

Examiner's Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2013

Functional Skills English

Reading Level 1

E102

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E102 - Functional Skills English, Reading Level 1

General Comments

On the whole, this paper has been very successful in testing Functional Skills Level 1 Reading.

It is clearly evident that centres are preparing their learners well. The following points are intended to help centres in their preparations for future series.

The main points arising from this paper are:

1. Learners must read the questions more carefully and identify key words.
2. Learners should use the evidence in the text, rather than providing an incorrect interpretation or adding from own knowledge or experience.
3. Learners need to be explicitly taught what questions are asking them to do.
4. Although learners are advised 'You do not need to write in sentences', one (or sometimes two) word answers are not usually sufficient to gain a mark.
5. Learners continue to need more practice in identifying both layout and language features of various texts.

It is good to see that most learners are attempting all questions.

Questions 1-3

Most multiple choice questions were correctly answered. Almost all learners made their choice clear and any deleted responses or changes tended to be clearly made. Centres are encouraged to help learners devise strategies for selecting the correct answer.

Question 4

This question which asked what people needed to do to make sure that paper books continue to be printed was reasonably well answered, with most learners gaining the single mark. Some learners generalised or rephrased the question: 'as long as there is a demand;' 'to keep real books alive' or else suggested things that people should do which were incorrect: 'keep downloading from the internet' or 'save paper.'

Question 5

This question proved challenging even though it should, by now, be a familiar question. A few learners chose not to attempt any kind of response and left the answer space blank. The majority of those who gained a mark identified a 'heading' or 'title' and 'image' or 'pictures,' but a considerable number, rather than identifying actual features in the specified text, referred either to the content, to features not there or simply generalised about the text. Incorrect answers included: 'bullet points' which were not used in this particular text, 'clear and easy to read' which failed to specify what made this the case and 'facts and

statistics' which are not layout features. A small number gave two facts about paper books or two of their features. Centres are encouraged to explain to learners that they need to identify layout or language features found in the specified text.

Question 6

Most learners were awarded both marks for this question which was very well answered. Incorrect responses tended to focus on irrelevant material, to give information not in the text or else were so brief that they failed to gain the mark: 'you can sell them after reading or pass them to your children' and 'flicking' or 'nice feeling' which needed further explanation to be meaningful.

Question 7

This question was generally very well answered, with most learners gaining both marks. Incorrect answers often raised the issue of space in the house which was not in the text: 'you won't have books lying round the house' or introduced own knowledge: 'you can read in the dark without a light on.' Brevity was the reason for some loss of marks; for example, 'you can download them' and 'you can take them on holiday.' In both cases it was the ease with which this could be done which was crucial to the answer. A few omitted the electronic reader, essential to explaining 'you can save a lot of books.' The reference to being able to 'download in seconds' was in Text B. This question asked for information from Text A.

Question 8

This multiple-choice question was generally answered correctly and gained a mark for almost all learners.

Question 9

Most learners gained one or both marks for correctly identifying (A) 'use of 'Dear Dave'' and (E) 'use of 'Yours sincerely' as features that show that Text B is a letter. A small number identified only one feature.

Question 10

This question was generally well answered. Most incorrect responses either failed to state what Dave should do or reinterpreted what they thought the text said Dave should do. A few responded with comments such as 'ebooks are more environmentally friendly,' or 'they will replace paper books.' Neither of these indicates a response Dave can make. Alternatively, some actions Dave could take were not rooted in the text: 'buy an ebook.' Other answers were incomplete: 'open his eyes' - to what was unclear. This was a question which rewarded those who read it carefully and who looked through the entire text to find two appropriate answers.

Question 11

This question was generally very well answered with most learners awarded both marks. Most wrote that electronic readers were 'light and portable' and 'it stores hundreds of books.' A mark was not given for 'you can download books' unless the speed of the download was indicated. Environmental points such as 'no carbon footprint' were not rewarded as these are environmental benefits (the

focus of a different question) rather than benefits to your friend as directed by the question.

Question 12

Almost all learners gained a mark for this question by answering 'Dave doesn't like the new technology' or 'Dave doesn't like using new technology.'

Question 13

This question was generally reasonably well answered, with most learners gaining either one or two marks. The focus of the question was the environmentally damaging effects of paper books and most were able to identify the 'cutting down of trees', 'the increase in the carbon footprint' and the issue of the 'disposal of the books'. Most marks were lost because of vagueness, incomplete responses and misinterpretation of the question. Answers such as 'transportation' failed to answer the question. Transportation is only environmentally damaging because it 'increases the carbon footprint.' Similarly, 'landfill sites' failed to draw attention to the need to dispose of paper books which is the issue which is environmentally damaging. 'The cutting down of trees' is environmentally damaging whereas 'damaging trees' does not indicate felled trees and consequent environmental effects. 'Saving space' in the context of the home was not an environmentally damaging aspect of books and could not be rewarded.

Principal Examiner tips for the Level 1 Reading paper:

- Centres should explicitly teach learners features of a text which help to present information
- Learners should be reminded to read questions very carefully. They should take note of key words (often emboldened) and look for the focus of the question
- Centres are encouraged to remind learners to refer to the text and avoid adding own knowledge or providing interpretation of the information given
- Learners are reminded that extremely short answers are unlikely to answer the question
- Learners should use the correct text (A or B) in order to answer the question
- Centres should remind learners that they *can* use a dictionary

Pass mark for E102 in January 2013

Maximum mark	20
Pass mark	15
UMS mark	6

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