

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

**ENGLISH
LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE (EMC)**

H474

For first teaching in 2015

H474/01 Summer 2023 series

Contents

Examiners' report template.....	i
Contents	2
Introduction.....	3
Paper 1 series overview	4
Question 1.....	5

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Paper 1 series overview

Paper 1 contains one question. Candidates are asked to write a comparative analysis of the ways in which language is used to convey meaning. Text A is from the OCR (EMC) Anthology; Text B is an unseen non-fiction passage and can be either originally written or spoken.

To do well, candidates need to be able to:

- use their 'seen' Anthology text to good effect, including demonstrating an understanding of the text's context, audience, and purpose
- demonstrate an understanding of the unseen text, including its context and intended audience and purpose
- use a range of frameworks accurately and to good effect to analyse both texts
- take a genuinely and consistently comparative approach, allowing the texts to shed light on each other.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made consistent and meaningful AO4 comparisons which had clearly been planned with care • took AO4 approaches which enabled analysis rather than description and/or narrative. • balanced comment across both texts • balanced AO2 and AO3 comments and linkages approximately equally: in responses at the top end of the mark scheme, these comments were integrated and often conceptual • began comparison and analysis quickly, keeping introductory comment brief and relevant • wrote accurately and coherently (AO1) • used a range of apt AO1 frameworks, features, and concepts to analyse both texts. In responses at the top end of the mark scheme, the features identified and analysed tended to be less accessible (e.g., parenthetical comment, 'you' as a generic/ impersonal pronoun but with inclusive undertones, sentence-initial positioning, asyndeton, Face-Work). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not balance AO2 and AO3 comment, tending more to AO3 description of mode/generic features rather than balancing this with analysis of how language is used to convey meaning (AO2) • offered long pieces of biographical context (AO3) but without linking this to the texts and the creation of meaning • dealt with the two texts separately, with only token references to comparison (AO4) • used frameworks, features, and concepts that were not apt for the quotations chosen for analysis (AO1) • wrote extended descriptive/biographical introductions with surface comment on mode differences and/or returned the wording of the question and contextual information on the texts • wrote with less coherence and accuracy (AO1) • tended to write responses which were less clearly planned and structured • used more accessible frameworks, features, and concepts (AO1). In responses at the lower end of the mark scheme, there was sometimes little evidence of A Level study.

Question 1

Read the **two** text extracts and **answer the question**.

Text A from the anthology is a transcript from an extract of a British daytime television talk-show where *Great British Bake Off* winner Nadiya Hussain is being interviewed by *This Morning* hosts Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby ahead of the release of a new TV show and cookbook.

Text B is from a website called *But Why Tho?* This site is dedicated to sharing opinions and reviews of new video games, comics, film, television, and books. This extract is a review of *Great British Bake Off* winner Nadiya Hussain's recent television baking series on Netflix called *Nadiya Bakes*.

- 1 Carefully read the **two** texts and compare the ways in which the speakers in **Text A** and the writer in **Text B** use language to convey meaning.

In your answer you should analyse the impact that the different contexts have on language use, including for example, mode, purpose and audience. **[32]**

As with previous series, most candidate responses began with an introductory overview of both texts, outlining key contextual factors. In stronger responses, these were succinct and relevant but in less secure responses, some candidates disadvantaged themselves by taking a long time to begin their analysis, offering extended descriptive comment on mode or biographical/contextual factors about the interlocutors in/viewers of Text A. This type of comment is unlikely to gain much credit in relation to the Assessment Objectives.

Some candidates used their opening paragraph as a type of thesis to outline their key comparative points. It was clear that this approach had often helped candidates to structure their responses in ways which genuinely allowed the texts to shed light on each other.

Many candidates commented on the texts' promotional purposes. In responses at the upper end of the mark scheme, candidates linked this purpose to Nadiya Hussain's personality, commenting on her warmth and relatability and how this is conveyed by Nadiya herself in Text A and reflected on by Swara Salih in Text B.

