

SY PGCE Assignment Submission Declaration**Final Grade: Distinction****Final Mark: 100.00**

Introduction

In this assignment, I will critically evaluate a nine-lesson advertising sequence taught to a top-set Year 8 English class at my Placement A School, an 11–18 rural comprehensive and sixth form located in a small town. The school is recognised for strong academic performance in the English department and was judged ‘Good’ in its most recent Ofsted inspection, which highlighted a culture where “teachers use strategies to help pupils learn with expertise” and where retrieval practice is embedded systematically across the beginning of all lessons, no matter the subject (Ofsted, 2020). However, like many schools nationwide, Placement A faces ongoing difficulties, with 25.6% of pupils persistently absent, reflecting wider post-pandemic disruption (DfE, 2023). These contextual features inform the school’s dual goal: to sustain high curriculum quality whilst assuring that learning is secure, cumulative, and resilient to challenges presented by interrupted attendance. In such a context, the accuracy of sequencing, modelling, and assessment becomes especially significant.

The Year 8 class I was allocated and briefed on during my induction comprised high-attaining pupils who demonstrated strong verbal critical reasoning, enthusiasm in discussion, and an eagerness to engage creatively with contemporary media texts. Yet, their written analytical responses revealed a persistent weakness: a reliance on identifying persuasive techniques without being able to give a sustained explanation of rhetorical function, audience effect, or alternative meaning. While pupils could confidently label devices such as emotive language, metaphors, or rhetorical questions, their commentary often remained procedural rather than conceptual. What I mean is that while pupils can explain metaphors and spot where one has been used, they struggle to say why it has been used or what effect it has on the reader. This demonstrates a broader challenge within English as a discipline: the movement from feature-spotting and technique recognition to interpretive reasoning.

As Christodoulou (2014) argues, pupils may appear fluent in performance while lacking secure underlying knowledge structures. In persuasive analysis, this presents as the listing of devices without articulating how and why they shape meaning within particular social, historical, or political contexts.

Advertising, as a multimodal genre, intensifies this disciplinary complexity. Pupils must integrate linguistic, visual, and contextual information, drawing on declarative knowledge of rhetorical terminology and procedural knowledge of explanatory structure. The Key Stage 3 National Curriculum requires pupils to “analyse and evaluate the ways language and structure are used to achieve effects” (DfE, 2014), signalling that English is not exclusively about identification but about interpretation. Furthermore, Ofsted’s English Subject Report emphasises that pupils must develop “secure disciplinary knowledge of how texts create meaning” (Ofsted, 2024). The pedagogical challenge, therefore, is not in enabling pupils to recognise language devices in isolation, but in sequencing explicit instruction so that analytical reasoning about effect, intention, and audience positioning becomes habitual and transferable when considering other texts (even in other subject disciplines).

This assignment argues that although the unit fostered high engagement and accurate retrieval of key terminology, the sequencing and assessment format did not adequately secure the knowledge required or develop the necessary skills for deep rhetorical analysis. Cognitive load theory indicates that when pupils are required to manage terminology, multimodal stimuli, structural frameworks, and creative production simultaneously, working memory can become overloaded, leading to superficial processing rather than knowledge consolidation (Sweller, 1988). Similarly, Rosenshine’s principles of instruction stress the importance of modelling, guided practice, and gradual release to ensure pupils internalise these intricate mental procedures before independent attempts occur (Rosenhine, 2012). In this sequence, pupils engaged in creative production before analytical reasoning was sufficiently rehearsed and automatised, which limited the depth and precision of their written commentary.

