

Examiners' Report
June 2014

GCSE English Language 5EN2H 01

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June 2014

Publications Code UG038736

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Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments for Questions 1–10.

Examiners are looking above all for signs that candidates are responding in a thoughtful way to the language and ideas of prose writers and are communicating clearly and effectively on the selected writing topic.

Examiners commented that it was pleasing to see evidence of some excellent teaching of the texts and candidates who were able to manage their time effectively.

The responses of candidates had many positive features.

Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that the candidates had a much stronger focus on language features and the ability to select relevant details and comment on the writer's language and its effects
- the ability to select an appropriate passage from another section of the text and explore a wide range of language features with detailed comments linking the language of their chosen extract with the ideas and themes of the extract
- writing on the chosen topic that showed a strong awareness of audience and purpose using an appropriate register to engage the audience effectively.

Less successful responses:

- showed an insecure grasp of language (for example, confusion over terms or feature spotting) or summarised quotations without any analysis of the language and its effect
- tended to produce speculative, unsupported comments or relied too heavily on narration or chose over-long extracts for comment in part b)
- lacked the ability to develop and sustain appropriate ideas in the writing task and did not have secure language controls.

Overall, examiners commented that there seemed to be a more secure focus on language features and the writer's intended effects than in previous series and there was a general sense that candidates knew how to respond to the tasks. Examiners observed that the majority of candidates engaged effectively with the texts.

Candidates' writing was often lively and focused and examiners commented positively on candidates' ability to demonstrate a sense of audience and to use an appropriate register.

In Section A the overwhelming majority of candidates chose to respond to Question 5, 'Of Mice and Men'. This no doubt reflects both the popularity of 'Of Mice and Men' and its familiarity to teachers.

In Section B Question 10 was slightly more popular than Question 9.

Section A (Reading)

Examiners commented that there was evidence that candidates had been prepared well and there was evidence of the good use of prepared extracts for part b). However some examiners commented that candidates are still producing longer responses to part a) and thus limiting their achievement for part b) which has more marks. Other examiners commented that it was pleasing to see that candidates did know that part b) should be a more developed response. Some comment was made about incorrect identification of language terms and unsupported comments made by candidates.

Part a):

Examiners commented that there was a stronger focus on language features in this section and most candidates were able to select relevant details and comment on the writer's language and its effects. Examiners commented that candidates generally engaged well with the given extracts.

Some examiners commented that some candidates' responses summarised the text and lacked close analysis of language features.

Part b):

Candidates were generally successful in identifying an appropriate extract for comment and better responses focused well on the writer's techniques. However, some examiners observed that this section was less well done than part a) as candidates tended to narrate or summarise the chosen extract rather than explore the writer's use of language and its intended effects.

Some examiners observed that the extract chosen was sometimes too long or not one extract, limiting the candidate's ability to focus closely on the task.

Comment was made about some shorter responses to part b) and suggested this may be because candidates spent too long on part a).

Section B (Writing)

Examiners did comment how much they enjoyed reading responses in this section, especially Question 10.

Examiners commented positively on candidates' engagement with the topics and their ability to demonstrate a clear sense of audience and purpose through the use of an appropriate register.

The majority of candidates were able to write in appropriate styles and structure their responses effectively although some examiners did comment on a lack of adventurous vocabulary and ambitious punctuation.

There were some brief and undeveloped responses which examiners felt might have demonstrated bad time management (spending too long on Section A).

Question 1

Question 1

Touching the Void

There were not many responses to this question.

a) There were some reasonable responses demonstrating a sound understanding of the extract but opportunities to comment on language features were not always developed. Most candidates were able to pick up on Joe's feelings of confusion and relief but these were not always supported by textual reference. Some responses were narrative and lacked language evaluation. The quotations chosen were relevant but were sometimes used to support narrative points rather than as a basis for language evaluation.

b) Most candidates chose appropriate passages commonly either the cutting of the rope or the crevasse but examiners commented that some candidates were unable to develop their responses in any depth or detail. Better responses did identify appropriate examples of the writer's language and were able to discuss how it was effective. Some examiners commented on a number of narrative responses that showed understanding of the chosen extract but lost focus on the writer's language and techniques.

This is an extract from a response to Question 1b) using an extract from Chapter 2.

from two years ago. Joe and Ian had been climbing all day and had found themselves what they thought would be a safe place to camp over night. The writer emphasises the climbers confidence in the first paragraph, using the power of three to give the reader the thought that the climbers were safe. "An hour later we had fixed a handrail safety rope, strung between an old ring peg and a spike of rock, clipped ourselves in and settled down to sleep."

The next ^{short} sentence, used for dramatic effect, ~~the~~ completely changed that confident secure picture.

"The next few seconds were unforgettable"

~~From the text~~ The words "suddenly" and "without warning" tell us that what happens was a shock. The movement was fast ~~at~~ "swiftly" giving the reader

no doubt Joe was experiencing the worst shock of the climb. Onomatopoeic words such as "ear-spluttering roar and grinding" add to the imagery used to really understand the ~~scene~~ shocking situation. "I knew nothing except the sickening dread" again emphasising the shock of the event. The writer uses a short sentence, again to reflect giving the impression of something positive "The safety rope had held". He was saved by the rope "I was completely disorientated" another short sentence for dramatic effect telling the reader Joe had no idea where he was.

