

391/01

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

ELang1: Using Language

A.M. FRIDAY, 25 May 2007

(1½ Hours)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need an 8 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer **both parts** of the question: **(a)** and **(b)** .

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Marks for this unit are divided equally between **(a)** and **(b)**.

In this unit you will be assessed on your ability to:

- communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to the study of language, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression;
- demonstrate expertise and accuracy in writing for a variety of specific purposes and audiences, drawing on knowledge of linguistic features to explain and comment on choices made;
- know and use key features of frameworks for the systematic study of spoken and written English.

Remember that marking will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answers.

Complete tasks (a) and (b). Each counts for half of the total marks for this unit.

The subject of this unit is **young people's involvement in local politics**.

Read the extracts on pages 3, 4 and 5.

Texts X and Y are about 'Political Speed Dating', which is designed to involve young people in local politics by encouraging them to ask questions of their local councillors in a short space of time. (Local councillors are politicians elected to sit on a council serving a particular community.)

Text Z is an article from a website, which discusses why it is important to involve young people in local decision-making.

Then, using this information, complete the **two** tasks which follow.

Tasks

- (a) Every year local councils are keen to get more young people involved in the decision-making processes at local government level. Some councillors are taking roadshows into local schools and colleges. Young people are given the opportunity to put councillors to the test in a political speed dating event at these roadshows.

Imagine that your school or college has just hosted a roadshow which included a political speed dating event. A reporter from a local radio station was also present at the event and interviewed both students and councillors, asking for their experiences and reactions to the political speed dating event. Using the information from **Texts X, Y and Z**, write the text from part of the interview that would be transmitted by the local radio station.

Write the text from part of the interview in at least 300 words.

- You must use conventional spelling and punctuation as opposed to transcription conventions.
 - Make use of relevant information from pages 3, 4 and 5.
 - Adopt an appropriate spoken tenor (register).
 - Make sensible use of the material in formulating suitable questions and responses that would focus on the success (or not) of the event as well as on individual experiences.
 - Include some focus on young people's views on topical issues.
 - Use your own words as far as possible.
 - Remember to make your language choices appropriate for discourse between a reporter, young people and local councillors.
- (b) **When you have completed task (a), write about the language you have used (approximately 400 words).**

Drawing on your knowledge of language frameworks and linguistic features, you should explain and comment on the language choices you have made. Comment particularly on your use of spoken language features and how you have made your choices of language appropriate for the specified situation.

TEXT X**Political speed-dating for councillors and young people**

'Political Speed Dating' events are fun ways for young people to meet councillors and find out more about the role they play in the community and how they can represent young people's rights and views at the local level.

The idea behind it is that councillors are put to the test by young people in a unique political event. 'Speed dating' rules apply so young people and councillors have a limited amount of time to get to know about each other's roles and opinions. This is a lighthearted way to bridge the gap between young people and councillors. Councils can even run the event on Valentine's Day to capitalise on the 'Date' theme.

As the compère does his thing and the band play background music, young people should be grilling the councillors to find out who is most in tune with them and their needs. In turn, the councillors will be setting out a fast and furious 'canvassing' campaign that lasts just two minutes each in the hope that they will win the most votes before the young people move onto the next 'election' candidate. It will be the shortest election canvassing event ever!

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TEXT Y**Do It Yourself Political Speed Dating**

DIY Political Speed Dating is a fun and lighthearted way for people to interact with their representatives. Like conventional Speed Dating, each session consists of a series of 3 minute 'Dates' (or interactions). During this time you can ask your partner anything except their age, party affiliation and place of residence. The idea is to focus on what the person is really like. When the gong sounds, regardless of how engrossing the conversation, you move on.

Hosting

The event is hosted by the self-proclaimed popstar Big 'D' Mocracy who will explain exactly how Political Speed Dating works. No matter how many people are involved in organising your political speed dating event, one person needs to be nominated to co-ordinate the participants on the day.

The Event

As people arrive, have music playing and refreshments available.

1. Big 'D' Mocracy introduces himself and the concept of Political Speed Dating. When instructed, the nominated co-ordinator should give a sticker to every Councillor and a scorecard and pencil to each young person to rate their interviews.
2. Big 'D' leads the group in some team-building exercises. He then explains the rules for Political Speed Dating.
3. When the gong sounds, the action begins. Backing music plays and, every 3 minutes, Big 'D' hits the gong and everyone moves on rapidly to their next 'Date'.

Political Speed Dating Copyright Solent People's Theatre 2004

TEXT Z (from a website)**Involving young people in local decision-making**

A study by the Institute for Public Policy Research explored the ways of enhancing young people's involvement in decision-making. It found:

- Focus groups of young people revealed a genuine enthusiasm for playing a part in certain aspects of decision-making processes, particularly at the local level. Common issues of concern included crime, personal safety, education, facilities for young people, the environment and housing.
- Ninety per cent of councils responding to the project survey stated that involving young people was important to their authority and that they had increased the amount of work they had done to involve young people over the past four years. However, less than one in three evaluated the impact of initiatives.
- Reasons for involving young people included: gaining information on young people's views and improving service delivery; empowering young people and giving them a voice; and giving young people a chance to develop their skills.
- More than 8 out of 10 councils said that increasing young people's awareness of local government was an important reason for involving young people. Interviews found that officers and members were concerned that young people lacked an understanding of the relevance of local government to their lives. In addition, there was widespread anxiety about the low levels of voting among young people at local elections.
- Interviewees stated that involving young people in the democratic process is a rewarding and positive experience for both young people and local authorities. Public involvement can be empowering, especially for traditionally excluded young people, and can promote feelings of inclusiveness in society.

Why involve young people?

The need to engage young people is clear. In the 2001 general election the overall turnout of 59 per cent was the lowest recorded figure since 1918. Voting among young people was lower still. Estimates suggest that turnout fell to approximately 39 per cent among 18- to 24-year-olds (The Electoral Commission, 2001). There is also evidence that young people are not likely to get more interested in voting as they get older (British Social Attitudes 16th Report, 1999).

Local election results make for equally depressing reading. But it is at the local level that issues such as crime, housing and education can feel more real and relevant for young people. One young person included in the research said of local government:

“It affects us more directly, it's where we are”.

The word 'Politics' may have negative associations for young people but the research shows that this does not make them apathetic. Common issues of concern include crime, personal safety, education, facilities for young people, the environment and housing. Young people may feel disconnected from political debate and decision-making but they are interested in a wide range of political issues. There is genuine enthusiasm for playing a part in decision-making.

**“Politics can be really petty ... but the decisions they make are important for the public.”
(Participant in 15- to 16-year-olds' focus group)**

The government is also clear about the need for local authorities to experiment with new ways of involving the public in service delivery and policy-making. Mainstream involvement and consultation mechanisms may not be enough to reach some groups, including young people.

What are councils currently doing?

A survey of local councils in England and Wales found a lot of commitment already to involving young people:

- Nine out of ten councils responding stated that involving young people was important.
- More than seven out of ten councils were currently working to involve young people.
- Nearly nine out of ten respondents said that the amount of work they had done to involve young people in decision-making had increased over the past four years.
- More than nine out of ten councils cited gaining information on young people's views and improving service delivery as the most important reasons for involving young people in decision-making.

‘Involving young people in local authority decision-making’, published in 2002 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Reproduced by permission of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.