

Writing analysis – texts about Timor-Leste (p. 27)

In 2015, a group of young Australians visited Timor-Leste as part of a study tour for 40 Hour Famine Youth Ambassadors. The tour included meeting people from rural communities, and observing the work the communities and World Vision are undertaking to address the issues of poverty and hunger. The following texts were written by four of the Youth Ambassadors.

For you to do

1. Read the four texts and with a partner discuss:
 - a. What did you learn about Timor-Leste from reading the texts?
 - b. What are some of the language features of the different text types?
(a diary entry; a letter to the editor; a poem; a reflection piece posted on a blog)
 - c. What is the purpose and intended audience for each text?

2. Select two of the texts and complete the following table:

Language feature	Text 1	Text 2
What is the text type? (eg, diary; letter to the editor; poem; reflection/blog entry)		
What tense is the text mostly written in? (eg, past; present; future)		
Does the text mostly use personal pronouns? (eg, I; you; we; she; he)		
How frequently does the text use facts? (eg, never; a couple; a few; many)		
Does the text use figurative language? If so, how often? (eg, metaphor; symbolism; imagery; appeals to the senses)		
Does the text use methods for creating emphasis? (eg, repetition; overstatement)		

Language feature	Text 1	Text 2
Does the text attempt to create an imperative mood? If so, highlight an example in the text.		
Does the text attempt to appeal to the emotions of the audience? If so, highlight an example in the text.		
Does the text attempt to appeal to the values of the audience? If so, highlight an example in the text.		

- Poverty, hunger and food insecurity are issues not only in Timor-Leste, but also in other countries around the world. Watch the 40 Hour Famine film clips about the lives of children in Bangladesh who have been impacted by poverty and food insecurity. Create your own text (for example, a letter to the editor, blog post or creative writing) inspired by the film clips. The film clips and background information about Bangladesh are available on the Get Connected: Food Security page at worldvision.com.au/schoolresources

Text 1 – Diary entry by Claudia

Today we visited a tree grafting project in the Bucoli area of East Timor. This particular project was initiated by World Vision, which provided materials, training for locals, and support of the nursery which provides community members with a stable income.

Tree grafting was a concept that previously I knew nothing about, but little did I know how radically it was changing lives. In this particular project there were 20 community members who had received horticultural training from World Vision and they were then responsible for the nursery which contained mango, avocado, citrus and papaya trees.

What was so effective about this project is that the grafting process wasn't very time consuming for the amount of money the community members benefitted after selling the trees. Each tree was sold for twice its original amount, from between \$5-\$25 depending on the length of its growth cycle.

The tree grafting method is rather simple. They graft two trees together by cutting a slit down the middle of one tree and inserting another tree in that hole, then taping it together and placing a plastic bag on top of the tree to contain the moisture for rapid growth.

It was really this concept of “two is better than one”. The two trees formed a stronger bond when they shared that connection. I began thinking about what my purpose here in East Timor is as a Youth Ambassador. Poverty is overwhelming, and sometimes it feels like one person can't make a difference when facing such a big issue alone. But I believe that the reason why I'm here is to connect both Australians and Timorese as one, so that we're stronger together. And just like the local community members in the Bucoli tree grafting process are changing their lives for the better, I know that if we stand together, we can beat this global issue that is poverty and hunger.

Text 2 – Letter to the editor by Abbie

If you've ever adventured out to change the world and end poverty, then perhaps, like me, you've experienced times when the enormity of the challenge has been overwhelming. Perhaps you paused to wonder how it's possible for development to be successful, when poverty is part of a complex tangle of injustice, hunger and many other struggles.

In Timor-Leste, for example, I met many families who had to walk hours or lose income on public transport just so that they can take their produce to a market. Families who never knew how much money they'd make, whether they'd have enough to send their children to school, enough to feed them, clothe them, or even just to buy clean water. Their struggle was real and unavoidable, one that could not be fixed by harder work or a one-off donation, or indeed any means that the families had available to them. It was a situation that, although complicated, boiled down to the core issues of logistics and uncertainty surrounding the sale of produce.