The next two paragraphs unfold the ~~the~~ ~~climbers~~ Joe ~~des~~ describes the situation both he and Ian are in vividly. Joe ~~sees~~ looks up and sees the disaster ^{and seriousness} ahead of where they were camping. The shock of seeing what remained ~~left~~ leaves ~~to~~ the two men in a state of shock and very frightened as they was "nervous swearing and hysterical giggling"

On looking down and around them, without their equipment they could do nothing. Joe emphasised this in a short sentence "we could do nothing". The use of "suicidal" adds drama to the situation, as "to attempt to climb up or down would have been suicidal" so the reader now knows the climbers are stuck.



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Examiner Comments

There is a relevant section covered and there are pertinent references with assured understanding with some secure selection of language points and focus on individual words. The point about short sentences has been made effectively and is closely linked with feelings. It was awarded 19 out of 24 marks, band 4.



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Examiner Tip

Note the pertinent selection of references to support the points made. For a Band 5 response language comments could have been developed yet more fully to demonstrate a really perceptive grasp.

Question 2

Question 2

Anita and Me

There were not many responses to this question.

a) Some examiners commented that there were good responses to the extract and that the rich imagery in the extract elicited these high quality responses. Most candidates recognised the unity of the villagers in their feeling of shock and horror as a reaction to the diggers commenting on the war imagery created with 'shiny and solid as tanks', 'convoy', 'metallic invasion' and the dehumanising and detached nature of 'diggers' and 'machines'. Most commented on the protective 'scooping up of a dozing Sunil' and the imminent sense of danger.

However, other examiners observed that some responses were quite weak with limited understanding of the extract with various misunderstandings such as the diggers were workmen. Some responses were narrative.

b) There were some successful responses with an appropriate choice of second extract (most commonly the village fete, the description of Tollington at the start of the novel or the death of Mrs Christmas) but examiners commented that many responses lacked a close focus on language or tended to be narrative in approach. A few candidates used over-long extracts or used several sections from the novel and some responses were short and undeveloped.

This is a successful response to Question 2a).

a) When the diggers arrive in Tollington to knock the school down, it is a significant moment in the changing landscape of the village. It causes ~~an~~ outrage amongst the local people who are all against the plans.

The language used to describe the diggers portrays them as an evil, war-like force. "shiny and solid as tanks", the reference to tanks gives connotations of the army and extreme violence. Syal uses personification to describe how the diggers move, "seemed to chew up the road and spit it back out as they ate their way towards the centre of the village", this shows the diggers to devour

Tollington and almost as if the diggers are disgusted at the 'faze' of Tollington. This could show a juxtaposition between the war-like diggers and the much quieter Tollington usually.

The idea of the diggers being war-like is reiterated later when the arrival is described as a "metallic invasion", with invasion having connotations with war and violence. It is like the small village of Tollington has gone to war ~~over~~ with these diggers. There is a strong feeling of togetherness and signs that Tollington is a strong, close-knit community, "it seemed the whole village had congregated on street corners, in gardens, hanging from windows and leaning on doorposts", this portrays Tollington as a village where everyone is together as everybody has come out to oppose and stand their ground against the diggers.

Syd uses an oxymoron to describe the diggers, "mechanical symphony", both words connote vastly contrasting ideas and this perhaps shows that even though the diggers are controversial, they are doing the right thing to help Tollington develop. Finally, the "buzzing staccato" is seen to contrast the "ponderous bass", and this reiterates the controversial nature of the diggers, as despite being portrayed in an evil sense, perhaps they are doing the right thing for Tollington.



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Examiner Comments

This is a well-judged response to the question with assured understanding, pertinent references and a good focus on language. It was awarded 13 out of 16 marks, band 4.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Look at how the response focuses closely on writer's use of language and comments thoughtfully on the effects of the chosen examples.

Question 3

Question 3

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

There were not many responses to this text.

a) The majority of responses were assured and perceptive with most examiners commenting positively on the quality of the responses. There was good focus on language analysis e.g. the connotations of the dolphin and fruit imagery. A couple of examiners commented on some undeveloped responses to language.

b) The majority of candidates chose an effective and appropriate extract - popular choices were the keyring and when the Little Chinese Seamstress is leaving. Many candidates responded in an assured and confident manner. Generally, candidates focused on a couple of specific pages and analysed language effectively. There were some instances, however, where the candidate mistook Ma's feelings for the Little Chinese Seamstress for Luo's - notably in the section towards the end of the novella when Luo goes away on leave and leaves Ma to look after the Little Chinese Seamstress.

This is the whole of a very successful response to Question 3a).

a) In the extract the little seamstress is presented as ~~elegant and beautiful~~ and elegant through the use of the simile 'she swims like a dolphin now'. The use of 'dolphin' has connotations of elegance and beauty as dolphins swim in a very smooth and streamlined way, showing the reader that Luo considers the ~~little~~ Little Seamstress to be an ~~beautiful~~ elegant and sophisticated swimmer. Also, dolphins are typically considered to be intelligent creature, meaning that the use of this simile shows Luo to see the little seamstress as clever ~~or~~ and intelligent. This is reinforced by the use of 'now' which implies that Luo believes she has become elegant and intelligent as a result of his efforts to civilise the Little Seamstress.