This assignment examines three interrelated areas of practice. First, it identifies the subject-specific challenge inherent in teaching persuasive/advertising language

analysis: supporting pupils to move beyond identifying techniques towards sustained explanation of effect, intention, and audience positioning. Second, it critically analyses assessment practices within this sequence, drawing on formative assessment theory (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Sadler, 1989) and the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on feedback and metacognition (EEF, 2021), to evaluate whether checks for understanding genuinely surfaced analytical misconceptions amongst pupils or inadvertently reinforced surface-level recall. Third, it considers adaptive teaching for high-attaining but low-confidence writers with ADHD and ASC, drawing on the SEND Code of Practice (DfE and DoH, 2015), metacognitive research (EEF, 2021), and cognitive load theory to propose refinements to modelling, scaffolding, and task sequencing that remove barriers without lowering expectation, better supporting students with additional or different needs.

This critique is based on the understanding that memory is formed by the quality of thought in which pupils engage. As Willingham states, "memory is the residue of thought" (Willingham, 2009, p. 54); unless pupils are required to think deeply about rhetorical intent and audience effect, their learning is unlikely to transfer beyond isolated tasks. By strengthening modelling, clarifying disciplinary expectations, and aligning assessment with conceptual understanding rather than procedural performance, persuasive analysis can become more secure, cumulative, and transferable. Consequently, this assignment positions curriculum sequencing, assessment planning, and adaptive pedagogy as mutually reinforcing elements in developing disciplined, analytical thinkers within English.

Task One

The principal challenge within this Year 8 advertising unit was not pupil engagement, motivation, or the identification of persuasive techniques. As high-attaining top-set pupils, they readily recognised rhetorical devices and accurately labelled features such as emotive language, rhetorical questions, and direct address. The difficulty, instead, lay in moving from feature recognition to analytical reasoning: from naming

devices to explaining their rhetorical function and intended effect on a specified audience. This is not a procedural weakness, but a disciplinary one. As Ofsted's English Subject Report argues, progression in English depends upon pupils developing "secure disciplinary knowledge about how texts create meaning" (Ofsted, 2024). In persuasive analysis, this requires understanding rhetorical devices not as isolated labels, but as purposeful linguistic choices embedded within social, cultural, and ideological contexts. Yet pupils frequently treated persuasive language as terminology to be identified rather than as evidence of deliberate rhetorical construction.

This pattern demonstrates a broader epistemological tension within English. Christodoulou cautions, "performance is not the same as learning" (Christodoulou, 2014, p. 25). Pupils may competently complete tasks such as underlining devices and naming techniques, yet lack a secure conceptual understanding of how language shapes interpretation. In this sequence, identification had been repeatedly rehearsed, but the interpretation had not yet been fully understood. The issue was therefore not the lack of knowledge, but the weakness of the schema. We know that "memory is the residue of thought" (Willingham, 2009, p. 54), so if classroom thinking centres on classification, then classification is what becomes automatised. Analytical reasoning, by contrast, calls for persistent cognitive rehearsal of causal explanation.

The unit's sequencing partially contributed to this fragility. The sequence initially foregrounded engagement and creative production: pupils analysed contemporary advertisements, explored branding strategies relevant to their age group, and collaborated in designing and pitching original products before completing a formal written analysis using a PQCZ structure. This design fostered high-quality discussion amongst pupils and confident verbal reasoning. However, as the unit progressed toward extended written analysis, a discrepancy emerged between oral sophistication and written articulation. Pupils who articulated perceptive insights in discussion often reverted to listing techniques in formal writing. Myhill argues that while talk mediates writing development, the transfer from spoken reasoning to structured prose requires explicit modelling (2012, p. 213). Without such modelling, knowledge stays tacit rather than textualised. In retrospect, creative application preceded the secure establishment of analytical schema.

Several recurring misconceptions of sorts revealed the depth of this disciplinary gap. Pupils frequently assumed persuasive techniques were inherently exaggerated; conflated emotive appeal with factual persuasion; treated rhetorical questions as automatically persuasive without reference to audience positioning; and confused branding elements with language devices. These misconceptions suggest an inadequate understanding of rhetorical intention. They correspond with Christodoulou's critique that apparent fluency may mask conceptual weakness (Christodoulou, 2014). Identification was secure; academic and logical reasoning were inconsistent.

