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# Rationale | Poster

Visual Arts • Year 9/10 • Victorian Curriculum 2.0

## Task 1B

### On the choice VCD

Visual Communication Design sits at the intersection of critical thinking, creative practice and real-world communication, guiding student thinking toward the user experience. Whether this is through a poster, a building, interior design or a game, students learn how to design with the user in mind. It's on who receives the design, how it lands and what it does to them. To understand this, a student needs to use their empathy to find their way into a genuine orientation toward the other person. It's about understanding their context and experience before making decisions about form, content or communication. As Brown (2008) argues, empathy is the foundation of design thinking: you cannot design well without inhabiting the perspective of the person you are designing for. As Robinson (2006) argues, creativity is as important in education as literacy. And VCD is where students develop both with clarity and a step by step design process. Through the design process the students become conscious readers of the visual world. Visual literacy, design thinking and critical communication are general capabilities embedded explicitly in the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 (VCAA, 2024).

### Why This Concept

This advocacy product is a two-part communication system. The first page is a conceptual poster. The second page is a companion information sheet. Together they enact a core VCD principle: the headline does the emotional work, the supporting content does the explanatory work.

The headline 'YOU ARE BEING DESIGNED. DESIGN BACK' was chosen because it speaks directly to the experience of a Year 9/10 student without condescending to them. Rudolf Steiner understood early adolescence as the moment when inherited structures feel insufficient and the young person begins building their own relationship to truth and authority (Steiner, 1996). This poster meets students at that moment. It validates what they often already are becoming aware of, that something is shaping their world without their permission. And the poster offers them agency through design thinking. The companion page then answers the practical questions that follow: what will I learn, where will it take me, what will I actually do.

## **Why These Visual Choices**

The poster draws on the tradition of bold typographic poster design: oversized type, duotone portraiture, textured paper background, vertical body text. The visual language is inspired by several specific traditions. The typographic dominance and high contrast palette reference the Swiss International Typographic Style of the 1950s and 60s, where type becomes image and communication is stripped to its most direct form. This directness works well in a poster but specifically for this target audience (the students). It builds on urgency and demands attention. The duotone colour palette and textured paper ground reference risograph and zine culture, independent, tactile, 1980s underground. The directness of address and the high chroma pink and blue speak the visual language of contemporary streetwear and music poster design, a register Year 9/10 students recognise immediately. There is no politeness, no asking, just strong stating and in that unapologetic statement a worked example in claiming your voice.

Every design decision is an argument for the subject: the hierarchy shows intentional communication, the contrast shows visual literacy, the concept shows design thinking. As Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) argue, visual composition is itself a grammar, a system of meaning-making that operates independently of words. Content descriptors VCAVCD091 and VCAVCD092 are enacted rather than referenced (VCAA, 2024).

The duotone face carries the concept visually. The subject looks directly at the viewer because she is both the person being designed and the designer looking back. The colour palette contains hot pink on cream with electric blue, high contrast, urgent and contemporary. It speaks to our cultural heritage of boys blue and girls pink, stated in vivid saturated and vibrant tones. These references are the argument. The girl is blue, it's showing that it's for both boys and girls. The poster looks like something from their world because VCD is about their world. It is urgent and impossible to ignore, which I believe is what an electives night poster must do.

## **Stakeholder Awareness**

The two-part product addresses three audiences simultaneously. For students the poster is a provocation that feels personal and immediate, connecting to their lived experience of visual culture and social media. The companion page shows them where VCD leads: to VCE, university, careers in graphic design, architecture, UX, branding, interior or architecture design. For parents the

companion page makes the subject's value legible in practical terms, addressing concerns about future employment and study pathways. For school leaders there is explicit alignment to Victorian Curriculum 2.0 content descriptors and general capabilities including critical and creative thinking, communication and digital literacy demonstrates the subject's contribution to whole-school learning goals (VCAA, 2024).

## **References**

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. Routledge.

Robinson, K. (2006). Do schools kill creativity? [TED Talk]. TED Conferences. [https://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_do\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity](https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_do_schools_kill_creativity)

Steiner, R. (1996). *The education of the child*. Anthroposophic Press.

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. (2024). *Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0: Visual Communication Design*. <https://f10.vcaa.vic.edu.au/learning-areas/the-arts/visual-communication-design>

Brown, T. (2008). Design thinking. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(6), 84–92.