The author also uses a semantic field of movement and energy to create the idea that the little seamstress is fun and energetic. For instance, words such as 'rising', ~~the~~ 'churning', 'undulating' and 'flung' all have connotations of fast movement and energetic actions. This shows that

Luo considers the little seamstress to be full of fun and energy as the author ~~is~~ consistently describes her movements as fast paced ~~and energetic~~, therefore showing her ~~energy~~ energetic nature.

When describing the ledge, the author uses a semantic field of fear, for instance words such as 'horror', 'dizzy', 'never dared' and 'dangerous' are used. These words demonstrate how Luo fears for the ~~the~~ little seamstress as the words have connotations of danger and worry meaning they show the reader that Luo is scared for her safety. This therefore shows that Luo is deeply ~~even~~ concerned for the little seamstress and that he cares about her as he is fearful that she will cause herself harm by diving off the 'dangerous' and '~~dizzy~~' 'dizzying' ledge.

The author uses the metaphor of falling fruit to describe the little seamstress's diving as innocent and lovely. For instance, 'the fruit falls, streaking through the air' suggests ~~lightness~~ ^{innocence} as 'fruit' has connotations of sweetness and ~~delicate~~ delicacy. The use of the metaphor ~~is~~ implies how Luo views the little seamstress as fragile as fruit is often soft and easily damaged therefore showing the little seamstress's ~~the~~ vulnerability.

Furthermore, this metaphor is extended to demonstrate how Luo views the little seamstress as unique as the extract states that other divers 'never achieve the lightness of dropping fruit'. The use of 'lightness' connotes elegance and innocence ~~what~~ and the use of 'never' shows how to Luo no-one can achieve the

beauty ~~of the~~ same beauty as the little seamstress.
The metaphor therefore suggests that the little seamstress
is one of a kind and has an elegance that no-one
can match.

The little seamstress is also presented ^{as fragile} in the extract
through the lexical choice of 'tiny' ~~the~~ when
describing her. ~~The~~ This choice of lexis implies
vulnerability because 'tiny' has connotations of
innocence, childishness and fragility which therefore
shows the reader that Luo sees her as ~~the~~ vulnerable.
This therefore highlights his feelings towards her as
he believes she is innocent and needs protecting as
she is tiny and vulnerable.



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Examiner Comments

The response fulfils everything required in Band 5 and more – a very perceptive response with discriminating reference to the text. The analysis is very strong - seen in how much can be achieved in the comments on just one metaphor. 16 out of 16 marks, band 5.



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Examiner Tip

Look closely at the perceptive points the candidate has made and the discriminating reference to the text supporting these points, together with the range of language features discussed.

Question 4

Question 4

Heroes

a) Examiners commented that most candidates showed a strong engagement with the text and there were successful responses with detailed comments on language. Better candidates responded confidently and demonstrated a strong focus on the effects of the writer's language with word level analysis.

Most candidates maintained a clear focus on language.

Candidates commented successfully on the simile of the nostrils 'like the snout of an animal', the reaction of the child, and how Francis wanted to hide away.

Many candidates were able to refer to Francis' viewpoint on his appearance and some candidates considered the issue of the unreliable narrator. Weaker responses tended to feature spot rather than analysing the effect of the language.

Some responses lacked detail, analysis and explanation.

b) There were some confident and assured responses with focused comments on language. Candidates mostly made suitable choices of a second passage. Candidates chose a wide range of extracts for this question, the most popular including the opening of the novel, the meeting with Mrs Belander, the reunion with Nicole and the ending when Francis meets with Larry. Some examiners commented that candidates did not always choose an effective extract which limited their response. Most responses demonstrated at least a sound understanding but the tendency to explain rather than analyse was more marked in this part than in part a).

Some responses tended to be quite narrative in their approach, even when the part a) answers had a clear focus on language.

This is an extract from a successful response to Question 4a).

a) From this extract, the reader can clearly see how Cormier has used language to show us the effects of Francis' appearance, and show it as both a blessing and a curse.

We can see how language is used in this way through where the extract says that the boy was "peering at me with one big eye". The verb "peering" used has connotations of innocence, which seem to contrast with Francis' appearance and his past experiences. It

also indicates to the reader how the effect of Francis' appearance was not understanding, but it more made people shrink back: "peeping" also has an air of ^{curiosity} ~~enquiry~~ about it, and Connier is trying to show through this how people regard Francis' Injuries as features of strange interest.

"One big eye" even has ironic connotations of a monster, showing how, despite the bad effects which its appearance seems to be causing, Francis is still trying to create a link or a bond with people, picking out anything which is similar in him to others.

We also see how language influences our view of the effects of Francis' appearance through where it says: "No face at all, actually, the nostrils like the snout of an animal." The syntax of the sentence with "actually" separated by commas reinforces a sense of insecurity and sudden understanding of himself, which has been caused by people's reactions to him. The tone of self-deprecation which is present in 'actually' indicates to the reader the deep-rooted psychological effects of Francis' appearance in himself.

The simile of "like the ~~pinpoint~~ snout of an animal" reinforces this feeling that Francis now

lacks self-worth and considers after seeing his appearance's effects and now views himself as some horrific beast.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a confident and sustained response with assured understanding of the text and the ideas of the writer and perceptive comments on the language used.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate confidently analyses the effects of the writer's use of language.

Question 5

Question 5

Of Mice and Men

This was the most popular question.

There was evidence of very thorough preparation of this text.

