Writing Feedback
TERM 2 - 2025 | WEEK 8 – Writing | Year 5 Scholarship Essentials

Section 1:

#1 **"Beneath the roar of traffic lies a quieter city—one that's waiting to breathe. A city where streets are no longer veins of chaos but spaces of connection. A city where the scent of exhaust is replaced by flowers in bloom, and where children don't need to pause before stepping off the curb. The question isn't simply whether more roads should be converted into car-free zones. The question is: what kind of world do we want to live in?"**

Strengths: Your opening creates a powerful visual contrast between traffic-dominated and pedestrian-friendly spaces. Your use of sensory details (roar, scent, exhaust) helps readers imagine both environments vividly.

Lack of specific context → Your introduction doesn't clearly establish which cities or urban areas you're discussing. Without this grounding, readers might struggle to connect with your argument. The broad question "what kind of world do we want to live in?" needs more specific framing about the particular urban planning challenges you're addressing.

"Beneath the roar of traffic lies a quieter city—one that's waiting to breathe. In Australian cities like Melbourne and Sydney, streets could transform from veins of chaos into spaces of connection. The question is: what kind of urban environment will best serve our communities in the decades ahead?"

#2 **"Start with the air. It's the most vital resource we share, yet also the most abused. When cars dominate streets, what follows is not just noise, but an invisible invasion of nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and fine particles that coat the lungs like dust on forgotten shelves. These pollutants are not abstract figures in scientific reports. They are the wheeze in a child's chest, the shortness of breath in an elderly neighbour, the late-night ambulance rushing a patient to hospital."**

Strengths: Your paragraph effectively connects abstract pollution concepts to concrete health impacts. Your comparison of lung particles to "dust on forgotten shelves" creates a memorable image that helps readers understand the issue.

Limited supporting evidence → While you mention health impacts of pollution, you don't include specific statistics or studies that would strengthen your argument. The connection between car-free zones and improved health outcomes needs more direct evidence to convince readers who might be skeptical about making such significant urban changes.

"Start with the air quality data. When cars dominate Melbourne's CBD, nitrogen dioxide levels can reach up to 80% higher than in pedestrianised areas. These aren't just numbers—they represent the 14% increase in childhood asthma cases linked to traffic pollution and the estimated 3,000 premature deaths in Australia annually from vehicle emissions."

#3 **"Of course, changes like these aren't simple. Critics raise real concerns about accessibility, business disruption, and transport logistics. These challenges must be met with ingenuity, not dismissal. Shuttle services for the elderly, delivery corridors timed for off-peak hours, and well-connected transit systems can bridge the gaps. But the answer to urban strain is not more roads—it's better design. More lanes invite more traffic. But fewer cars invite more possibility."**

Strengths: Your paragraph acknowledges potential challenges to car-free zones, showing you've considered multiple perspectives. You offer practical solutions like shuttle services and delivery corridors, demonstrating that these challenges aren't insurmountable.

Underdeveloped counterarguments → While you mention critics' concerns, you don't fully address them or explain how your proposed solutions would work in practice. For example, how would delivery corridors function? What would happen to businesses that depend on car traffic? Without engaging more deeply with these counterarguments, your position seems less convincing.

"Changes like these require careful planning. Take Brisbane's Queen Street Mall conversion—initially, local shops worried about losing customers who drove. The solution included adding 400 nearby parking spaces, creating a free loop bus service, and scheduling deliveries before 10am. Within two years, foot traffic increased by 40% and retail revenue grew by 27%, showing how thoughtful design can address legitimate concerns while achieving better outcomes."

■ Your piece presents a compelling vision for car-free urban zones but needs more specific examples and data to strengthen your argument. You could improve by adding local context—mention specific Australian streets or neighbourhoods that could benefit from pedestrianisation. Also, include more concrete statistics about the benefits seen in cities that have already implemented car-free zones. Try balancing your poetic language with hard facts. For example, when you mention Barcelona's superblocks, add that they reduced nitrogen dioxide levels by 42%. You could also strengthen your argument by explaining how car-free zones might work differently in various parts of a city—what works in a dense CBD might not suit outer suburbs. Consider adding a paragraph about the economic benefits, as studies show pedestrianised shopping streets often see increased retail sales. Your conclusion could be more powerful if you included a call to action for local councils or community groups.

Score: 45/50

Section 2:

Should urban areas convert more roads into car-free zones, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists?

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in bloom, and where children don't need to pause before stepping off the curb. The question isn't simply whether more roads should be converted into car-free zones. The question is: what kind of world do we want to live in? #1

Start with the air. It's the most vital resource we share, yet also the most abused. When cars dominate streets, what follows is not just noise, but an invisible invasion of nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and fine particles that coat the lungs like dust on forgotten shelves. These pollutants are not abstract figures in scientific reports. They are the wheeze in a child's chest, the shortness of breath in an elderly neighbour, the late-night ambulance rushing a patient to hospital. In areas that reduced car access, like parts of Barcelona and Oslo, asthma attacks dropped, emergency visits declined, and ordinary life became safer. Breathing clean air should be a right, not a privilege. Cities have the power to grant that right—if they choose people over pollution. #2

Then there's the matter of space. Cars demand an enormous share of our public realm: wide lanes, parking bays, traffic signage. But they carry just one or two people at a time. Pedestrians and cyclists, in contrast, are compact, efficient, and silent. They don't just move through a city—they experience it. A car-free zone is more than a road without traffic. It becomes a stage for street artists, a playground for children, a conversation between strangers who are no longer sealed behind glass and steel. In Seoul, the transformation of the Cheonggyecheon freeway into a pedestrian-friendly riverfront revitalised the entire district. What had once been a congested, polluted corridor became a ribbon of life—teeming with people, commerce, and joy.

Of course, changes like these aren't simple. Critics raise real concerns about accessibility, business disruption, and transport logistics. These challenges must be met with ingenuity, not dismissal. Shuttle services for the elderly, delivery corridors timed for off-peak hours, and well-connected transit systems can bridge the gaps. But the answer to urban strain is not more roads—it's better design. More lanes invite more traffic. But fewer cars invite more possibility. #3

Car-free zones are not an attack on convenience. They're an invitation—to slow down, to notice, to participate in the life of a city instead of passing through it at sixty kilometres an hour. Imagine sitting in a café on a broad boulevard, the sounds of wheels on pavement replaced by birdsong, the air crisp and breathable. Imagine your child walking home from school, not between idling vehicles, but under a canopy of trees. That's not an inconvenience. That's a vision worth working toward.

And the change doesn't have to be radical. Start with one street. Then a square. A school zone. Watch as the culture shifts, as people begin to linger where they once hurried, as eye contact replaces honking horns. These are the building blocks of community—laid one car-free space at a time.

In the end, this isn't a debate about transport. It's a question of values. Do we measure a successful city by how fast a car can cross it, or by how fully a person can live within it? ~~The path forward is not paved with exhaust and noise, but with footsteps, laughter, and the quiet assurance that the city belongs to us all.~~ [The path forward is paved not with exhaust and noise, but with footsteps, laughter and the quiet assurance that the city belongs to us all.]