Many candidates commented insightfully on the issues raised in both texts around cultural identity, diaspora, family, and belonging. In stronger responses, candidates often made perceptive comments on how this is problematised both by Nadiya herself and by Swara Salih in her comment about cultural erasure. At the top end, candidates also picked up on the sense of Nadiya's work being 'meaningful/for purpose' and explored what this could mean.

Issues around mental health and representation were also identified in many responses, with candidates making insightful comments on social stigma and Nadiya's tenacity, resilience, and path to success (as outlined in Text B).

The spoken mode nature of Text A gave candidates scope to comment on spoken discourse features and concepts. Candidates picked up on non-fluency features and some made meaningful links to Nadiya's nervousness or emotion in discussing sensitive issues (mental health/family) or Phillip Schofield's real or affected non-fluency to suggest his amazement at the book's quality.

Many candidates made good use of theory, including Goffman, Leech, Grice, and Brown and Levinson. Some candidates perceptively foregrounded the roles of the three interlocutors and the fact that speaker dominance and topic shifts are managed purposefully in the time-sensitive context of a chat show.

Some candidates attempted to apply and evaluate gender theory. When successful, this was linked to the interlocutors' personas and the promotional and informative purposes of the segment in relation to the viewer demographic.

Candidates made broad comparative points about the spoken versus written mode natures of the texts. Those that did subsequently focused in on this by commenting, for example, on the highly crafted nature of Text B's praise for Nadiya, including the use of metaphor and the lapses into colloquialism, and compared this with Phillip Schofield's simpler, more spontaneous approbation and the techniques used to convey this in Text A.

As with previous series, some candidates chose to write an overview concluding paragraph. While this may have functioned as a 'check' for coverage of key points, unless the paragraph introduces and explores a new connection or analytical point, it is unlikely to be given much credit against the Assessment Objectives. Candidates would be better advised to use this time at the start of the exam, planning carefully to make sure their response is meaningfully comparative and covers a range of features and comment against all the Assessment Objectives.

Connections and Comparisons (AO4)

Successful candidates tended to address at least three or four different comparisons in turn. Comparisons were successfully made based on thematic and contextual points as well as on concepts and methods. Well-structured responses tended to use concise topic sentences to introduce a comparison before exploring it.

In the planning of stronger responses, it was often clear that the candidate had comparison as a priority to which they then fitted concepts and methods, rather than 'retrofitting' comparison to features of the texts they had already selected for comment.

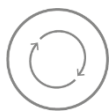
Successful comparative points included: the promotional nature of elements of the texts, representation of different facets of Nadiya's personality (represented and self-represented), the manipulation of syntax to foreground key ideas, cultural identity and belonging, and the use of metaphor. Some candidates made very perceptive comments on the contrast/progression between the vulnerability and unassuming nature of Nadiya's self-presentation in Text A, and her presentation as a master of her craft and respected teacher in Text B.

Less successful responses made comparisons which were not based on concepts and methods from literary or linguistic study, such as identifying that both texts focus on Hussain or that both deal with similar themes of cooking and culture, but without then exploring how language is used to convey this meaning.

The nature of the text pairing this series meant that many of the less successful responses saw candidates making broad comparative comments based on mode, but with little reference to how meaning is conveyed (e.g. 'Text A is spoken and Text B is written. We can tell this because Text A has non-fluency features like false starts and Text B has a mix of long and short sentences which show it was planned out').

Less successful responses made comparisons before moving on to a different point and not exploring the comparison made. In some scripts, candidates were nearing the end of the response before remembering to make a comparative link. In these scripts, the comparison was often neither genuine nor meaningful.

OCR support



The OCR Teacher Guide for the Anthology gives potential foil texts for the Anthology texts. These could be used as practice unseen paired texts to help candidates to plan meaningful AO4 connections, perhaps in timed conditions.