Some examiners commented that some candidates used irrelevant background information and that there were too many references to women in the 1930s which were not rooted in the given extract; however, some examiners observed that they had seen less evidence of this and that there were more focused responses on the text.

a) Examiners commented that there seemed to be a clear understanding from most candidates that language was the focus of the task.

Candidates responded positively to the given extract and there were some interesting and developed interpretations of the text.

More able candidates demonstrated an assured and perceptive ability to analyse and interpret language and ideas.

Successful responses developed interpretations of Curley's wife with close analysis of Steinbeck's language choice and sometimes offered valid alternative interpretations.

Better candidates recognised how the writer's language choice reveals Curley's wife's naivety and the futility of her dream.

Examiners commented that the best responses were mature and perceptive in developing sensitive interpretations of Curley's wife and in their ability to avoid over-simplifying Curley's wife and re-evaluating her character at this point in the novella. There was a good deal of effective word level analysis for example of 'coulda', 'tumbled', 'passion', 'cried', 'darkly'. Many identified the reader's response to Curley's wife in the extract as being in contrast with the response gained elsewhere in the novella. There was much comment on 'foreboding', as might be expected. Weaker responses were less well developed and lacked a focus on aspects of language and how they were used to influence the reader. Some candidates confused language terms, especially adverbs and adjectives. Some candidates continue to feature spot, rather than analyse the effect of the language in the extract.

b) Examiners commented that responses to this section were generally well done. Most candidates were able to choose an appropriate extract e.g. when Curley's wife is first introduced to the reader which was the popular choice. On the whole candidates tackled this well, commenting on the sexual imagery, the foreshadowing of danger and threat, and how she is viewed by the men on the ranch. Most candidates commented on the use of red to convey danger or sensuality. Some linked this with the red dress of the girl in Weed. An interesting development was the link made between 'girl' and 'playfully', with connotations of naivety and innocence, to contrast with George's 'tramp' comments. The heavy make-up and her clothing was commented on as unsuitable for the ranch, an attempt to create glamour, linked to the movie star dream or a mask to hide her insecurity.

There was also some interesting interpretation and comment on the fact that her voice was described as 'brittle', with some suggesting that this gave it an unpleasant quality, whilst other candidates discussed the possibility that it suggested the idea that she herself was fragile.

Other extracts seen were when she is in Crooks' room and her death. Successful responses were able to keep a firm focus on Curley's wife and how the language used aids the reader's understanding of her. Examiners commented they saw some very good responses that were

perceptive and thoughtful with a strong focus on language demonstrated by word level analysis.

Weaker responses to this section made undeveloped or generalised comments about her being a flirt and/or dangerous and missed references to language or tended to be narrative.

This is the whole of a candidate's response to Question 5a).

Firstly, at the ~~beginning~~^{start} of the extract Curley's wife uses rhetorical questions 'what's the matter with me?', 'ain't I got a right to talk to nobody?'. The reason she does this is to get her anger across to show she doesn't understand why people treat her the way they do. As the extract goes on her mood begins to change it becomes more positive, as she talks about her hopes and dreams.

Curley's ~~wife~~ wife claims ~~that~~ 'I wouldn't be livin' like this', 'I don't like Curley. He ain't a nice fella'. Steinbeck uses this to show she is unhappy with her wife. ~~Curley~~ She talks about the men she met who would make her a star, however, her 'ol' lady wouldn't let her go to 'Hollywood'. ~~But~~ The

repetition of 'I was a n...'
is used to slightly brag about
her talent and to prove it
'she had a small... show that
she could act'. When Lennie
tried to exchange and tell
Curley's wife his story 'she
~~wasn't even more than her sister~~
continued with hers 'quickly'
'before she should be
interrupted'.

She doesn't usually open
up to people 'I ain't ever
told this... maybe I ought
to' but she continues placing
her trust in Lennie's hands.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate has shown sound understanding of the text and ideas with mostly clear reference but the comments on language are not developed. It was awarded 5 marks out of 16, band 2.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This answer would need more focused comments on the writer's language to move it up into a higher band. Remember to comment on the writer's use of language and its intended effects rather than re-telling the passage.

a) At the beginning of the extract ~~to~~ the reader gets the impression that Curley's wife is sick of being lonely and just wants some company. 'her face grew angry' & because of now ~~upset~~ ^{frustrated} she was. She starts throwing rhetorical questions at Lennie to show her anger. "Who's the matter with me?", "Ain't I got a right to talk to nobody? Whatta they think I am, anyways?" Steinbeck uses these rhetorical questions to show the emotion Curley's wife has. In the middle of the extract ~~the~~ Curley's wife ~~she~~ starts to get deep into the conversation, Steinbeck uses the ~~word~~ ^{adverb} 'darkly' to show the dark side to Curley's wife.

~~the~~ Her dark side also shows how demanding and self-centered she is; 'she tells 'her story quickly before she should be interrupted'. As if she knows what is coming, if foreshadows her death as she is 'quickly' telling her story. She wants someone to know the truth before she dies.

Another thing in the extract Steinbeck shows is how passionate Curley's wife is about her dream. The repetition of 'cavida' shows the sadness and regret she has over ~~what~~ her past. "Maybe I will yet" shows that she still has hope of her dream. The personification of 'her words tumbled out in a passion of communication' shows the hope and excitement Curley's wife has for her dream.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The response shows thorough understanding of the text and the writer's ideas. The candidate demonstrates thorough understanding of language with sustained references to support comments made. The response was awarded 9 out of 16 marks, band 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

With a slightly stronger interpretation and development of the points made, this response could have moved into band 4.