Cognitive load theory gives further explanatory insight. Sweller argues that learning is constrained by working memory capacity, and that excessive "extraneous cognitive load" (1988, p. 257) impedes schema construction. Advertising, as a multimodal genre, integrates language, image, typography, and layout simultaneously. For pupils still consolidating analytical reasoning, this assimilation may overload processing capacity. However, cognitive load theory must be used critically. Paivio's (1986) dual coding theory suggests that verbal and visual channels may improve learning when meaningfully integrated. The issue, therefore, is not multimodality per se, but its sequencing relative to schema security. When multimodal complexity precedes conceptual consolidation, cognitive competition may occur; when it follows merging of ideas, it can deepen understanding.

Rosenshine emphasises the importance of "presenting new material in small steps" (2012, p. 13) and assuring a high success rate before independent practice. While modelling and cold calling were embedded, the transition from I DO to YOU DO was not consistently mediated by sustained WE DO rehearsal. Pupils were sometimes required to annotate independently before explanatory reasoning had been sufficiently consolidated, depending on the length of the task at hand. As a result, weaker analytical writers reverted to device-spotting under increased cognitive demand. Furthermore, the creative product-design task occurred before extended analytical writing was secure. Christodoulou (2014) argues that discovery-based tasks are most effective when grounded in firm, specific prior knowledge; here, the development of creativity arguably preceded conceptual mastery. There is, however,

an essential counterbalance. Alexander (2018) cautions against overly mechanistic pedagogies that risk constraining dialogic reasoning. The creative pitch tasks fostered exploratory discussion and audience awareness: both important aspects of English as a socially situated discipline. The limitation was not their inclusion, but their placement before analytical consolidation. A disciplinary schema must underpin dialogic exploration if it is to translate into sustained written reasoning.

The challenge, then, is fundamentally epistemological. English demands interpretive expertise rather than procedural compliance. Assessment must therefore probe explanation rather than recognition, and modelling must make mental processes visible. When I modelled a 1950s Quality Street advertisement under the visualiser, explicitly narrating how gender representation, lexical choice, and visual framing constructed meaning, pupils demonstrated stronger subsequent responses. With few prompts from me, pupils were able to begin exploratory talk about the potential effect on the audience. This suggests that earlier and more sustained modelling of interpretive reasoning would have strengthened written outcomes.

Several refinements follow. Identification, explanation and evaluation should be separated into distinct modelling phases; retrieval should target effect and audience positioning rather than definition of key words; multimodal complexity should be introduced progressively, giving experience of different mediums; and metacognitive prompts should make analytical thinking explicit, in line with EEF guidance that explicitly teaching planning and monitoring improves outcomes (EEF, 2021, p. 7). Structured scaffolds, gradually withdrawn, would support transition to independence while upholding high expectations.

The disciplinary challenge within this section of the Power of Language unit, therefore, lies in securing the conceptual shift from feature recognition to rhetorical reasoning. Engagement, classroom climate, and recall were strengths; however, sequencing and modelling need some improvement to ensure pupils internalise analytical reasoning as a transferable cognitive process. By foregrounding explanatory thinking, managing cognitive demand, and embedding structured metacognitive rehearsal, persuasive analysis can move beyond technique-spotting toward secure disciplinary understanding: a progression fundamental not only for

GCSE attainment, but for the development of critically literate readers of contemporary media.

Task Two

Assessment within this advertising unit was deliberately varied, operating across multiple modes: retrieval practice, mini-whiteboard formative checks, cold-calling and hinge questioning, peer assessment, oral presentations, informal verbal feedback, and a final summative written analysis. While assessment was frequent and low-stakes, critical reflection reveals an inconsistency between what was being checked and the unit's disciplinary goal. The central aim was to cultivate conceptual analytical reasoning: the capacity to explain how and why persuasive techniques construct meaning. However, much of the assessment practice prioritised skill progression of recognition and recall.

