

Principal Examiners' Report

March 2018

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills
English Reading Level 1 (E102)

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This paper was successful with a significant number of learners demonstrating functionality at this level.

The following points are intended to help centres in their preparation for future series.

The main points arising from this paper are:

1. Learners must read questions very carefully in order to find the focus of the question.
2. Learners must read the options in multiple-choice questions carefully to select the correct answer and the correct number of answers.
3. Learners should use the evidence in the text, rather than making assumptions based on own knowledge or experience. Answers must be rooted in the text.
4. Learners need to be explicitly taught what different types of questions are asking them to do, for instance questions asking for the identification of presentational features or the main purpose of a text.
5. Although learners are advised 'You do not need to write in full sentences', one (or sometimes two) word answers are often not sufficient to gain a mark. Some questions may require a verb or some indication of an action.
6. Learners should aim to give precise answers rather than make vague statements or generalisations.

Questions 1-3

Most learners found these questions straightforward with the majority answering correctly. However, marks were occasionally lost in Q1, usually due to learners selecting Option A, which is incorrect as it mentions boa constrictors rather than corn snakes. As Option B is the only option that mentions corn snakes, careful reading should ensure this is identified as the correct answer.

Question 4

This question caused very few problems and a large majority of learners answered it correctly.

Question 5

Although many learners gained both marks for this question and the number doing so continues to increase, there are still some who fail to gain both marks and a substantial minority who fail to gain any. As is often the case, many simply didn't understand the requirements of the question and gave a content-based answer or identified punctuation marks. Others identified 'bullet points' or 'picture' but these were not features of this text.

Question 6

This was a question that often yielded full marks, as long as learners identified specific features of a good home. Marks were lost when learners gave generalised answers about corn snakes that failed to identify these features.

Question 7

Although many learners answered this correctly and gained both marks, a number of answers appeared uncertain regarding criteria for a 'good pet', often simply identifying characteristics of a corn snake without focusing on the specific demands of the question.

Question 8

The majority of learners answered this question correctly.

Question 9

This question was generally well-answered, though it is still the case that some learners are offering only a single answer. The question clearly states that two answers are required for this question and those learners who overlook this instruction are unnecessarily penalising themselves. Some learners also lost marks by giving Option F as one of the answers, an error that again would be overcome by close reading of the text as it is Evonne and not Lucy who is going to Venezuela.

Question 10

This question proved challenging for a number of learners, who gave explanations that were often detailed but failed to identify precisely what Lucy needed to do to look after Sid's accommodation. Again, this was a question that rewarded precise answers; generalised explanations were not enough.

Question 11

Learners who differentiated between snakes in the wild and those kept domestically usually gained full marks here. However, a number of learners gave answers that were more suited to Q13. Clearly such answers did not pick up on the words 'in the wild' given in the question and lost marks because of this. Others incorrectly identified 'South Africa' and 'South-East USA' as answers.

Question 12

This question was generally answered correctly, though occasionally a mark was not gained due to a lack of precision, such as simply answering 'ask' or 'ask for help' rather than 'ask Ken', which was required for the mark.

Question 13

This question was generally answered very well with the majority of learners able to identify two reasons why Sid is a good pet. Occasionally a mark was lost when learners identified both Sid's friendly nature and love of company, as these were considered to be the same point.

Examiner tips for the Level 1 Reading paper:

- Centres should explicitly teach learners what is meant by 'features' which help to present information.
- Centres are encouraged to remind learners to read each question very carefully, taking note of key words which may be emboldened. Learners should look for the focus of the question and should pay attention to an initial sentence when present.
- Centres should remind learners to refer to the text and avoid making assumptions based on their own knowledge.
- Centres must encourage learners to give precise information when answering questions.
- Centres should remind learners that they *can* use a dictionary.

Pass mark for E102 in March 2018

Maximum mark	20
Pass mark	15
UMS mark	6



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