Curley's wife says to George later in the extract 'nobody can't blame a person for lookin', which I think can be interpreted in several ways. Firstly, she is currently present in the bunkhouse because she is looking for Curley and so this exchange of dialogue could be in reference to him. However, she says this after she had 'twitched her body' which suggests that she won't blame George and Hennie for looking at her because she deliberately tries to make herself look appealing. Alternatively, she could be challenging George's brusque nature previously and telling him she can't be blamed for looking at ~~both~~ them as they are 'the new fellas'. The way in which Steinbeck has used colloquial language for 'fellas' also suggests that she is quite familiar and casual, perhaps even flirty. Her choice of words influences the view of the reader and hints to a hidden meaning - her words may be assumed to be confident but again this could be a facade.

Steinbeck also uses Curley's wife to metaphorically portray a darkness and

lack of hope for the characters in the novel. Upon arrival in the bunkhouse 'the rectangle of sunshine in the doorway was cut off' which represents her as cutting away the hope of George and Lennie, ~~foreshadowing her death later in the novel.~~ Steinbeck has used light to represent hope and lack of hope - in this scenario, George and Lennie have arrived at ~~near~~ a new ranch and are hopeful for the future (the sun is shining through the doorway) but this hope is destroyed by Curley's wife who blocks the light by standing in the doorway (foreshadowing her untimely death that consequently crushes George and Lennie's dream). Steinbeck's use of light to symbolise hope is a consistent theme throughout the novel and the fact that Curley's wife 'cuts off' the light is extremely significant and warns the reader that there will be darkness for her and other characters in the novel.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response shows perceptive understanding of the text and the writer's ideas of the character, perceptive understanding of language and discriminating reference to the extract. This was awarded full marks, band 5.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Note the excellent focus on language analysis linked to the writer's ideas and how this reveals a perceptive understanding.

The author John Steinbeck uses further adjectiving and nouns to reference the character of Curley's wife, showing she is a juxtaposition of elegance & delicacy in a rugged backdrop. Evidence for this lies in the quote "red mules, on the muzzles of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers". This dress item comprises a rare & expensive leather which does not accord with the harsh & rough nature of farming or the monetarily deprived times of the Great Depression in the 1930s. This juxtaposes her out of place nature to the reader and helps highlight the thorough significance of her character.

Steinbeck includes the illustration of Curley's wife's para-linguistic features. This in turn justifies her flirtatiousness. A prime example of these features lies in the chapter & quote: "She put her hands behind her back & leaned against the doorframe so her body was thrown forward". This quote shows the reader she is desperate to crave attention, making her self obvious to the whole bunkhouse & exposing her in a rather flirtatious way. Owing to the scarceness nature of women on the ranch she obviously uses her attractive nature to allure attention from the other men.

Adverbs describing the other characters' speech used to address Corley's wife show that she is not necessarily the most popular character in the room. Evidence for this is when the adverb 'brazenly' is used to describe George Milton's speech. The quote reads "George said brazenly, 'Well, hear it now'". The word brazenly in an etymological sense references the Italian word for rude, this implies to the reader that the characters, especially George, are trying to discourage her presence to ease the nature of their stay on the ranch.



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Examiner Comments

There are a number of very thorough points although they are not always expressed as clearly as they could be. There is assured understanding of the writer's ideas and assured understanding of language. The response was given 17 out of 24, band 4.



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Examiner Tip

For a band 5 response, comments could have been developed yet more fully so as to demonstrate a really perceptive grasp.

Question 6

Question 6

Rani and Sukh

There were not many responses to this text.

a) Candidates engaged with the given extract and many candidates were able to demonstrate a clear awareness of the requirements of the question and a sound or thorough understanding of language and ideas. The more able offered some close analysis of language and the writer's techniques e.g. short sentences, use of ellipses, use of commas and specific comments on language were made about 'trouble-schmubble', the appearance of Divy and the 'stony masks'. Some candidates described the event rather than analysing the language.

Weaker candidates were sometimes narrative but included some attempts to comment on language although these tended to explain rather than analyse.

b) Most chose the death of Billah or Sukh and better candidates produced thoughtful and detailed responses with good focus on the language of shame ('wronged', 'izzat', 'whore') or violence ('murderous intent', 'dragging', 'bloodlust'). Weaker responses tended to be narrative and were not able to comment effectively on the use of language.

This is an extract from a response to Question 6b).

Harbhajan is truly horrified at what Billah has done. Bali Rai shows this as Harbhajan thinks that Billah has "polluted" his name. This means he has made his name dirty or ~~was~~ ruined and it will never be the same again.

Bali Rai also uses aggressive and violent language to describe just how horrific the situation was. Billah was "dragged to the square". The word dragged gives the reader the impression that Billah was pulling against the force as he had to be dragged.

Another example of violent language is when Harbnajan "drove" a long, pointed blade through Billan's chest and out of his back". This really shows how violent and grewsome the situation was and what Harbnajan thought Billan deserves.



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Examiner Comments

There is sound understanding and clear references to the text to support the response. The response was given 8 out of 24, band 2.



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Examiner Tip

To qualify for a higher band, think about how the points could have been developed and more detailed comments could have been made about language.