Assessment in English differs from subjects where knowledge may be more discretely measurable. Progress is not simply the accumulation of correct answers but the development of increasingly sophisticated interpretive articulation. Ofsted emphasises that effective assessment in English must reveal “whether pupils can apply their knowledge of language and structure so as to explain meaning” (Ofsted, 2024). The operative verb here is ‘apply’. Naming devices, though necessary as declarative knowledge, are insufficient without causal explanation. As Sadler argues, effective formative assessment requires that learners “possess a concept of the standard (or goal) being aimed for” (1989, p. 121) and be able to compare current performance against that standard. In this sequence, while the PQCZ structure provided methodical clarity, pupils did not consistently encounter explicitly modelled exemplars that made qualitative differences in cognitive depth visible. This structure was internalised, though the complexity of academic reasoning was uneven.

Formative strategies were embedded consistently. Retrieval starters rehearsed persuasive terminology; mini-whiteboards enabled immediate whole-class visibility of understanding; cold-calling distributed participation; hinge questions surfaced misconceptions. Black and Wiliam define formative assessment as evidence used to

“adapt teaching to meet student needs” (1998, p. 140), and at the level of terminology/key words, this was achieved. For example, mini-whiteboard responses revealed confusion between emotive appeal and statistical persuasion, allowing me, as the teacher, to provide timely clarification. However, misconceptions about rhetorical reasoning (such as why a rhetorical question positions an audience in a particular way) were less readily visible. Assessment captured procedural fluency more reliably than conceptual understanding. Assessment also communicates epistemic value: by repeatedly checking identification of techniques rather than their explanation, I inadvertently signalled that recognition, not explanation, constituted success. As Black and Wiliam (1998) argue, assessment practices shape learner behaviour. In this sense, misaligned assessment did not simply fail to detect conceptual weakness: it may even have reinforced it. Refining assessment, therefore, becomes an act of epistemological clarity rather than procedural adjustment.

Retrieval practice was particularly strong in reinforcing terminology, in line with test-enhanced learning research. Roediger and Karpicke demonstrate that repeated retrieval produces “greater long-term retention” (2006, p. 255) than repeated study. Retrieval consolidates whatever is retrieved, yet by nature, this is whatever is initially studied. If questions centre on definition, what becomes automatised is classification. Willingham’s aforementioned assertion that “memory is the residue of thought” (2009, p. 54) is instructive here: cognitive effort determines what is retained. In this sequence, retrieval frequently rehearsed naming rather than explaining, inadvertently reinforcing feature-spotting. A more epistemologically aligned approach would require the retrieval of causal reasoning, such as explaining why emotive language might affect a particular demographic of pupils. Rosenshine argues that effective teachers “check for understanding from all students” (2012, p. 16). Participation was fairly allocated; however, the depth of questioning did not consistently interrogate audience positioning or interpretive nuance. In this respect, the assessment validated recognition but did not systematically challenge explanation.

There is, conversely, a counterargument to consider. An excessive emphasis on frequent checking and tightly structured questioning may risk constraining exploratory thinking. Alexander (2018) cautions that overly mechanistic pedagogies

can reduce dialogic engagement, which is central to English as a discipline. The oral pitch presentations within this unit fostered precisely this dialogic reasoning: pupils demonstrated audience awareness and rhetorical intention in a socially mediated context, academically guided by their teacher. Similarly, Myhill (2012) emphasises that talk plays a central role in writing development. The limitation was not the inclusion of dialogic tasks, but the absence of an earlier written diagnostic task to translate verbal reasoning into disciplined prose.

Placing the final formal PQCZ analysis at the end of the unit further restricted the formative potential of the assessment. Sadler (1989) emphasises that feedback is most powerful when it informs subsequent improvement. In this instance, the summative task functioned more as an endpoint than a diagnostic pivot. Introducing a mid-unit analytical paragraph would have surfaced misconceptions in reasoning earlier, allowing responsive reteaching before creative production tasks.

