Term 3 - 2025: Week 5 - Writing Homework | Year 5 Scholarship Specialisation

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Section 1:

#1 (Opening hesitation and arrival sequence) **Strengths:** Your opening effectively captures internal conflict through the rhetorical question "Did I really want to do this?" whilst establishing contemporary family dynamics through the detail about pixelated screens and poor network connectivity. The physical action of sprinting down stairs demonstrates character determination overcoming initial reluctance.

Weakness: Dialogue punctuation mechanics → The phrase "My mum's network was never good, where she lived" requires proper comma placement, and several dialogue exchanges omit necessary punctuation marks that would clarify speech patterns and improve readability.

Exemplar: *My mum's network was never good where she lived, so our conversations were always interrupted.*

#2 (Initial family interaction and tension establishment) **Strengths:** Your character development through dialogue reveals family dynamics efficiently, particularly the father's sleepy confusion contrasting with the narrator's careful topic deflection. The authentic awkwardness of family reunion conversations demonstrates solid understanding of interpersonal psychology and realistic speech patterns.

Weakness: Narrative voice consistency → Your writing shifts between present and past tense without clear stylistic purpose. The sequence from "I asked, sneakily changing the topic" to "'She's fine too. Just feeling a little bit… overworked?' Dad answered awkwardly" shows tense inconsistencies that weaken narrative coherence and reader engagement.

Exemplar: *I asked, hoping to change the topic without seeming obvious about my concerns regarding their relationship.*

#3 (Revelation scene and emotional climax) **Strengths:** Your dialogue builds tension effectively towards the revelation about moving to Sydney, with the mother's frustrated honesty feeling genuine and emotionally authentic. The interrupted dialogue technique with "'Honey, didn't we say it was supposed to be a surpr-'" demonstrates sophisticated understanding of how real conversations develop organically.

Weakness: Character motivation development → The sudden shift from family tension to excitement about moving lacks sufficient emotional bridging. The narrator's transformation from suspicious questioning to immediate excitement needs more psychological development to maintain narrative believability and character consistency throughout the scene.

Exemplar: *Despite my earlier frustration with their secrecy, the prospect of living together as a proper family filled me with unexpected joy.*

■ Your piece demonstrates sophisticated awareness of contemporary family challenges, particularly the strain of maintaining relationships through digital communication platforms. The authentic dialogue captures realistic family interaction patterns, especially the careful navigation of sensitive topics and the parents' attempt to manage information sharing with their child. Your characterisation shows genuine insight into how physical separation affects family dynamics, whilst the revelation about relocation provides satisfying resolution to established tensions. However, your technical execution requires attention to dialogue punctuation conventions and consistent narrative voice throughout. Focus particularly on maintaining temporal consistency within scenes—establish whether you're writing in present or past tense and maintain that choice systematically. Your vocabulary demonstrates age-appropriate sophistication, though some transitions between emotional states need stronger psychological development. The pacing works effectively, building from uncertainty through family awkwardness to hopeful resolution, but consider expanding the middle section to develop character relationships more thoroughly. Additionally, strengthen your sentence structures by ensuring proper comma placement and dialogue formatting. The thematic exploration of family reconnection through relocation shows mature understanding, though the emotional journey could benefit from more detailed internal reflection during key transition moments.

Score: 39/50

Section 2:

I waited hesitantly at the open train door. Did I really want to do this? My eyes darted to the fluorescent orange sign. [that] ~~It~~ read 'Melbourne'. I ~~can't~~ [couldn't] believe I was really ~~here~~ [there], meeting the person I talked with every day [on] just ~~on~~ a pixelated screen. My mum's network was never good where she lived.

No.

I had to go ~~meet~~ [and meet] her. I stepped out onto the ~~stoney~~ [stony] platform and sprinted down the stairs. Of course, she was there waiting for me. She looked almost furious, having a staring contest with the woman on the poster opposite her.

'["]Hi!' ["] I called out to her, waving my arms enthusiastically.

'["]Hi.' ["] She ~~almost immediately~~ replied almost immediately.

'["]You okay?' ["] I asked, suddenly worried. '["]You look sad.'["]

ꞌ["]No, I'm fine. Come on, we need to go now. Dad's waiting.ꞌ ["] She quickly pulled me out onto the pathway and we rushed towards our car, where Dad was sleeping.

ꞌ["]Hi.ꞌ ["] I quickly muttered as I got into the back seat.

ꞌ["]What?ꞌ ["] ~~He~~ [he] said as he slowly woke up. ꞌ["]Oh. [!] Hi! Welcome back. How was school?ꞌ["]

ꞌ["]It was fine.[,"] I replied, not wanting to tell him about my friends. I was afraid of him being angry. ꞌ["]How's Mum? She hasn't been looking too well today.' ["] I asked, ~~sneakily~~ [hoping to] ~~changing~~ [change] the topic.

ꞌ["]She's fine too. Just feeling a little bit… overworked?ꞌ ["] Dad answered awkwardly. ꞌ["]Let's just go home.ꞌ["]

Frustrated, I struck first. ꞌ["]You guys are hiding something. Why can't I know?ꞌ["]

ꞌ["]It's just… I don't want to live like this. It's strange meeting each other every day through FaceTime. We're considering moving to Sydney. That way this family relationship might not be so awkward.ꞌ ["] My mum finally said.

ꞌ["]Honey, didn't we say it was supposed to be a surpr-ꞌ["]

ꞌ["]We're moving?ꞌ ["] I interjected excitedly.