My piece of writing aims to describe and experience and recreate the atmosphere to share with the reader. The use of present tense and the way the writing addresses the reader helps to achieve this over the whole piece, involving the reader and letting them see things while they happen rather than as they happened to someone else. Other techniques I tried to incorporate include the use of different similes and metaphors, long sentences piling up lots of things going on around the reader, to create an atmosphere of hustle and bustle and not being able to soak up everything that's going on around you. Small amounts of dialogue are used, and this also helps create this feeling, adding more things floating in the reader's mind as well as colourful and descriptive language which I tried to use to the best of my ability. I tried to use a range of different words to describe what the people were doing—things such as squealing, smiling, hugging, chatting, laughing, and this was quite a challenge at some points because these things were going on quite a lot of the time, so I had to try and set similar scenes with different words.

This was one thing I have progressed with as a writer through this exercise, especially because this branch of writing was quite new to me. In the past I had briefly described the actions and emotions of a moment and moved on to finish telling a whole story, whereas in this exercise I was able to focus on capturing a moment in time and really write in detail about it, painting a much more evocative picture. I also became more confident with some of my writing techniques, using more similes and metaphors than I had before, as well as being more confident in the way I built my sentences—especially the ones designed to overwhelm the reader with lots of things happening all at once.

Another major progression in my writing which has been helped by this task is my ability to edit and polish a piece. Previously I had simply written and continued writing unsure of how to make any real changes. This life writing, being only short, allowed me to focus a lot more on details and make a lot more necessary and worthwhile changes.

I think this piece does achieve the purpose I meant it to, really sinking the reader into the moment and sharing with them the small sound, feel and overall sense of the atmosphere of the time and more.
Grade Commentary

Kendall has demonstrated a high level of competence in composing and evaluating a personal reflection. The response is fluent, well-structured and coherent with a strong sense of personal engagement. There is evidence of a clear understanding of audience, form and purpose, and of the effects of language choices. Comments on tense, simile, metaphor, dialogue and imagery have been made but there is no direct reference to the selected piece of writing. Kendall has demonstrated insight into the writing process by identifying personal strengths and weaknesses, and by suggesting areas for further development.

Kendall’s response demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at grade B standard at the end of Stage 4.

Farewell Year Six

Imagine your fancy heels clacking on the familiar footpath. It feels different this time no matter how many times you’ve walked this way before. Now it’s your last time—make it special. The feeling of anticipation is a strange drug you didn’t mean to swallow and now everything’s spinning out of control—the butterflies in your stomach have been replaced by something that thumps much harder.

Suddenly you’re overwhelmed by a tidal wave of people; faces you recognise, and some you don’t, all hugging and admiring each other’s outfits for the night. ‘Is that a wig you’re wearing? Where’d you get that skirt? I love your shoes!’ All the familiar voices sound strangely foreign as you struggle to focus, trying to soak up everything like a sponge, trying to collect as many memories as you can while you’ve got the chance.

And although everyone’s smiling and squealing you know they can sense it too— that hint of sadness hanging in the air, masked by the aromas of perfume and party-food.

Loud music starts inside the hall, and the cameras keep flashing everywhere like stars twinkling in the now fading light. Around you are all the people you’ve grown up with; the people you’re going to miss so much from now on. More cameras are pulled out. ‘Try standing over near that tree. All put your arms around each other. Perfect.’ Flash.

Then you’re all called inside and the night really begins. There’s singing and dancing and food and drink and a huge cake and the constant buzz of people chatting and laughing... But it goes by like a bullet from a gun—it’s over before you really knew it had started, and you can’t shake the feeling of disbelief lodged stubbornly somewhere in you.

‘Goodbye! I’ll miss you so much! Good luck at high school.’ Everyone’s leaving now, making their way out of the dark school grounds in dribs and drabs. The remains of the party are still left littering the ground, all provoking different memories of the night. Soon you’re exchanging hugs and goodbyes yourself and walking away, despite everything that’s telling you to stay here, where you feel safe and secure. It’s exciting, looking forward to some big changes, but sometimes you just wish things could stay the same.