

Principal Examiners' Report

October 2017

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills
English Reading Level 2 (E202)

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October 2017

Publications Code E202_01_1710_ER

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Centre report Functional Skills Reading Level 2 October 2017

This paper seemed to be accessible for the majority of learners. The paper included material from three texts on the topic of drinking water. The questions provided learners with appropriate opportunities to demonstrate their abilities at Level Two. Although, it should be noted that the cohort was fairly small, very few blank responses were encountered and all questions demonstrated that the full range of marks were awarded.

Question 1:

This multiple choice question seemed to pose few difficulties for the vast majority of learners, with most successfully gaining the mark by correctly selecting option B (it is not necessary to drink bottled water in the UK). This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.4 (Detect point of view, implicit meaning and / or bias).

Question 2:

This question differentiated effectively. The first phrase 'almost limitless access' was generally better understood than the second 'modern day wonder'. Where learners tended to drop marks with the first phrase was where they simply reworked the wording of the phrase by providing answers such as 'tap water has no limits'. Some responses focused inaccurately on the fact the text was advocating people to drink more tap water, rather than referencing the fact that the supply of tap water in the UK is abundant. With regard to the second phrase, many candidates focused on the idea of 'modern day' rather than the idea that safe drinking water was an impressive or important invention. Despite the challenges of the question most learners were able to gain at least one of the available two marks. Centres should provide learners with relevant opportunities to practise the skills required for this question by exposing them to a range of phrases and asking them explore the intended meaning of the writer. The question assesses the standard L2.2.4 (Detect point of view, implicit meaning and / or bias).

Question 3:

This question performed well with the vast majority of responses gaining the mark. As is the case in all series, examples of content only answers were encountered. These responses lacked a purpose as to why the text was written. There were a very small number of responses encountered with generic purposes cited, such as 'to inform'. Centres should teach learners to provide a purpose which is securely rooted in the content of the text in order to gain the mark. This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.3 (Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed).

Question 4:

This question proved very accessible with almost all learners gaining the mark. Often learners gave answers which covered multiple bullet points on the mark scheme, typically 'running in the park' and 'going for a bike ride'. This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.5 (Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses).

Question 5:

This multi-choice question did not pose too many difficulties for learners, with the majority successfully gaining the mark by correctly identifying option A (Buying plastic bags is a waste of money). This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.4 (Detect point of view, implicit meaning and / or bias). This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.4 (Detect point of view, implicit meaning and / or bias).

Question 6:

Once again this multi-choice question did not present too many difficulties for learners, with most able to gain the mark by correctly identifying the quotation selected was an example of 'Rule of three'. This question assesses standard L2.2.3 (Identify the purpose of texts and comment how meaning is conveyed).

Question 7:

This question saw the full range of marks awarded and therefore it differentiated effectively. Some learners simply gave quotes or paraphrased sections of the text without reference to language features. However, many scored at least two marks for identifying a relevant language feature and providing an appropriate supporting example. Rhetorical question was the most popular correct answer. The maximum mark of four was fairly frequently awarded. A common misconception was the identification of direct address with the example then given as 'Dear Sir'. This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.3 in an open response format. To gain full marks learners needed to correctly identify two features and provide a supporting example from Text C for each.

Question 8:

This question performed well and a full range of marks were awarded across the cohort. However, most learners were able to access at least three of the available marks. Examples of maximum marks being awarded were not uncommon. However, there were a number of often lengthy responses that scored only one or two marks because they did not adhere to the question and talked about why people should drink more water or other points which were unrelated to environmental problems. On occasions a lack of precision in learners' responses led to reduced marks and sometimes made it difficult to be sure examples had been drawn from both texts. This question assesses L2.2.5 (Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses). Centres should note that learners are not expected to produce responses in any particular format but it should be clear that both texts have been utilised to gain information.

Question 9:

This question was accessible for the vast majority of learners, with most gaining both marks. Where marks were dropped it tended to be in relation to Text C, with some candidates failing to make reference to the costs of water and instead focusing on the need to drink more water generally. This question assesses the skills standard L2.2.4 (Detect point of view, implicit meaning and / or bias). In this question learners are expected to quote directly from the text.

Question 10:

This question differentiated very effectively. There were examples of the maximum marks being awarded, where learners had identified multiple similar ideas and exemplified these fully. However, it was also common for learners to score in the lowest marking band because they failed to show a link between similar ideas in the two texts. It was quite typical to see multiple examples taken from the texts without similar ideas being 'reasonably precisely' identified as stipulated in the mark scheme. This question assesses the standard L2.2.2 (Select and use different types of text to obtain and utilise relevant information).

Question 11:

In general this question proved quite accessible, with the vast majority of learners correctly selecting Text A. Where some candidates did lose marks was in terms of identifying a reason. Often reasons were too vague, for example 'gives the best information' or in some cases no real reason was provided and two examples given instead. This limited some responses to one mark.

Centres should encourage learners look for a valid reason, which meets the purpose as outlined in the question and shows why the selected text is the most suitable. Learners also need to understand the difference between giving a reason and providing an example

Question 12

This question performed well with the vast majority of learners gaining at least two marks and many gaining the maximum three marks. Where candidates dropped a mark it tended to be for Text C where some candidates made reference to saving money by cooking their own meals, which is not quite the same thing as planning ahead. This question assesses the standard L2.2.1 (Select and use different types of text to obtain and utilise relevant information). In this question learners are required to quote or paraphrase directly from the relevant text

Question 13:

This question did not pose too many difficulties for learners, with the majority successfully gaining the mark. This question assesses the skill standard L2.2.2 (Read and summarise succinctly information / ideas from different sources). Learners are required to utilise information from two texts in order to select the correct response.

Pass mark for E202 in October 2017

Maximum mark	30
Pass mark	19
UMS mark	6



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