**English clarifications**

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**Explain significant connection(s) across texts using supporting evidence**

* [**Intent of the standard**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#Intent of the standard)
* [**What students need to do to meet the standard**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#What students need to do to meet the standard)
* [**Supporting evidence**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#Supporting evidence)
* [**Choosing a connection**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#Choosing a connection)
* [**Explaining the connection/s across texts**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#Explaining the connection/s across texts)
* [**Issues**](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/clarifications/level-1/as90852/#Issues)

**Intent of the standard**

This standard assesses students’ ability to "read broadly", developing their understanding through consideration of links across texts.

**What students need to do to meet the standard**

* Study four texts (at least one must be chosen by the student). These texts may be written, visual or oral, or any combination of these forms
* Identify a connection or connections shared by the texts. This can be any of: idea, theme, purpose, audience, language features or structures (Students choose this connection, not the teacher)
* Explain this connection, supported with specific examples, for each text. For example, if the student chooses a theme that is common to all four texts, for each text they need to explain the theme and support the explanation with specific supporting evidence.

It is the depth of explanation of the connection/s which enables students to meet the standard at the higher grades of Merit and Excellence. There may be some unevenness of the explanations across the four texts.

The annotated exemplars on the NZQA English web page show examples of significant connections and use of supporting evidence. They also provide explanations of requirements at each of the grade boundaries.

**Supporting evidence**

Evidence can be: direct quotations and/or references to any other relevant detail or example in the text, e.g. a specific event, narrative technique, etc.

The selected evidence must link to the connection addressed. It is not sufficient to simply provide evidence of the connection in each text, or explain the significance of the supporting evidence as in a close reading. Students must explain how the evidence they have selected expresses (Achievement) and develops (Merit and Excellence) understandings about the connection(s) being addressed.

**Choosing a connection**

Most students choose an idea or theme connection. However, the connection can be derived from any of the processes and strategies that underpin the Level 6 curriculums. Students may consider, for example, the use of first (or third) person narrative perspective, the use of flashbacks/chronological/episodic structure, the use of imagery, the effect of using specific settings (time and/or place).

Teachers cannot select the connection. Students need to select the specific connection themselves. It is likely that teachers may well have chosen texts with some similarities, but students will refine the ideas to focus on a connection that interests them. Approaches that could be taken include using a topic framework, such as ‘love’ or ‘war’, with class texts. Students will make their own connections which could include ideas such as: ‘the mental effects of war on soldiers’, ‘the absence of love in a parent/child relationship’, ‘man’s inhumanity to man’, ‘the triumph of the human spirit’.

For example, the NCEA grade boundary exemplars for this standard were all from the one class, and the teacher had chosen texts that all had "love" as a common idea. Students came up with a range of connections, such as: "unconditional love", "teenagers making wrong choices resulting in negative consequences", "forbidden love", "young lovers facing difficulties in being together", "challenges/obstacles of love", "loving friendships."

Students find it easiest to be convincing (Merit) and perceptive (Excellence) when they have defined a specific area to focus on (rather than lots of areas). They then have the opportunity to go into depth about a particular connection.

**Explaining the connection/s across texts**

The connection can be explained for each text individually, or texts can be linked together or compared with each other. It is the explanation of the connection/s, supported by evidence, that is assessed. Students may make comparisons about the connections in the different texts, but they do not have to.

**Issues**

Some students do not meet the standard because they merely identify, rather than express ideas about the connection in each of the texts. For example, a connection about bravery: “*Ellie is very brave when she blows up the bridge. A quote about this is when she says that, ‘the biggest risk is to take no risk. or to take crazy risks.’ This shows that they needed to be brave to take the risk to blow up the bridge. (Tomorrow When the War Began).”* In this example the student has identified an example of bravery in the text. To meet Achievement the student must also express ideas about the idea/concept of bravery itself. That is, the student needs to explain what they have learnt about the idea of bravery from evidence they have selected from texts.

Some students do not meet the standard because although they provide evidence from the text, the evidence does not **support** the idea about the connection/s.

Some students focus on summarising the text/s, rather than expressing ideas about the connection. Details from the text should be used to support the explanation of the connection/s, rather than telling the story.

Text choices may limit a student’s ability to sufficiently explain connections. For example, four pop songs may not enable a student to discuss ideas about their chosen connection at curriculum Level 6.

The expectation of the standard is that students think deeply and critically about texts, rather than showing personal engagement (which is the intention of AS9054 Form Personal Responses).