

PRACTICE TEXT — SPEECH TRANSCRIPT (ORAL TEXT)

Study the practice text, then choose one question

The Person with the Keys

An original speech written for this practice paper. Words in square brackets describe how the speaker delivers the speech.

[Mrs Tupaea walks to the front of the hall, carrying nothing. She waits until the room is silent.]

Good morning. Some of you know my name. Most of you know my keys. [Laughter. She lifts a heavy ring and shakes it.] Thirty-four years. Thirty-four years of opening this school at six o'clock in the morning, and locking it at six at night, and I have never once been late for either.

I was asked to say a few words today, and I have a confession. [She lowers her voice.] I am much better at sweeping than speaking. But I have a message for you, and I want you to hear it, because nobody ever told it to me.

You see the teachers. You see the principal. You see the trophies in the cabinet and the names on the honours board. [She gestures to the wall.] But who put the chairs out for this assembly? Who unlocked the gym for your netball final? Who found your lunchbox, your bag, your lost shoe, at the bottom of the field at four o'clock in the rain?

[She pauses and looks along the rows.] I do not tell you this to be thanked. I tell you because the world runs on people like me: the people you do not notice, the people whose work is only seen when it is not done. The bus driver. The nurse on the night shift. The one who fixes the pipe. Nobody makes a speech about the pipe. But try living without one.

I used to think that work like mine did not matter. I thought that mattering was for people with names on walls. Then one morning, a small girl, six years old, found me in the corridor and said, "Mrs Tupaea, you make the school clean for us." [Her voice softens.] Eight words. I have kept them in my pocket ever since, with the keys.

So here is my message. [She straightens and speaks more slowly.] Notice people. Say thank you. Learn the name of the person who cleans your classroom, because they know yours. And when you leave this school, and you will, take care of the small things, because small things hold up the large ones.

[She holds up the keys one more time.] I will not be needing these on Monday. [Pause.] But I will be listening for the sound of them. Thank you, and kia ora koutou.

[She places the keys on the table. The hall rises.]

CHOOSE ONE QUESTION

About 750 to 800 words

QUESTION ONE

Analyse how the speaker uses oral techniques to engage the audience and develop the idea that unseen work matters in 'The Person with the Keys'. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

QUESTION TWO

Analyse how the speaker uses tone and structure to develop her message in 'The Person with the Keys'. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

QUESTION THREE

Analyse how the speaker uses personal anecdote and imagery to build a relationship with the audience in 'The Person with the Keys'. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Write an essay of about 750 to 800 words. Refer to specific techniques and use short quotations or precise descriptions as evidence.

Planning space (not marked)

The opening: humour, the keys as a prop.

Rhetorical questions and lists ("Who...?").

Tone changes: lowered voice, softer voice, slower pace.

The ending: the keys placed on the table.

A MODEL RESPONSE AND GUIDANCE FOR THAT TASK

QUESTION ONE — GUIDE AND MODEL ANSWER

Worked solution

What the question asks

You must develop an argument about how oral techniques (such as humour, repetition, rhetorical question, list, tone and the use of a prop) engage the audience and develop the idea that unseen work matters, supported by precise evidence from the speech and its delivery.

What each grade looks like for this question

Grade	What the response shows
Achieved	Identifies some oral techniques and the idea that unseen work matters, with relevant evidence.
Merit	Explains convincingly how techniques such as the keys, rhetorical questions and changes of tone engage the audience and develop the idea.
Excellence	Analyses perceptively how the speaker's control of humour, structure and tone moves the audience from laughter to respect, using insightful evidence from both words and delivery.

Evidence you could use

- “Most of you know my keys.”: humour and the keys as a prop introduce the idea
- “Who put the chairs out for this assembly?”: rhetorical questions in a list reveal unseen work
- “Nobody makes a speech about the pipe.”: humorous, concrete example
- “small things hold up the large ones”: the speech's main message in a memorable image

Model response (about 740 words, aiming at Excellence)

In ‘The Person with the Keys’, Mrs Tupaea uses oral techniques to win her audience's attention and to persuade them that unseen work matters. She moves the listeners from laughter to respect through a carefully controlled structure, shifts in tone and a prop that gives her message a physical form.

The opening is designed to put the audience at ease. Mrs Tupaea says, “Some of you know my name. Most of you know my keys.” The joke is gentle, and it presents her as someone known by her tools rather than her title, which hints at the speech's central idea. The delivery note, “She lifts a heavy ring and shakes it”, adds a visual element, and the sound of the keys becomes a symbol of her work. The repetition of “Thirty-four years” emphasises her long and reliable service, and builds the audience's respect before she makes her argument.