Peer assessment also illustrates this tension. While collaborative critique is consistent with formative principles, the quality of feedback varied. The Education Endowment Foundation states that feedback is most effective when it is “specific, accurate and clear” (2021, p. 10). Because rigorous analytical feedback was not explicitly modelled, some pupils defaulted to generic praise. Structured sentence stems, foregrounding effects, and audience positioning would better align peer assessment with disciplinary goals.

Cognitive load theory further clarifies assessment misalignment. Sweller (1988, p. 257) argues that learning is impeded when simultaneous demands overload working memory. When pupils were required to recall terminology, interpret multimodal stimuli, and structure extended analysis concurrently, assessment risked capturing working memory strain rather than genuine misunderstanding. Staging assessment to isolate identification, explanation, and evaluation into discrete phases would reduce extraneous load and provide clearer diagnostic insight.

Assessment within this unit was therefore frequent, visible, and procedurally sound, yet insufficiently diagnostic of interpretive depth until late in the sequence. By reframing retrieval toward explanation, embedding earlier diagnostic writing, modelling qualitative standards explicitly, and structuring peer and self-assessment

around rhetorical reasoning, assessment can function not simply as verification of terminology but as a driver of interpretive expertise. In doing so, it becomes aligned with the disciplinary aim of English: the cultivation of analytical judgement rather than the performance of vocabulary.

Task Three

The specific group identified within this Year 8 top-set class comprises high-attaining pupils who demonstrate sophisticated verbal reasoning yet encounter barriers when producing sustained analytical writing. Within this group are pupils formally diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition), alongside others showing similar characteristics: perfectionism, reduced writing stamina, attentional fluctuation, and diminished confidence in extended independent tasks – this information was available to teaching staff through the EHCP of each pupil. Crucially, these pupils did not demonstrate conceptual misunderstanding of persuasive techniques. Rather, the barrier lay in sustaining, organising, and regulating extended written reasoning under cognitive and emotional pressure. This distinction is significant: the challenge was not knowledge acquisition, but knowledge execution within the constraints of executive function and cognitive demand.

The SEND Code of Practice emphasises that high attainment does not preclude additional need and that support should be grounded in the identification of “specific barriers to learning” (DfE and DoH, 2015, p. 100) rather than categorical assumptions. In this context, the barrier is best conceptualised as difficulty with executive function: particularly planning, organisation, sustained attention, and self-monitoring. Barkley identifies executive functioning deficits as central to ADHD, affecting the capacity to “self-regulate across time toward future goals” (2015, p. 101). Extended analytical writing, which requires sustained coherence, sequenced reasoning, and sustained evaluative judgement, places precisely these regulatory demands. Similarly, Attwood (2007, p. 148) notes that pupils with ASC may demonstrate advanced subject knowledge yet have trouble with written organisation

and flexibility. Within this unit, these complications manifested not in misunderstanding rhetorical concepts but in translating verbally articulated insights into extended, coherent prose.

In early lessons, these pupils excelled in discussion and collaborative analysis, articulating subtle interpretations of audience positioning. However, during the final written PQCZ task, several patterns appeared: shortened paragraphs, repetition without evaluative development, reluctance to extend or suggest interpretations that were less popular, and occasional task abandonment. This discrepancy between oral confidence and written execution suggests a breakdown in regulatory capacity rather than cognition. Certainly, when I verbally prompted both students with ASC and ADHD while the rest of the class worked, their verbal reasoning and ability to formulate ideas were sound. Myhill (2012, p. 213) argues that talk mediates writing development, but that explicit modelling is required to make linguistic choices visible. Without structured modelling of how spoken reasoning becomes academic prose, pupils may experience what appears as conceptual weakness but is, in fact, cognitive strain.

Cognitive load theory further clarifies this interaction. Sweller (1988, p. 257) argues that learning deteriorates when working memory capacity is exceeded by intrinsic and extraneous demands. In this task, pupils were required to recall terminology simultaneously, interpret multimodal stimuli, structure analytical paragraphs, and evaluate the effect. For pupils with attentional regulation difficulties, this compound demand intensifies cognitive strain. However, cognitive load theory must be applied judiciously. Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark (2006) argue that minimal guidance is ineffective for novices, yet high-attaining pupils in this context are not novices in rhetoric. The issue, therefore, is not lack of guidance but the timing and staging of guidance relative to executive demand. Chunking extended writing into staged phases: identification, explanation, evaluation. This reduces extraneous load while preserving disciplinary rigour.

