✓ TWO TEEL body paragraphs with evidence and elaboration
- ✓ A counterargument with a clear rebuttal
- ✓ A conclusion that synthesises (does NOT simply repeat) your argument
- ✓ Selective-level vocabulary throughout

## Wrap-Up (7 minutes)

Share one strong thesis from the class. Discuss: what makes it selective-level? Review the essay structure checklist together.

### Self-Assessment Checklist — Tick Before You Submit

- ☐ My thesis is clear, formal and debatable
- ☐ Each body paragraph follows TEEL structure
- ☐ I have used at least FOUR sophisticated vocabulary choices
- ☐ I have included and rebutted a counterargument
- ☐ My conclusion synthesises — it does not merely repeat
- ☐ My tone is formal and academic throughout