

Principal Examiner Report

July 2011

FS English Reading Level 2

E202

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General comments

The paper allowed learners to access the full range of marks. However, key areas of difficulty for learners continue to rest in the following areas:

- Identifying the purpose of texts (Q1 and Q7)
- Identifying of bias or techniques used to influence the reader (Q6)
- Describing how features of a text have been used to convey meaning (Q8).

It is recommended that centres focus their teaching for future series on these key areas by exposing learners to a wide range of different texts and exploring audience, purpose, bias and features used to convey meaning. Learners also need to carefully read and understand the wording of each question rather than assuming they know exactly what is being asked for.

Question 1

A few learners gave generic responses such as 'to inform' or 'to persuade'. These generic responses were not awarded marks. However, it is encouraging to note that this type of response tended to appear less often than in previous series. In this paper, a significant number of learners lost marks by failing to identify that the text was providing information specifically about Pass Plus courses or advanced driver training for less experienced motorists. Many learners did not look beyond the title of the text and defined the purpose simply in terms of 'slashing insurance costs'. Although insurance costs are a key theme in the text, the article does have a clear focus on the benefits of Pass Plus training.

Advice for centres

Centres need to encourage learners to read texts closely in order to define accurately the **main** purpose of the text. This should be described in conjunction with an appropriate verb or qualifying phrase.

Question 2

The vast majority of learners are able to accurately read and extract the information required to answer this multiple choice question correctly.

Question 3

Once again this multiple choice question appeared to pose few problems for learners within this series, with the vast majority of learners accessing the text correctly in order to gain the mark.

Question 4

This question appeared to pose few problems for learners, with the majority of learners able to gain both marks. The most common correct answers referred to drivers lacking experience of driving in rush hour traffic or after dark.

Question 5

This question was answered very well in this series. Most learners were able to access at least two of the three available marks and many learners gained full marks. This indicates that learners are becoming increasingly confident at identifying the difference between fact and opinion.

Question 6

The format of this question was slightly different in this exam series in that learners were asked to identify a **way** the writer had attempted to influence the reader and then provide a **supporting example** from the text. The majority of learners attempted this successfully and many were able to gain both available marks. The most common correct answers tended to focus on the use of statistics for the 'way' part of the question. This was then followed by an appropriate quote from the text. Some learners also identified techniques such as use of emotive language and were able to provide good examples within the text to support this. However, a significant proportion of learners misinterpreted the question and simply gave two quotes / points taken from the text.

Advice for centres

Centres should ensure learners understand what is expected in response to the wording of particular questions. In particular learners should understand whether a question is looking for techniques, or '**ways**', employed by the writer or **examples** of bias from the text. In this case they were asked to look for both and to ensure they were linked.

Question 7

This question was generally answered better than question one; with most learners identifying that the purpose of the text was to inform learners about changes to the practical driving test. Some learners lost marks by simply not being specific enough. For example, responses such as 'to inform about independent driving' were not awarded a mark as they did not mention the fact the changes related to driving tests.

Advice for centres

Although learners are not required to give answers in full sentences, they should ensure they provide sufficient information to fully encapsulate the main purpose of the text, whilst using a verb or indicative phrase.

Question 8

This question caused difficulties for many learners with relatively few able to access the maximum three marks. A significant proportion were able to gain one or two marks by identifying features such as use of sub-headings to structure information or use of bold for the title, sub-headings or within the first sentence. This question specifically asked for **layout** features so marks were not awarded for **language** features, such as use of personal tone or personal pronouns. Many learners identified the use of an image but failed to gain the mark by relating this to how it had been used in the text. Responses such as 'use of paragraphs' did not gain marks as they were too generic. A small number proportion of learners completely misinterpreted the question and gave responses which simply described or summarised points made in the text itself.

Advice to centres

Centres should ensure learners are familiar with the wording of this type of question and that they understand terms such as 'features' and 'convey'. Learners also need to understand the difference between layout features of a text, which refer to how a text is formatted or laid out and language features, which refer to the impact of different choices for words or phrases. At this level marks are not awarded for responses such as 'use of bold' as learners need to identify how and where bold has been used within the text. Similarly, where images are used as features within texts, learners are expected to show an understanding of why the image is relevant. For example in this paper, by referring to the fact the image showed a person taking a driving test.

Question 9

This question posed few difficulties for most learners, with the majority gaining the two available marks. Where learners failed to gain marks it tended to be as a result of careless errors, such as referring to 'traffic lights' rather than 'traffic signs'.

Question 10

This question was misinterpreted by a significant proportion of learners. The correct response should have been quite straightforward to extract from the first sentence in the last paragraph of Text B. However, some learners appeared to be using their own assumptions to explain why the changes to the test had been introduced.

Advice to centres

This type of question is asking the learner to extract information directly from the text. Answers should therefore be explicitly rooted in the text, although learners can express these in their own words.

Question 11

This question was answered well in most cases, with many learners gaining all three available marks and few learners failing to gain any marks. Some learners lost marks by repeating the same point, especially the point about not being penalised for going off route during the driving test.

Advice to centres

Learners should be encouraged to find three different responses that utilise the information in the text to answer the question.

Question 12 and 13

These questions presented few difficulties for learners with the vast majority able to gain the mark for both questions.

Question 14

Although many learners were able to access two or three marks for this question, a significant proportion lost marks by giving reasons that were not unique to the advert they had selected. For example, marks were not awarded for 'offers Pass Plus' as all three adverts offered Pass Plus or advanced driver training. However, learners could gain a mark for 'offers Pass Plus at competitive prices' when selecting Hardy's School of Motoring, as particular phrase is only found in the first advert. Some learners lost marks by giving vague or incomplete reasons, for example 'free tuition' was not awarded a mark, whereas 'free tuition for theory test' was an accurate justification for choosing Street-Wise training.

Advice to centres

Centres should encourage learners to identify three points that are specific and unique to their chosen advert. Although not expected to write in complete sentences, learners need to provide enough detail to ensure they have justified their choice fully with accurate reasons which are directly rooted in the text.

Recommendations for centres

- Continue to practise identifying specific features of a text
- Revise purpose and audience of a text
- Remind learners to refer to and use the texts as directed
- Practise looking for key words in a question
- Practise 'unpicking' questions so that learners know what is being asked of them
- Remind learners that they should use a dictionary when necessary

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Pass mark for E202 in July 2011

Maximum mark	25
Pass mark	17
UMS mark	6

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