Metacognitive regulation is equally central. The EEF (2021, p. 7) states that “explicitly teaching pupils metacognitive strategies can improve learning.” Within this unit, the success criteria were visible, but the cognitive process of analytical reasoning was not consistently narrated. Embedding structured prompts such as

“Have I explained the effect?”, “How does this link to audience positioning?” and ‘What was the writer intending?’ support pupils in monitoring and evaluating their own reasoning. This is consistent with Rosenshine’s (2012, p. 15) emphasis on modelling cognitive processes instead of merely presenting finished answers. There is, however, a counterargument to consider. Excessive scaffolding risks creating dependency and may unintentionally narrow interpretive exploration. Florian (2014) cautions that inclusive pedagogy should extend what is ordinarily available to all rather than create parallel tracks of support. For this reason, scaffolding must be temporary and gradually withdrawn. Sentence stems such as “This positions the audience as...” provide cognitive structure for pupils to mimic, although systematic fade-out is essential to maintain autonomy. The graduated response is outlined in the SEND Code (DfE and DoH, 2015): to assess, plan, do, review. This ensures adaptation stays responsive rather than reductive.

Importantly, these strategies do not dilute curriculum ambition. Ofsted (2024) emphasises that “all pupils, including those with SEND, access the full curriculum ambition.” The objective is not to simplify analytical reasoning but to render its cognitive demands explicit and manageable. High-attaining pupils with hidden regulatory vulnerabilities may otherwise be ignored because oral fluency masks written fragility. Without adaptive structures, their attainment risks reflect regulatory strain rather than conceptual capacity.

The barrier experienced by this group is therefore not a deficit of understanding, but a challenge in sustaining organised reasoning under cognitive pressure. Through explicit modelling, staged task design, scaffolded metacognitive prompts, and gradual release, adaptive teaching can enable pupils to translate verbal sophistication into disciplined analytical prose. In doing so, inclusion and academic rigour are not positioned as competing aims, but as mutually reinforcing commitments within a research-informed English classroom.

Conclusion

This assignment has critically evaluated a Year 8 advertising unit at Placement A School, identifying a central disciplinary challenge, interrogating the alignment of assessment with that challenge, and refining adaptive provision for high-attaining pupils whose written performance did not consistently reflect their conceptual capacity. Across the three tasks, a coherent theme has emerged: effective teaching in English depends not on activity variety or engagement alone, but on the deliberate cultivation of disciplined interpretive reasoning through explicit modelling, carefully aligned assessment, and principled adaptation grounded in research.

It is important to acknowledge that this evaluation is context-specific: the pupils I analysed during Placement A were high-attaining and verbally confident. However, in a lower-attaining cohort, cognitive load dynamics may differ. Nonetheless, the underlying disciplinary principle I have uncovered during this assignment is that analytical reasoning must be explicitly modelled and rehearsed for all students. In planning this unit, I prioritised engagement and pupil autonomy, influenced by the assumption that motivation would naturally lead to depth of understanding. In retrospect, this reflects an oversight of the transfer between verbal reasoning and analytical writing. My planning privileged variety, creativity, and enjoyment over secure schema consolidation. This evaluation has therefore changed my understanding of curriculum design: engagement is necessary to encourage, but it is not sufficient to rely on this. Intellectual precision depends upon deliberate rehearsal and practice of disciplinary thinking.