Question 7

Question 7

Riding the Black Cockatoo

There was only one response seen to this text.

Question 8

Question 8

To Kill a Mockingbird

a) Most candidates showed good engagement with the text and examiners commented they saw some good responses to this question. Better responses demonstrated good understanding of the text and supported this with some excellent language analysis. Comments were made on Atticus's treatment of Walter, the 'two men' idea, the syrup sequence, Scout's comment 'just a Cunningham', Calpurnia's 'furious whisper' and the alliteration of 'stinging smack'. Better candidates were also able to show how Calpurnia's anger was demonstrated by her unusually ungrammatical language. Weaker responses sometimes focused on Walter's behaviour rather than on how he was treated at the Finches' house or had a less secure focus on language.

b) There was no popular choice for this part and candidates sometimes wrote about themes rather than language. Some candidates struggled to find an appropriate extract. Successful choices for the second extract were Scout's first day at school, the visit to First Purchase Church with Calpurnia, meeting Dolphus Raymond and Scout's final understanding of Boo Radley. Better responses selected an appropriate extract and had a secure focus on how the language of their chosen extract supported their comments on what Scout learns. Weaker responses were sometimes narrative and did not explore language. One examiner commented that some extracts chosen were too long.

This is an extract from a response to Question 8a).

a) In the extract we see how Walter Cunningham contrasts to the Finches. We know how he is poor and his family lifestyle isn't that great. While at the Finches' house he tries to be respectful and thankful towards them.

The Finch house had an impact on Walter; the fact that he 'had forgotten he was a Cunningham' could suggest how he was treated well and as if one of the Finch family.

The verb 'forgotten' could suggest accidental and he was so happy to have a change from his family lifestyle.

'Atticus greeted Walter' shows respect towards him even though he is from a different background. The verb 'greeted' shows politeness and how Atticus wants to make a good impression on Walter so he can see the type of family they are.

Despite coming from a different background and not being rich or well educated, Walter is respectful towards people at the Finch house. For him to communicate towards Atticus using the honorific 'Mr Finch' shows how he tries to fit in with people around him.

At the dinner table, Lee uses Scout's point of view to tell the reader how 'Walter ~~was~~ poured syrup... with a generous hand'. The adjective 'generous' implies how he uses a lot, suggesting greed or abnormality of the food he has been given. Whilst at the Finch house Walter gets privileges that he wouldn't normally get at home because his family is poor, therefore eating

more of what is being offered.

Although Walter wasn't shy to take as much food as he wanted, when Scout confronts him, he feels embarrassed and almost ashamed of his family background and him being a Cunningham. 'Then he ducked his head' presents how Walter does not want to be noticed. The verb 'ducked' suggests wanting to hide away from if he has done something wrong.

Calpurnia and Atticus understand how wrong Scout was for ~~saying~~ confronting Walter about his dinner manners. They know how because he is from a background you should be respectful towards him. The class divide is easily picked up on when Calpurnia calls them 'folks', 'there's some folks who don't eat like us'. Calpurnia uses the noun 'folks' to imply that it is not just the Cunninghams, but other families within Maycomb who don't have privileges, unlike them.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

There is assured understanding of the text and the writer's ideas. It is confident and detailed, but does not always analyse the effect of language enough to move into Band 5. This was awarded 11 out of 16, band 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A more confident and detailed analysis of language would have moved this into band 5.

b) Another chapter in which Scout learns an important lesson is chapter 20, when she encounters Mr Dolphus Raymond. Here Scout learns not to judge everything, or everyone, by appearances. This can be seen in, ~~Scout's~~ "Scout, it's nothing but Coca-Cola". ~~That's~~ This is describing Mr Dolphus' drink, which Scout and the rest of Maycomb presumed was ~~alcohol~~ ^{"whisky"} but was in fact just a soft drink. This presumption was due to Mr Dolphus' different way of living and his "mixed children", which according to Scout made him a 'sinful' and 'evil man'. The use of these adjectives shows Scout's prejudiced views towards Mr Dolphus, just because he prefers the company of black people, which ~~that's~~ she assumed was due to him being enebriated all of the time. However, this disgust soon turned to ~~that~~ Scout finding him 'fascinating' when she realised that she had prejudged him again, as Mr Dolphus chooses to live with the Black Community rather than living that way because "he can't help himself". In this way, Scout learns that not everyone is racist and prejudiced towards black people, and how not everything

| may be as it 'at first seems. |



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

There is thorough understanding of text and ideas but there is not enough development of language points. It was given 11 out of 24 marks, band 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

When writing about the language features of an extract, make sure to write about why you think the writer has chosen particular words, phrases or images.

Question 9

Question 9

Violence in Today's Society

Many examiners enjoyed reading the responses to this topic.

AO4 (i) and (ii) Content and ideas:

Many candidates offered a range of causes of violence most commonly video games, such as Call of Duty and Grand Theft Auto, and offered a range of solutions to a violent society, some more draconian than others. There seems to be a lot of concern about violence and one candidate commented: 'Scary to think you might pass someone in the street who is carrying an instrument that could potentially kill you.' The examiner commented that it was a shame young people have to think this way!

Solutions that were offered were across quite a wide range: the need for a greater police presence on the streets, CCTV cameras everywhere, improved lighting, lessons about violence and its effects in school, better parenting, the creation of clubs for teenagers, sport, the re-introduction of the death penalty and the banning of hoodies.

