

Section 1:

#1 (Paragraphs 1-3)

Strengths: ■ Your vivid contrast between the creek's past and present creates a powerful visual image that immediately engages the reader. ■ Your use of sensory details helps readers experience both versions of the creek, making the environmental message more impactful.

Weaknesses: Horror movie comparison → The comparison to a horror movie is mentioned but not fully developed. While you state "it belongs in a horror movie," you could strengthen this by providing specific details about what makes it horror-like beyond just being "spooky" and "gloomy."

Exemplar: *The creek now resembles the setting of a horror film—a place where shadows lurk beneath the murky surface and the eerie silence is broken only by the occasional unnatural bubbling of toxic chemicals.*

#2 (Paragraphs 8-11)

Strengths: ■ Your inclusion of specific chemicals and scientific information adds credibility to your article. ■ Your transition from scientific facts to community action shows good organization and creates a call to action.

Weaknesses: Undeveloped solution → While you mention a working bee and cake stall, these solutions seem small compared to the severity of the problem you describe. The transition from "dangerous chemicals" to community cleanup lacks explanation of how these efforts would address the heavy metals and industrial chemicals.

Exemplar: *Professional environmental engineers could work alongside our community volunteers to tackle both the visible pollution and the invisible chemical contamination, with funds from our cake stall helping to purchase specialized equipment needed for safe removal of hazardous materials.*

#3 (Paragraphs 19-22)

Strengths: ■ Your emotional appeal about children missing out on creek experiences creates a powerful conclusion. ■ Your inclusion of specific details about the upcoming cleanup day provides readers with actionable information.

Weaknesses: Unclear connection → While you mention that contaminated water "snakes its way around bends and all through the city" and gets "evaporated to make rain then seeps into the very water we drink," you don't clearly connect this to wider health impacts or explain the scientific process accurately.

Exemplar: *The contaminated water from Silverwater Creek doesn't just stay contained—it flows into our larger waterways, affecting our ecosystem and potentially entering our water supply, presenting a risk far beyond just the immediate creek area.*

■ Your feature article effectively uses emotional appeals through personal stories like Brooke's and Jack's experiences, which helps readers connect to the issue on a human level. Your inclusion of expert opinions adds authority to your writing. To improve your piece, try developing a clearer cause-and-effect relationship between the pollution and its impacts. Also, you could strengthen your article by providing more specific details about the cleanup process and how it would address the serious chemical contamination you mention. Your concluding paragraphs could be more powerful if you created a stronger vision of what the restored creek might look like after community efforts. Additionally, consider adding more details about how everyday actions contribute to creek pollution, helping readers understand their role in both the problem and solution.

Overall Score: 42/50

Section 2:

Silverwater Creek: What Lurks Beneath

Silverwater Creek 6 years ago: crystal clear water gleaming with the sun's rays, filled with children's laughter, excitement and happiness, birds chirping, rope swings leading to cannon ball splash competitions.

Silverwater Creek today: murky, dark green water filled with lizards and bugs, poisonous to even the slightest touch, the sun no longer reaching its gloomy surface. The creek has a spooky vibe around it, eerily quiet without any children and birds.

#1 Look at the world we've created; it belongs in a horror movie but it's the reality that we were part of making, and it will only get worse if we don't stop it now.

Nine-year old Brooke Brown sobbed, "I remember coming here when I was a little kid, I used to splash about and fall off the rope swing and now it's all gone." She always carries a locket with a photo of herself and her family playing in the creek.

There are many others on the same train of thought as Brooke.

Dr Sharol Thomas, a hydrologist from The University of Sydney states, "I used to play here when I was a little girl and now I am trying to repay the creek for what it has done for me. The Silverwater creek is unfortunately the most polluted creek I have ever seen, it is made up of 70% runoff and 30% toxic minerals." She has a framed photo on her desk of herself splashing in the creek as a child.

#2 The creek has dangerous chemicals embedded in the water which makes it impossible to swim in. Dr Thomas and her team have conducted research in respect to Silverwater Creek and have found out that it houses heavy metals including lead, arsenic, and industrial chemicals like PFAS, and disinfection byproducts like trihalomethanes. Even if you make the slightest contact with the creek you will get severe rashes all over your body. All those chemicals lurking under the surface may seem invisible but in truth they are not.

You might be thinking it will be too costly to get it fixed, but the happiness and healthiness of the community far outweighs the overall cost to clean the creek. We could gather adults and children, dress them up in safety overalls and make a working bee to help remove plastics from the creek.

The council has agreed to set up a cake stall to help raise money to help fund the cleansing of the creek.

~~A reporter went around and asked everyone who lives in the houses neighbouring the creek if it would be ok to have a cleaning operation adjacent to their houses.~~ [A reporter asked everyone who lives in houses neighbouring the creek if they would support a cleaning operation near their properties.] All of them agreed and said they are keen to join in as they regularly see the worst of the creek.

Mrs and Mr Jones who have the creek running along the back of their fence have reported that their 8-year old son Jack was playing soccer outside when thick smog came from the creek. The next morning Jack woke up to a constellation of rashes covering his whole body and swollen eyes. His parents immediately took him to the emergency department.

Jack is not the only child to have suffered badly from the creek.

Dr Bob Smith, who has over 30 years of experience as a paediatrician states, "~~I have been getting more and more patients with violent rashes after claiming to have encountered the creek. Children shouldn't suffer like that.~~" ["I have been treating more and more patients with violent rashes after they've encountered the creek. Children shouldn't suffer like that."]

The creek is now classified as dangerous for health and safety.

The creek used to be frequently visited each day but now it lies silent, quiet, unnoticed. People who live adjacent to the creek report hearing no noise coming from the creek. ~~The creek is so unnoticed that most young children have never heard of the wonders that come from the creek.~~

[The creek is so forgotten that most young children have never heard of the wonders it once offered.] Do you want young children to grow up oblivious to the wonders around them?

#3 The contaminated water of Silverstream Creek silently snakes its way around bends and all through the city. It gets evaporated to make rain then seeps into the very water we drink.

The innocent children in their junior years at Silverwater Primary School will never hear about the wonders they should've inherited. They will never feel the joy of cannonballing into the water off a rope swing, the exhilarating wonder of diving down to collect coins if we do not make a move now.

Dr Thomas appeals for the community's support in preserving the natural wonders of Silverwater Creek before it is too late. Silverwater Creek Clean Up Day is being held on Saturday, 3rd of May 2025, from 9 am to 3 pm. Please refer to Facebook page 'Save Silverwater Creek' for details and put your name down for safety kit. Spare safety kits will be available on the day.