The challenge identified in Task One reflects a broader epistemological issue within English. As Ofsted (2024) emphasises, progression depends upon secure knowledge of how texts create meaning. This unit revealed that procedural fluency within terminology does not guarantee conceptual understanding. Christodoulou warns that “performance is not the same as learning” (2014, p. 25), and this distinction proved central: pupils could perform identification tasks competently while lacking secure reasoning about rhetorical intention. Willingham’s assertion that memory can be considered the “residue of thought” (Willingham, 2009, p. 54) accentuates the necessity of directing cognitive effort toward explanation rather than

recognition. Moving forward, sequencing will foreground analytical reasoning before creative production, making certain that knowledge structures are consolidated before application: an approach consistent with Rosenshine's (2012, p. 13) principle of presenting material in "small steps" with guided practice before independence.

Task Two reframed my understanding of assessment as a mechanism for shaping cognition rather than merely recording attainment. Although retrieval practice and formative checks were consistently embedded, they did not always probe the depth of interpretive reasoning required by the discipline. Black and Wiliam (1998, p. 140) argue that formative assessment raises achievement when evidence is used to "adapt teaching to meet student needs." This evaluation demonstrated that assessment must be calibrated precisely to the disciplinary goal it serves. Retrieval that supports identification consolidates classification; retrieval that supports explanation consolidates reasoning. Embedding earlier diagnostic writing tasks and explicitly modelling high-quality exemplars, in line with Sadler's (1989, p. 121) emphasis regarding clarity of standards, will ensure that assessment captures analytical complexity rather than simple surface accuracy.

Task Three extended this examination into an analysis of adaptive teaching. High attainment did not remove barriers for pupils; instead, executive function demands and cognitive demand pressures limited their ability to externalise understanding in sustained written form. The SEND Code of Practice (DfE and DoH, 2015) emphasises that removing barriers must not equate to lowering ambition, a principle I strongly support. Sweller (1988, p. 257) notes that performance deteriorates when working memory is overloaded, but this does not mean intellectual demand should be simplified. Applying cognitive load theory alongside metacognitive research (EEF, 2021, p. 7) clarifies that explicit modelling, staged writing processes, and structured self-monitoring can reduce unnecessary cognitive strain while maintaining disciplinary rigour. Inclusion and academic challenge are therefore interdependent, not oppositional. However, it is important to maintain balance: over-structuring or excessive scaffolding can narrow interpretive exploration in English. Alexander (2018) cautions that dialogic teaching requires space for exploratory reasoning. The refinement of this unit, therefore, is not in replacing dialogic engagement with rigid

structure, but in sequencing modelling and diagnostics so that secure conceptual schemas support exploratory thinking.

Perhaps the most significant professional insight emerging from this evaluation is the centrality of modelling as the bridge between knowledge and performance: Rosenshine (2012, p. 15) emphasises that effective teachers “guide student practice” before independent application. In this unit, pupils’ strongest written responses followed deliberate, narrated modelling of interpretive reasoning. Future practice will therefore embed consistent think-aloud modelling, strategically staged diagnostic writing, and retrieval questions that prioritise explanation over identification. These refinements represent structural adjustments rather than superficial modifications; they are intended to develop durable analytical habits that build on existing skills.

This evaluation has also sharpened my understanding of English as a discipline. It is not simply the study of texts, but the formation of interpretive judgment within social contexts. Teaching persuasive analysis requires pupils to move beyond labelling linguistic features, toward reasoning about how those features construct meaning for particular audiences. Through aligning curriculum sequencing, assessment planning, and adaptive scaffolding more coherently with this aim, the revised unit will more effectively support pupils in developing transferable analytical expertise. In conclusion, this assignment has reinforced that quality teaching is characterised by clarity of disciplinary purpose, assessment strategies that shape cognition, and adaptation grounded in evidence-based observation of pupils rather than intuition. Through critical reflection on practice and engagement with theory, I have developed a more coherent and well-founded framework for planning, teaching, and assessing English. I will carefully structure the classes I teach to integrate elements such as explicit instruction, careful modelling, and formative assessment strategies, including mini-whiteboard checks. This process has not only refined this specific unit of teaching but will also inform my ongoing commitment to sustaining academic aspiration through inclusive, research-informed pedagogy.

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