

you use pencil in Section B, re-  
(preferably 2B) must be used for the  
multiple choice (Section A) answer  
sheet, and you must have an eraser  
in case you change your mind.  
Crossing out and shading another  
box is *not* acceptable.

It is a good idea to highlight any  
final calculated answer, especially if  
it is not in the bottom right hand  
side of the answer space where a  
marker would expect to find it. Use  
a highlighter, or put a box around it.  
You can expect that at least some  
questions will require the use of

data that is provided. Sometimes  
this data is presented at the start of  
the question, but more often it will  
be in the Data Book that accom-  
panies the exam and with which  
you should now be very familiar (it  
will contain the same information  
as the one provided with the Unit 3  
examination in June).

One of the questions on this  
year's June examination provided  
solubility data for both lead(II) iod-  
ide and lead(II) nitrate. The last part  
of the question then asked why a  
precipitate of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  had not  
been observed, when a precipitate  
of  $PbI_2$  had been. Very few students  
made reference to the fact that the  
solubility data indicated that



$Pb(NO_3)_2$  is much more soluble  
than  $PbI_2$ .

Some of the data in the Data  
Book applies specifically to the Unit  
3 examination, so make sure you  
know exactly where to find data  
that might be relevant to the Unit 4  
exam. It is likely that the data you  
require will be on just 4 of the pages  
in the Data Book.

#### P3 Table 1 Periodic Table of the elements

This is where you will obtain relat-  
ive atomic masses. Note that you  
will be adding values that are all  
accurate to the first decimal place.  
This means that any Molar Mass  
you determine will be accurate to  
the first decimal place. Do not use  
an atomic number by mistake.

#### P4 Table 2 The electrochemical series

Make sure you know the simple  
half reactions that occur in galvanic  
and electrolytic cells, and also  
whether or not a redox reaction is  
likely to occur between 2 reactants.  
It is useful to note that many of the  
reductants (on the right hand side  
of the table) are metal elements.  
This should remind you that if a  
metal element is reacting, it will be  
oxidized, and the substance it  
reacts with will be reduced.

Know the limitations of Electro-  
chemical Series predictions, but be  
sure to read questions very carefully  
(highlight important phrases if  
necessary) and beware of simply  
trotting out pre-prepared answers.  
Last year, a question asked students

to explain why a particular redox  
reaction was not predicted to  
occur, yet many students seemed to  
interpret this as if it were asking  
why a particular reaction was not  
observed to occur. They missed the  
point of the question, and received  
no credit for answers that simply  
referred to the rate of the reaction  
being too slow.

**P5 Table 3 Physical Constants**  
The Faraday constant ( $F$ ) is likely to  
be required for calculations  
involving stoichiometry in electro-  
chemical cells. Note that its unit  
( $C\ mol^{-1}$ ) allows you to deduce a  
key relationship ( $F = Q/n(e^-)$ ).

Questions that involve the self  
ionisation constant for water,  $K_w$ ,  
will often be testing whether you

**P11 Table 12 Acidity constants of  
some weak acids**  
Any question involving a weak acid  
and a calculation will probably  
require you to look up the appropri-  
ate  $K_a$  value for the acid. Typical cal-  
culations might involve finding the  
pH of a solution of known concen-  
tration and/or the percentage ion-  
ization.

#### P11 Table 13 Molar Enthalpy of combustion of some common fuels

Two things should be kept in mind  
if you encounter a question relating  
to the combustion of a fuel. It is  
logical that you may be required to  
write a balanced equation for the  
reaction, and that you will need to  
quote the  $\Delta H$  value that accompa-  
nies the equation.  
Heat of combustion of a fuel  
does not normally have a sign  
(negative energy is not a logical  
concept), but an enthalpy of com-  
bustion value must have a negative  
sign to show that the reaction is  
exothermic.

■ Phil Ponder teaches Chemistry at Pen-  
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# Testing students' skills to think, plan and write

## ◀ From PAGE 3

audience, style and purpose will be  
implicit in the writing and there is  
no provision for a statement of  
intention or a reflective comment-  
ary.

The specific direction of the  
piece of writing on Context will  
come from the single prompt  
offered for each Context. Students  
must grapple with the direction and  
spirit of the prompt, constructing  
and developing their pieces of writ-  
ing accordingly.

Ultimately, then, the success of a  
piece of writing for Section B

derives from the quality of the ideas  
that are presented, the quality of  
the writing and the manner in  
which the prompt has been dealt  
with.

#### SECTION C - Analysis of Language Use

The final section of the English  
examination offers students the  
opportunity of analysing one or  
more pieces of written and visual  
material. The essential focus of this  
section is to demonstrate insightful  
analysis on the ways in which lan-  
guage and visual features are used  
to present a point of view.

The most successful responses

will be able to contextualise the  
material and provide a strong over-  
view, while exploring explicitly why  
particular words, phrases and  
images have been employed by the  
writer or speaker.

This requires adeptness at  
manoeuvring in and out of the  
material — close analysis and  
connecting this analysis with its  
broader purposes. This is best  
exemplified by considering the  
vastly different contexts of the  
pieces offered over recent years.

One was in the form of a newsletter  
persuasively written by a coach to  
his sporting community, followed

by an online journal presenting a  
point of view and finally a piece for  
a major newspaper. Thus the con-  
textion, construction, develop-  
ment, selection of language and  
persuasiveness have varied signifi-  
cantly.

Students should also be able to  
incorporate the analysis of any  
visual material and explore how  
visuals add meaning and implica-  
tion to the material as a whole. Too  
many students in recent years have  
regarded visuals separately from  
the writing.

It is important to acknowledge  
and explore the intended impact of

any visual material and the way in  
which it contributes to the persua-  
sion of the piece as a whole.

The English examination  
rewards students who have worked  
hard throughout the VCE, develop-  
ing their skills and knowledge.

Those who are well prepared for  
their examination, understand the  
distinctions among the three pieces  
of writing, use their time wisely and  
respond specifically to the topics,  
prompts and tasks will enjoy suc-  
cess in English.

■ Bob Hillman is a senior English teacher at  
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