Candidates engaged well with the task and examiners commented that better candidates sustained a sense of audience and purpose in responses that were accurate and ambitious. Most candidates were able to maintain the appropriate tone and there was an appropriate development of ideas. At the highest levels, candidates wrote compelling pieces that were clearly intended for a general audience of newspaper readers. They successfully appealed to their audience, varied their sentences and vocabulary for effect, showing conscious crafting of language and employing rhetorical and structural devices.

Some candidates did not structure the response as a letter. Some responses could clearly be understood to be an 'open letter' to a newspaper; however, some candidates' responses were more like an essay rather than a letter. Weaker candidates did not answer in the form of a letter and lost focus on the audience and purpose of the task or presented undeveloped ideas. Examiners commented that some candidates lost focus on the task and wrote a diatribe about violence rather than coming up with suggestions and solutions.

There were quite a few candidates who had not paragraphed their work or who paragraphed ineffectively. Paragraphing was sometimes lacking in otherwise organised responses.

One examiner commented that where explicit planning was used the students tended to be more successful.

AO4(iii) (Spelling, punctuation and grammar).

Examiners commented on the usual range of errors – comma splicing, lack of sentence control, problems with spelling, homophones and problems with capital letters. Some examiners commented about a lack of a range of punctuation but other examiners commented that candidates are learning to master the use of appropriate punctuation for the context. Some examiners commented that there was an improvement in accuracy.

^{the same} the streets that my children will walk! Do you? Would you stand by and let your children walk to school knowing a child ~~killer~~ killer is on the loose? ^{And} NO! ~~And~~ you should not have to! A life sentence should mean life!



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

While this is not strictly a letter (it could be an open letter to a newspaper), there is quite a secure, sustained realisation of purpose and audience. It engages well with the audience with effective ideas. Mark 11 out of 16, band 4.

There is a range of sentence structures and the vocabulary is varied and reasonably extensive. Spelling is almost always accurate, with occasional slips. Mark 5 out of 8, band 2.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Always make sure that you use the correct form to show a secure sense of purpose as well as demonstrating a good sense of audience.

This is an extract from an impressive response to Question 9.

Not only is it the wellbeing of our possessions for which I am concerned - offences against the person is becoming a more prominent problem across the country. The well-respected barrister Mr Deed recently spoke out about grievous bodily harm, stating that it is 'a very serious matter which needs to be tackled persistently in order to create a safe society in which we can all rise to be the very best individuals that we can^{be} - a capability that we all possess'. His insistence to actively seek to prevent violence is solidly justifiable, particularly

as over 160 individuals have visited our local hospital in the last month ^{alone} on account of unprovoked attacks. Perhaps even more worryingly so is the fact that the police were unable to identify over half of the perpetrators of these vicious, ~~vicious~~ outbursts. A violent society inevitably increases pressure on the police service, but I feel it is essential to have officers stationed in areas notorious for violence so that we can remedy the problem at the source.

Finally, we must consider the financial aspect of ~~enact~~ enforcing these safety regulations. I strongly feel that increasing the number of CCTV cameras will dissuade individuals from committing acts of violence but will also successfully identify those who do. Am I suggesting that the council who are lacking funds in every department increase the focus on our safety, overlooking other aspects of society which we seek to improve? I certainly am. After all, you can't put a price on the safety of a person.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response achieves precision and clarity in presenting compelling and sophisticated ideas. There is a strong, consistent fulfilment of the task. Spelling is not consistently accurate, but the occasional slips do not impede meaning or achieving a full mark answer given the range of ambitious vocabulary. The response was awarded full marks, 16 + 8.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Note confident tone and strongly developed ideas in this response.

Question 10

Question 10

Cycling and Walking

Examiners enjoyed reading the responses to this question.

Some examiners felt this task was done better than Question 9.

This was slightly more popular than Question 9.

AO4 (i) and (ii) Content and ideas:

Many candidates seemed familiar with the appropriate techniques for an article and were able to use them effectively and examiners commented positively on the attempts at humour to persuade their intended audience e.g. 'Bikes are not that fast and unless you're Usain Bolt, legs are even slower.' Many examiners commented on the strong sense of audience and purpose demonstrated in the majority of responses, even if the language controls were not always as secure. Better responses produced a lively article well focused on their teenaged audience with a controlled use of informal tone. At the highest levels, candidates used a convincing tone, humour and compelling points in support of their argument. These responses tended to use complex vocabulary and a range of language devices integrated seamlessly into the writing. There were many obvious attempts of persuasive and rhetorical devices used effectively e.g. 'wicked walking and cool cycling'.

Several examiners commented that those candidates who disagreed with the statement often produced better responses.

They tended to use humour to see the other side such as avoiding 'helmet hair' and not being sweaty on meeting up with friends. The majority of candidates agreed with the statement and looked at the health benefits of getting the 'beach body', the economic aspects of saving money and being with friends instead of parents. There were a number of responses that also looked at the green aspects of saving the environment, carbon footprint, emissions, etc. but these were fewer in number. The disadvantages were also acknowledged, such as the potential dangers or journeys taking longer.

Most candidates did well with sustaining the purpose and had a clear focus upon the audience as teenagers, adapting their style accordingly, although a few were too colloquial.