[OCR Teacher Guide for the Anthology](#)

Concepts, methods, and terminology (AO1)

The spoken mode nature of Text A enabled candidates to apply a range of terms from the spoken discourse framework and most candidates applied these aptly. In some responses, the features were listed (e.g., false start, repair, backchannelling) but not clearly quoted, so it was difficult to credit the accuracy of identification. This was also true of other identification of features, with candidates commenting, for example, on the use of verbs in Text B but then quoting a whole phrase or sentence without making the precise example clear. In cases where longer quotations are used, precise identification can be made clear by underlining the specific referent(s) therein.

Successful responses discussed features and concepts from a range of different language levels: lexico-semantics, syntax, discourse, pragmatics, phonology, and grammar as well as figurative language and rhetoric. In some responses, concepts and theory such as Grice's Maxims, Leech's Politeness Maxims and Goffman's Face-Work as well as comments on power/dominance were used successfully. Less successful comparative points attempted to apply these theories and concepts to Text B but without recognition of their very different modes and contexts. There was also some application of rhetoric to Text A with false starts, for example, being described as anaphora. This tended to demonstrate the candidate's less secure grasp of contexts of production.

Some candidates commented on gender theory in relation to Text A. In some responses, this was handled well, with comment on Schofield's use of compliments, for example, used to evaluate Janet Holmes' work on positive politeness strategies, or Holly Willoughby's 'Good for you' utterance used to comment on speaker support and positive politeness. Subtler comment acknowledged the different contextual roles of the interlocutors in terms of speaker dominance, holding the floor, and topic management.

Some candidates used terminology consistently, but on a word level, identifying parts of speech such as nouns, verbs and adjectives. Responses in the lower levels of the mark scheme used few (or no) concepts or methods beyond those taught at GCSE. There was the frequent use of 'lexis'/'lexeme' when candidates could not identify word class. There was also comment on semantic fields, but often used vaguely or imprecisely - for example, a semantic field of 'positivity'.

Some candidates commented very perceptively and conceptually on personalities, projected personas, and audience positioning. This type of comment, when made successfully, tended to be seen in responses at the very top levels and was indicative of a deeper understanding of the public nature and purposes of both texts.

Stronger responses used a range of relevant concepts and methods to allow the texts to shed light on each other. Some examples of more nuanced identification of concepts and methods included:

- the use of cataphoric reference in the pronoun 'it' in the first line of Text B to suggest Nadiya's continued success and the positioning of the target audience as already familiar with her endeavours

- the use of the inclusive first person plural pronoun 'us' in Text A, 'It was invented for us' to foreground affiliation and belonging
- the parenthetical relative clause in Text B '(who tend to be white)' to comment on cultural erasure
- the use of 'you' as a generic/impersonal pronoun in both texts and the different ways this is used to position the viewer/reader.

Understanding of the significance and influence of contexts (AO3)

As with previous series, there was a marked difference between responses which demonstrated contextual 'awareness' (Levels 1-3) and those which demonstrated 'understanding' (Levels 4-6). In the former cases, responses tended to devote many words on varying degrees of planning and spontaneity in the texts, but without referencing the significance and influence of these modal differences. There was often, too, extensive description of audience and purpose for both texts, but without textual exemplification and links to the significance and influence of these contexts.

Most candidates had a good understanding that Text A was at least partly spontaneous, and Text B wholly crafted and planned. The extent to which candidates were able demonstrate understanding versus awareness of the significance and influence of these contextual considerations was a discriminating factor in the levels of attainment.

Most candidates identified the promotional purposes in both texts, but less successful responses tended to consider this in isolation, whereas stronger responses recognised other considerations and aims that were also in play. These included: raising cultural awareness and recognition; awareness about mental health; presenting Nadiya as a warm and relatable person as well as a chef; inspiring others who might be experiencing difficulties.

In terms of audience, stronger responses tended to recognise the broader nature of the target audience for Text A and the more specialised nature of the audience for Text B and explored how this is reflected in the language used. Many candidates recognised the more informal nature of Text A, but often overstated the formality of Text B. Stronger responses on Text B commented on the non-standard use of sentence-initial conjunctions, for example, or the sudden switch to the first person, or the colloquial use of the adjective 'top-notch'.

