

ILLUSTRATING THE WRITING STANDARD

'Landfills'

By the end of year 8, 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.

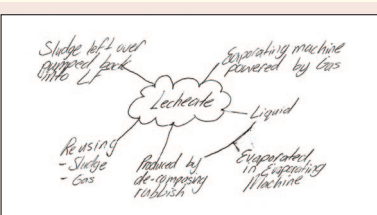
The difference in the standard for year 8 [as compared with year 7] is the students' increased **accuracy** and **fluency** in writing a variety of texts across the curriculum, their **level of control and independence** in **selecting writing processes and strategies**, and the range of texts they write. 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 science topic, the students in a year 8 class are studying different practices for dealing with rubbish in the community. Following a visit to the Redvale Landfill, the students were asked to clarify their learning by describing in detail the processes implemented at the landfill to deal with waste.

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.

The student completes a graphic organiser to clarify and organise her ideas in preparation for writing.



Transcript: 'Landfills'

There are many reasons why they are so successful, one of them being the way they deal with their Leachate and A LFG, or Land Fill Gas.

Firstly it is important to explain what Leachate and LFG are. Leachate is the liquid that is produced by decomposing rubbish. It is highly toxic and must be disposed of safely. LFG is the gas created ...

LFG is the power source ... Leachate is a big deal for the Environmental Scientists at Redvale. If it is not disposed of properly it could pose a huge threat to the wildlife that surrounds the landfill area. Because of this, Leachate is handled carefully and effectively by with a special machine powered by the LFG.

The student approaches the idea of landfill sustainability by identifying the by-products of the landfill and then explaining what they are and how they are managed and used. She realises the importance of clarifying the difference (as well as the connection) between leachate and LFG and uses appropriate detail to explain these two by-products. She makes this distinction by using the same concept of decomposing rubbish in each explanation and also by using a similar sentence structure, showing a level of control over the way she presents information ("Leachate is ... produced by ..." and "LFG is ... created by ..."). The student uses scientific and technical vocabulary ("liquid", "decomposing", "highly toxic", "gas", and "disposed of safely") to provide precise information about each by-product. This writing process and these strategies help the student to clarify the scientific process (for her own understanding) with some accuracy.

In a straightforward "cause and effect" structure appropriate to the writing purpose, the second sentence of paragraph four explains the possible consequences if leachate is not dealt with carefully. The student builds on this information in her next sentence ("Because of this ..."). In the sentence, she demonstrates her scientific understanding of the qualities and uses of the two by-products by describing how the process for managing the leachate includes using LFG as a power source.

The student uses a variety of sentence structures, which show her control over language and ideas. She uses complex sentences to provide precise and detailed information.

The student organises her writing in paragraphs. Paragraphs two to four are used to organise specific information about the two main by-products and are introduced with topic sentences. The student is aware of the need to make links between all four paragraphs and does this by referring back to the by-products introduced in the first paragraph. The information is logically sequenced.

The student demonstrates a clear understanding of the scientific process involved in the effective disposal and use of waste products from landfills. She uses appropriate writing strategies and processes with control and accuracy. She uses writing as a tool to clarify her own thinking and knowledge, demonstrating that she is meeting the writing demands of the curriculum at level 4, as expected by the end of year 8.

*Foot Draft
Foot Reading*

Landfills are often viewed as bad for the environment because they are essentially rubbish dumps. But over the years environmental science has taken a huge step forward in the way we deal with our waste. The landfill we participate in, leading the way for few, cannot handle Landfills. There are many reasons why they are so successful, one of them being the way they deal with Leachate and LFG, or Land Fill Gas.

Firstly it is important to explain what Leachate and LFG are. Leachate is the liquid that is produced by decomposing rubbish, and it is highly toxic and must be disposed of safely. LFG is the gas created by decomposing rubbish as it decomposes. This gas is collected by special wells that distribute it among huge cylinders where it is kept until it can be used or sold.

LFG is the power source for pretty much the whole landfill. That is why it is good that the rubbish produces so much. In fact, sometimes it is too much. When this happens the excess gas is burnt off in a huge flame powered by two V8 engines, that is the amount of power used by nearly 5 V8 engines.

Leachate is a big deal for the Environmental Scientists at Redvale. If it is not disposed of properly it could pose a huge threat to the wildlife that surrounds the landfill area. Because of this, Leachate is handled carefully and effectively by with a special machine powered by the LFG. Especially, the Leachate is put into a big big tank where it is heated until it evaporates. The gas that is left with a kind of sludge. This is pumped back into the landfill to keep it damp so it will keep producing LFG.