

Resource 7A

Visual elements response model**Key questions:**

- How do the visual elements in the text express the ideas?
- How do they represent experiences in life and/or challenge our ideas and cultural understandings?
- What makes this text distinctive/memorable/influential?

Text and image chosen: *"The Falling Man" photograph by Richard Drew, September 11, 2001*

Visual Element	What message is being conveyed by this visual element? How is it effective?
<i>Context and title</i>	The image is a "flashpoint" moment in history and one of a controversial series taken straight after the 9/11 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers. The title is literal and stark like the image. The word falling has connotations which arouse a different response to jumping and suicide
<i>Choice of image</i>	The image is of disturbing subject matter and it raises many social and cultural questions about terrorism, suicide and personal choice in death. The photo is almost a public invasion into a private moment of death and choice about how one can still control how one dies, even in a terrorist attack.
<i>Framing and editing</i>	Editing has created a particular frame with the image of the man at the centre. The horrific context of the photo is cut out and this challenges the viewer to imagine it. The shot appears perfectly arranged and suggests a much larger building but not the destruction, with the focus on the subject – the man.
<i>Positioning and composition</i>	The man's body appears relaxed and the posture quite straight with one leg bent gracefully. The man's posture paradoxically suggests peacefulness about his falling and impending death. He is in perfect alignment with the vertical lines of the building and the composition is visually balanced and appealing in its construction; ironically, this belies context and ideas.
<i>Light and contrast</i>	The light and reflections on the building allow a halo effect to be seen around the man reinforcing that to fall was a better choice about how to die rather than burning to death.
<i>Symbolism</i>	The contrast of the light and dark in the background can be read as symbolic. The darkness suggests the evil of the event and yet the lightness hints at the peaceful last moments before death. This also highlights the moral issues raised by the man's choice to jump and not burn to death, as well as the newspapers' decision to publish such a photo.
<i>Personal response</i>	Answer dot points 2 and 3 at the top of the page.