In recognising this, World Vision's development project tackled these issues by starting a community market in a local village. The key action that allowed for the success of the project was the creation of a link between the new village market and a supermarket in Dili, who became regular buyers of the local produce. This not only eliminated the need for the villagers to travel, but gave the families a better, more reliable income. The ability to save money therefore meant stability and security for both parents and children, as well as the ability to access basic needs.

It is because of examples like these that we need to remember when the fight against poverty feels overwhelming: through World Vision's efforts to affect change in Timor-Leste, we can see that despite the complexity of the issues and injustices in developing communities, progress is possible, achievable and sustainable.

Text 3 – Poetry by Isobel

Morning

Sun streams and
Wood smoke and
Construction sounds and
Tire jacks and
Dogs on the roof and
Mountain air and
Car horns – gentle – and
Blue and Green and Blue

Engine revs and
Sweet fruit and
Americana pillows in crinkly plastic just inside a shop front

Chickens roaming
Bundles to carry
Brush brooms, buttery sunlight
Stirring up shadowy rooms

Baucau, Baucau is awake

Church

Windy roads and
Church clothes and
Cornfields and
Concrete and
Tetun flying thick and fast above my head

Motorbikes – parked – and
Houses – empty – and
Pink, pink flowers against
Brushed and beautiful Sunday hair

New t-shirt, old ritual
Bananas hang in clumps on corners
Besser blocks, barbed wire and
Green and green and green

Turn on the de-mister
The rain has started again.

Miranda

Old hands
Aged nails
Softly tracing the leger pages
That simple gesture,
A greater work
Than my young hands
Have ever known

Dirt

Red and red and red and red
Lean on that wall and there's no escaping it.

Carefully kept
Lovingly prepared
Apologies that hurt

Hospitality
Green papaya and white rice and black, black coffee
I don't drink it at home,
but for her?

Anything.

Leaving

Before,
Confusion bred eloquence
But now?
It breeds nothing
Just brews and stirs and boils
Overtaken by bubbles of emotion
Silently exploding, condensing, evaporating

Then deep deep quiet
Just images of weathered hands
And whispered prayers
Flashing fleeting across the insides of my stinging eyes

Text 4 – Reflection/blog entry by Kate

East Timor.

What an incredible country. It's really hard to sum up all my thoughts about Timor-Leste. This was my first time travelling out of Australia, so for me, the contrast between the two countries was huge. However, each day spent in Timor came with new understandings and deeper appreciations for the country and its people. By the end of the trip, I was unknowingly focusing more on the similarities we have, rather than the differences. Learning about Timor's history and the current challenges they face as a nation gave me this everlasting impression of admiration and respect for its citizens. The people we had the pleasure of meeting were such strong, positive people who cared so much for those around them and for their country as a whole. Obviously seeing different levels of poverty first hand is quite confronting ... It totally changed my outlook and my approach to global issues. When I now hear a statistic relating to poverty and inequality, the numbers have so much more meaning—it's not just a fact or a figure now, they are the raw realities for some people.

My experience in Timor was not all heavy-hearted. For me, the levels of poverty were quite obvious so I didn't feel the need to talk about it with the people we met all the time. I just had to open my eyes—it was there. It may sound naïve or simplistic, but I really made a conscious effort to get to know people for who they were, more so than the situations they were in. So many laughs and smiles were shared. I formed strong and real connections with some incredible people who I'll never forget.

On return, I realised how important it is to think and act globally. It is so easy to live your life within your own, self-made context, innocently not extending your thoughts and actions beyond the borders that we've created. There are lines that are said to divide up the world, but at the end of the day, we are all people. It doesn't matter where we come from. We are equals ... and yet such great inequality exists within our world. I hope that I can influence the mind-sets of people all over Australia and encourage them to extend their thoughts and actions beyond their borders. When they think, I want them to try and think globally. When they act, I will try to support and encourage them to act in the best interest of the world. One small attitude change in one person can make a world of difference, and that is what I hope to do.