She then involves the audience by posing a series of rhetorical questions: “Who put the chairs out for this assembly? Who unlocked the gym for your netball final?” The repeated structure creates rhythm and builds momentum, and each question names a task that the students have taken for granted. The final example, finding a “lost shoe, at the bottom of the field at four o'clock in the rain”, is specific and slightly comic, so the audience laughs while recognising that they have benefited from her work. Because the questions are unanswered, the audience supplies the answer themselves, which makes the message feel as though they have discovered it.

Her tone shifts to give weight to her argument. She admits, “I am much better at sweeping than speaking”, lowering her voice, which makes the speech feel honest and intimate. When she widens the argument to include “the bus driver”, “the nurse on the night shift” and “the one who fixes the pipe”, the list of three works to generalise from herself to many people. The humorous line, “Nobody

makes a speech about the pipe”, keeps the tone light, but the next sentence, “But try living without one”, turns the joke into a challenge.

The emotional centre is the anecdote about the child, who said, “you make the school clean for us.” The delivery note says that “Her voice softens”, and the detail that she has kept these words “in my pocket ever since, with the keys” links the child’s kindness to the prop. The audience understands that being noticed has mattered deeply to her, which gives the argument emotional force.

Mrs Tupaea also builds a relationship with the audience through her use of direct address. She says, “I want you to hear it, because nobody ever told it to me.” The pronouns “I” and “you” place her in direct conversation with the students, and the reason she gives, that nobody told her, presents her as someone who has learnt a lesson the hard way. This vulnerability is unusual for a speaker with authority, and it makes the audience more willing to accept her advice. The later phrase “the world runs on people like me” moves from the personal to the general, so that her individual experience becomes a universal truth.

The speech’s structure reinforces its meaning. It begins with something familiar (the keys), moves to the unseen (the tasks nobody notices), then to the emotional centre (the child’s words), and finally to advice. This movement from the concrete to the abstract mirrors the idea of the speech: the small, ordinary object leads to a larger principle. The repetition of the keys at the opening, in the anecdote and in the final act of placing them on the table gives the speech a circular shape, so the audience senses that the speaker has come full circle and that her message has been completed.

The final section uses imperatives (“Notice people. Say thank you.”) to turn reflection into advice. The line “small things hold up the large ones” is a memorable image that sums up the idea. Mrs Tupaea’s slower pace here, and her final act of placing the keys on the table while the hall rises, show that the audience has accepted her message. The speech therefore succeeds because it blends humour, structure and tone to make unseen work visible. In this way, the oral form allows Mrs Tupaea to do what her work has never done: to be heard, and to make an audience, for a moment, notice the people who keep a school and a community running.

Why this response earns Excellence

- It analyses both the words and the delivery, which is essential for an oral text.
- It explains the effect of each technique on the audience, not only its name.
- It follows the structure of the speech from opening to ending and shows how the audience’s response develops.

KEY TAKEAWAY

For an oral text, analyse both what is said and how it is delivered, and explain how each technique shapes the audience’s response.

LIKED THIS SAMPLE?

The full paper is the real thing.

THIS FREE SAMPLE

A short extract: the opening questions of Paper 1, then their worked answers. 4 pages in all.

THE FULL PAPER

One speech, film or photo-essay text and a choice of three questions, for an essay of about 750 to 800 words, about 90 minutes, with a model response and an Achieved, Merit and Excellence guide. 12 pages, with a worked solution for every question.

What you get with each paper

- A complete, timed paper in the real exam layout, not just a taste of it.
- A worked solution for every question: numbered steps, why each wrong option is wrong, and a key takeaway.
- 20 different papers in this set. Every one uses new questions, so each extra paper is new practice, not a repeat.
- An A4 PDF emailed straight after payment, made for printing.

Get Paper 1 now

A\$11.99 one-off, instant PDF download. Tap or click here.

Or see all 20 NCEA Level 2 English 91099 Visual Text papers:
testpapershub.com/collections/ncea-level-2-english-91099-visual-text/

Getting the most from a practice paper

- 1 Print it and set the timer shown on the cover. Answer every question before looking at any solution.
- 2 Mark it against the worked solutions and note the topics that cost you marks.
- 3 Retry the questions you missed a day later, then use the next paper to check the fix held.

Not sure which paper to start with, or have a question before you buy? Email support@testpapershub.com and a real person will reply, normally within one business day. These are original practice papers, not official past papers, and are not affiliated with any exam authority.