There was some subtle and perceptive commentary on representations of cultural awareness and cultural identity across both texts, with candidates commenting on the fact that many of the viewers and readers would relate to the issues raised around belonging and cultural erasure, particularly the younger target audience for Text B.

Analysis of ways meanings are shaped (AO2)

Stronger responses quoted aptly and extracted much meaning from their well-evidenced points. At the top end of the mark range, AO2 and AO3 points were used symbiotically to allow the texts to shed light on each other.

Some of the stronger AO2 links included:

- In Text A, Nadiya's use of the metaphorical prepositional phrase (AO1) 'on the other side of fear' to foreground the fact that she has overcome significant challenges and is enjoying the fruits of this (AO2). Some candidates then linked this to Nadiya's purpose to offer encouragement to viewers who might also be experiencing similar challenges (AO3).
- In Text B, the use of polysyndeton (AO1) to indicate the abundance and range of recipes on offer (AO2), 'From her coconut and mango cake to her tutti-frutti meringue, to blueberry scone pizza and Lebanese diamond deserts [*sic*]'. Some candidates then linked this to Text B's promotional overtones, with the purpose to persuade the reader to watch the series (AO3).
- In Text A, Nadiya's use of incomplete utterances and the repetition of the coordinating conjunction 'and' at the beginning of successive clauses, which indicate her eagerness to convey her experiences with panic disorder to her immediate and secondary audiences (AO2), but perhaps also her nervousness and her relative inexperience of being in the public eye (AO3).
- In Text B, the use of language to foreground the accessibility of Nadiya's recipes, including the adjective 'accessible' and the negated idiom '[...] it never feels out of grasp' (AO2). This also supports the promotional purpose of the piece, providing reassurance to novice bakers that this series will not be too advanced for them (AO3).

Exemplar 1

Text A has ~~it~~ begins with a personal account into her life and then explores the ~~suggestion~~ idea of culture, whilst the structure of Text B predominantly focuses on cooking. Text A puts emphasis on culture and how Hurray sees her British culture through the use of hypophora 'What is British cuisine?'. This is significant as she expresses a question that the audience may too wonder of the answer and therefore explores how she depicts British culture to be, she considers herself being 'a part of lots of different worlds'. Therefore the informative

to be ~~is~~ reinforced as it deliberately focuses
 on the vastness of being British and Muslim
~~but~~ reinforces a personal tone through the
 emotive language 'we get to say we've seen
 the England that they've never seen' when
 exploring her opportunity that her ancestors have
 not experienced. This reinforces why it is so
 significant for her to educate an English/British
 audience of the culture of South Asia as
 many remain unaware of its traditions. Hussain
 also uses inclusive pronouns 'us' to highlight
 the romantic field of unity that is so
 clear throughout. In Text B, the writer
 also reinforces this romantic field of unity
 with the pronoun 'everyone' as the purpose
 is not to separate communities but instead
 embrace their differences and use them to
 come together as one to celebrate the beauty
 of different cultures. The writer also uses
 yndetic listing 'cardamom, turmeric, and tahini'
 as well as 'multi-fruit meringue, to blueberry
 stone pizza and Lebanese diamond desserts' to

bring the audience's shared passions to reinforce inclusiveness through the celebration of different cultures. The listing suggests that anyone can embrace different cultures and this is significant in promoting a multi-cultural and joyful society.

This is a rather longer comparison than most, but the candidate makes multiple meaningful links, both to meaning (AO2) and to contexts (AO3) as well as between the texts (AO4). The real AO4 comparative point is made in the medial movement between the texts, with a focus on the theme of unity and inclusion.

This is an example of a response which makes integrated comment on how meaning is conveyed as well as on contexts of production and reception. The candidate uses several apt and well-evidenced AO1 descriptors, tying these to both meaning and contexts.

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