One response scolded the reader, 'What are you doing? Don't answer. Let me guess. Sitting on your bottom and staring at a laptop...'

The irony was not lost on the examiner!

Weaker responses often had unclear or undeveloped ideas or inappropriate register.

Some examiners commented that weaker candidates did not do very well in response to this question. It was difficult for them to find a voice to write the magazine article; many ended up being too formal (and somewhat pedestrian at times) in the way they approached the task. Some responses were rather short and undeveloped.

AO4(iii): Spelling, punctuation and grammar:

Similar points were made by examiners to those on Question 9.

It's coming towards the days of summer anyway, so walking and cycling should not be a problem. Walking and cycling through the streets in summer is like a breath of fresh air... how amazing! I've seen many young teenagers walking and cycling with friends, this again can be a good way to socialise with others and a good way to catch up.

Walking and cycling can also help you have better adventure as you are able to explore more roads and more places, so new things everyday!

I remember the days when I used to cycle to school, everyday my body was full of energy, whereas my best friend was always asleep by second lesson... no wonder she was always putting on unnecessary weight. Ahh, no one believed me when I explained how important it is to walk and cycle but now my metabolic rate is very good and I always feel light and fresh as a daisy!

Walking is good for a maximum of half an hour if that's how long your journey is, but if your destination is 45 mins - one hour away, then cycle! You can show off your fitness and independence to your other mates, maybe this could encourage them to walk and cycle more, if it is indeed the best way of getting around to other places.

I cannot think of any negative reasons why walking and cycling are not the best ways of getting around.

In your PE ~~or~~ ^{or} sports lesson, if you are encouraged by your teacher to becoming more fit then instead of tiring yourself by ~~working~~ ^{WORKING} out, then travel around places by walking and cycling 'cause I am definitely sure you were told at least once in your life to increase your health and fitness.

Riding a bike and using your legs do not exactly cost money so why not? Cars and public transport are costly and also very unhealthy, so what's the point?



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

There is a secure and sustained realisation of the purpose and audience, with secure organisation. Mark 9 out of 16, band 3.

There is comma splicing, but spelling is accurate and sentences are purposefully structured. Mark 5 out of 8, band 2.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note the secure and sustained sense of purpose and awareness of how to address the intended audience.

This is an extract from the middle of a successful response to Question 10.

You may not ~~be~~ be gaining any weight now, but that's because you have got an extremely fast metabolism that could probably digest an entire cow in 10 minutes, but it's not always going to be that way. We've all got that friend who eats like an absolute pig now, and stays stick thin, but honestly later in life, you will be the one looking great at your high school reunion if you ~~re~~ consider these next few steps.

Step one - live, love, laugh. As previously mentioned; treat yourself now and again, do something you enjoy, go out with some friends to a theme park or even just to town. A motto of ours is 'stay happy and you'll stay young', so do things that you enjoy and you will always look like you are glowing from the inside out.

Step two - (here's the hard part) Abandon the car or bus for a little while. We all know it's easy to just jump in a car and be on your way, but easy it brings, next time you plan a fun trip into town, ^{we} challenge you to dust off your old bike that's been sitting in the garage for the past 3 years, and take it for a ride! You may even find it fun! Being out in the open air, smelling the breeze, feeling the sun caress your skin, gliding past beautiful views of nature and wildlife. Or if you don't ride a bike, walk there! Did you know that you burn the same amount of calories walking a given distance, than you do running that same distance.

Step three - Spice it up a little! If you are one that gets bored easily or can't bear to be alone, try listening to music, or inviting another one of your friends to walk or cycle with you. Could be a great icebreaker for you and your crush!

Some safety precautions of course would be to perhaps listen to your ipod with one earphone only in order to be able to hear for cars, and to always concentrate on where you are walking, even if you are in deep

conversation with the core of your life.

We can guarantee you that if you follow these three simple steps (all in moderation of course) then you'll be well on your way to being in good shape for adulthood. There are a multitude of ways in



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

There is a strong, consistent fulfilment of the writing task and the response is sharply focused on the purpose and audience. The ideas are compelling and fully developed and organisation is convincing. Mark 16 out of 16, top of band 5.

AO4 (iii) is consistently accurate overall – although there are occasional slips, it is purposeful and sustained. Mark 8 out of 8, top of band 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Look at how the organisation and strong register help the candidate to keep a firm focus on purpose and audience.

Paper Summary

Candidates' work often reached a very high standard. There was evidence of good preparation of the texts and good awareness of how to respond to the questions. There was evidence of strong personal responses, dealing precisely with the language of the texts and how this communicated the writer's ideas. In their writing, candidates often were able to demonstrate a strong sense of audience and purpose in writing that was clear and effective.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

Candidates should ensure that in Section A (Reading) they:

- Engage in a sustained manner with the writer's use of language and its effects.
- Analyse the writer's use of language rather than summarising quotations.
- Choose an appropriate extract for part b) that allows them to explore the writer's language fully in relation to the writer's presentation of ideas, themes or characters.
- Avoid slipping into narrative instead of analysing the text.
- Ensure that their comments are fully rooted in the extracts.

In Section B (Writing), they should:

- Address the audience, which was clearly specified in the two questions.
- Develop ideas effectively and present them in a sustained response.
- Use a range of sentences, correctly punctuated.
- Use a range of punctuation and vocabulary appropriate for the task.
- Check work for common errors.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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