

General Certificate of Education  
January 2008  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE (SPECIFICATION A)**  
**Unit 2 Using Language**

**EA2W**

Friday 18 January 2008 9.00 am to 11.00 am

**For this paper you must have:**

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours

**Instructions**

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is EA2W.
- There are **three** sections:
  - Section A:** Language Analysis
  - Section B:** Language Production
  - Section C:** Commentary on Language Production
- Answer all three questions.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 120.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**Advice**

- It is recommended that you spend 20 minutes studying and preparing the source materials for the Language Analysis and Language Production tasks.

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**SECTION A – Language Analysis**

Answer Question 1.

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**1 Text A**, which you will find on pages 4 and 5, is the introduction to a series of feature articles about robots in *New Scientist*, 4 February 2006.

- Comment linguistically on the significant features of the text.
- Explain how these language features contribute to the text's meanings.

In your answer you should consider:

vocabulary and meanings

grammatical features, including sentence functions, types and structures, and their effects

how the article presents developments in robot design.

(30 marks)

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**Text A for use in Section A – Language Analysis**

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**SECTION B – Language Production**

Answer Question 2.

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- 2** Write an article for *New Scientist* magazine discussing the recent decline of the urban sparrow population in England. You should cover different explanations for this decline in a lively, well-structured and informative way. Write between 400 and 500 words.

In your answer you should draw on the ideas contained in **Texts B, C and D**, which you will find on pages 7, 8 and 9. You will need to select appropriate ideas and adapt the way they are expressed to suit your audience and purposes.

*(60 marks)*

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**SECTION C – Commentary on Language Production**

Answer Question 3.

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- 3** Explain the linguistic devices you have used to make your article suitable for your audience and purposes. Use examples to illustrate your points and provide reasons for your linguistic choices.

*(30 marks)*

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**Texts B, C and D for use in Section B – Language Production**

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**Text B** is taken from an article by Mark Townsend in *The Observer*, January 12, 2003.

**Text C** is an extract from a 2006 website article on sparrows by Donald Lyven.

**Text D** is from a letter written to Donald Lyven by J. Denis Summers-Smith, a leading authority on sparrows.

**Text B**

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## Text C

### Welcome to the Sparrows Need Hedges Website

#### A site devoted to the plight of British urban and suburban House Sparrows

**This website was created in reaction to the don't care, won't care attitude of much of our media on the subject of UK House Sparrow decline.**

**Most house sparrow** nest sites have been destroyed deliberately or eradicated during roof repairs or renewal. Estate agents and property surveyors insist birds' nests are removed from houses. Sadly, many people do not like having house sparrows nesting in their roof and are happy to see them gone; their incessant chirruping is either loved or hated. Sparrows thrive where roofs have holes, where cover is available and there are places to search and find food, and they like to be left alone. Hedges and ivy also give the house sparrow a chance to find suitable accommodation if they have been evicted by yet another thoughtless homeowner.

**In my opinion**, the rapid changes in our urban & suburban environment have caused house sparrows to disappear from many of our towns and cities. The removal of hedges and front gardens for car parking has eradicated the cover used by most of our sparrows as an important part of their habitat requirements.

**While many interesting** ideas have been put forward about sparrow decline, by those who are actively studying the problem, sparrow loss is continuing apace because critical time is being wasted looking for a mystery cause that does not exist.

**It's really strange** that while all over the world, endangered animal species are facing extinction because their habitat is under threat from mankind, the humble British house sparrow is oddly perceived as not affected by local habitat destruction – but by a mysterious cause! – Something new we have added, rather than what we have taken away.

**Instead, we have** intriguing theories put forward like sparrowhawks, magpies, cats, tidy gardens, mobile phone masts and the volatile compounds in unleaded petrol affecting insects, as possible reasons for sparrow decline. Journalists and concerned organisations habitually list these familiar possible reasons whenever a new idea is suggested.

**People have always** tidied their gardens; magpies, sparrowhawks and cats have always been with us, and as for phone masts, these are purely coincidental with the era we live in. It would be better to study the increasing widespread use of pest and weed-killers in people's gardens, now that these unnecessary products are absurdly peddled by greedy multinational chemical companies and sold without restraint by supermarkets alongside their groceries.

**The concern about** unleaded petrol needs to be further studied, considering that in America, the fumes from petrol pumps are extracted away, and not allowed to escape into the atmosphere, protecting their customers from the potential carcinogenic effects of benzene. Curiously in this country, this hazard is conveniently ignored by the petrol industry.

**I hope after** you read my various essays on the important close links I've observed between my local sparrows and hedges, you will appreciate why I believe most urban and suburban house sparrows prefer to live where all the factors important to their needs are immediately available. I suggest hedges are the key element in this, providing the vital protective cover they require, including linking nest site with food supply.

**Destroy the hedges** and the sparrow colony they support will inevitably disappear, most probably dying out if they cannot relocate to a similar environment promptly.

Source: [www.sparrowsneedhedges.com](http://www.sparrowsneedhedges.com)



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**Text D**

Dear Mr Lyven,

I find your argument interesting, though I do not agree with it. I have been studying House Sparrows since 1948 and am still unable to define a 'House Sparrow Habitat'. You assert that 'hedges' are a necessary component of this habitat, but that is not my experience.

The House Sparrow is a tough and resourceful bird; it takes more than the absence of a few hedges to prevent it colonising an area. In my view we have to look further than loss of hedges to account for its decline in our cities. I do not think that hedges are an essential part of its habitat, though that is not to say that hedges are not a valuable addition to the habitat; House Sparrows, as you say, make much use of them, if they are there, as a safe refuge, and possibly also a source of food, but they are not essential.

Even if it were established that urban sparrows could be saved by reverting from using our front gardens as car parks and turning them into suitable habitats, there is no guarantee which way the vote would go if this was put to the general public. I suspect a lot of people would rather have convenient car parks than sparrows.

Now let me come to my ideas about the reasons for urban House Sparrow decline. I think this is complicated by a number of factors rather than there being one simple cause. My view is that the basic underlying factor is lack of invertebrate food on which the adults depend to rear the young.

There is some good evidence to support this view: Simon Bower showed that failures of 1st broods in Hamburg in 1999 coincided with lack of insects; Kate Vincent in Leicester found that the poor success of late broods was associated with the absence of aphids; the BTO has shown from an analysis of nest record cards that the average number of chicks reared per brood has fallen from 3.5 in 1980 to 2.5 in 2003 (a decrease of almost 30%!). Breeding success has been evolved over a long period in balance with losses by disease, predation, etc. The fact that predation has increased (more Sparrowhawks and cats in cities) must have some significance when viewed in the light of this fall in breeding success. House Sparrows have been gradually adapting themselves to man and his environment for the 10,000 years in which they have been associated. There is a real problem in that the current rate of change in this environment is so rapid that it may well be beyond the capacity of the House Sparrow to keep pace.

Again, let me apologise for having gone to such lengths, but I have done this because I think what you have been doing – providing actual observations from the field – is valuable.

Keep the flag flying!

Regards  
J Denis Summers-Smith

Source: [www.sparrowsneedhedges.com](http://www.sparrowsneedhedges.com)

**END OF TEXTS**

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