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# Examiners' Report November 2017

GCSE English Language 1EN0 01

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## Introduction

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in English Language is a linear course. It consists of two externally examined components and one endorsement for Spoken Language. Paper 1 is worth 40% of the total GCSE and consists of two sections, lasting for one hour and forty-five minutes in total. Candidates are recommended to spend one hour on section A which tests reading with questions on an unseen 19th century fiction extract of approximately 650 words. In November of 2017, this was an extract from *The Mill on the Floss* by George Eliot.

There are four questions which increase in difficulty with the following mark breakdown: Q1 = 1 mark, Q2 = 2 marks, Q3 = 6 marks and Q4 = 15 marks. Questions 1 and 2 test AO1: Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Question 3 tests AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views and Question 4 tests AO4: evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references. Section B tests writing and candidates are recommended to spend 45 minutes on this section which is worth a total of 40 marks, giving the paper a total of 64 marks. In this section, there is a choice of two writing tasks, linked by a theme to the reading extract. One of the writing tasks provides two images that students can use to help them generate ideas for their writing. Students can write a response that draws on just one or neither of the images. This is an untiered specification and the choice of texts and questions set are such that all candidates are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing. In November of 2017, candidates found the paper to be engaging and interesting and they responded well to it.

## Question 1

Question one is a single mark question which tests the ability of candidates to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This low-tariff question is intended to lead candidates into the examination and was completed successfully by the majority of candidates in the November 2017 paper. The examples below indicate the most common responses seen which was 'level with the upstairs window', though others gave the full phrase 'Her boat was on a level with the upstairs window'; all of these responses were awarded the single mark that was available. Where candidates were unsuccessful they either chose a section of the text from the stipulated line references lines 1-4 which did not answer the question or chose text from outside the line references given.

1 From lines 1-4, identify the phrase which describes how high the floodwaters were.

"Her boat was on level with the upstairs windows."



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer successfully identifies the phrase and is awarded the available mark.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

This answer gives just the words from the passage. It isn't even necessary to use speech marks on this particular question.

1 From lines 1-4, identify the phrase which describes how high the floodwaters were.

It says "Her boat was on a level  
with the upstairs windows"



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This candidate successfully identifies the phrase required and is awarded the mark available for this question.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

In order to be quick on this single mark question, candidates should just write down the phrase which is being asked for. There is no need to explain or to add any words of your own.

## Question 2

Question two is worth two marks and, like question one, tests candidates ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This question develops from question one by asking candidates to focus upon a longer section of text and by allowing candidates to express answers in their own words as well as using quotations from the text. The question asked candidates to give two ways in which danger is made clear to the reader. The layout, with its use of separate lines numbered 1 and 2 is intended to structure the answer for candidates and to ensure that they include two ways, in order to gain the two marks that are available. This question was answered successfully by the majority of candidates. Where candidates were unsuccessful they often failed to recognise that the question was focusing upon danger and therefore marks were not awarded for text from within the line references that did not have this as its focus. Other unsuccessful answers referred to text from outside the line references given.

2 From lines 10-16, give **two** ways in which danger is made clear to the reader.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 "I fear the man is drowned; he was carried down the Rippe."

2 "part of the mill fell with the crash of trees and stones against it"



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate correctly identifies two quotations from the text and so is awarded two marks. The two parts of the text that relate to danger are that a man has drowned and that the flood waters have caused part of the mill to collapse. This answer makes use of the two lines to separate the two parts of the answer.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make use of the layout to help you separate the different parts of your answer.

2 From lines 10-16, give **two** ways in which danger is made clear to the reader.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 "I see the man is drowned."

2 "Maggie with eyes of intense life"



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This answer scores one mark for successfully identifying the phrase about the drowned man. The second point is on lines 21 and 22 and so falls outside the line references for this question.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Take great care when you are given line references for a question. Your answer must come from within the given range of lines. Check that you have not used something from elsewhere in the passage.

2 From lines 10-16, give **two** ways in which danger is made clear to the reader.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 The use of small sentences may they have no time to waste as it is dangerous.

2 "Get in quickly"



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This candidate identifies that there is no time to waste in part one and gives the quotation "Get in quickly" at part two. The two points made cover the same bullet point in the mark scheme and only identify one way in which danger is made clear to the reader. For this reason, this answer scores one mark.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Make sure that you are saying two different things about the passage or identifying two quotations that focus upon different aspects of the question. This answer tries to write about technique and the use of small sentences. That is not what this question is asking for and you should not use your time doing so; simply find the two ways that the question asks for and put those in your answer.

### Question 3

Question three is worth six marks and tests candidates ability to explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. The most notable feature of this question is that it asks candidates to comment upon both language and structure. The mark scheme is split into three levels of two marks each with the instruction that, responses that are unbalanced cannot access Level 2 or above. This is an important feature and one that centres should be aware of. However, candidates should use the mark tariff as a guide about how much to write in response in this question and it is quite possible to attain all six marks in the one page provided in the answer booklet and there is an example of just such a response below. It was a feature of some responses in the November 2017 paper that candidates spent too long responding to question 3 at the expense of later questions on the paper. In order to access the marks in levels two and three, it is not necessary for the language and structure comments to be equally weighted, only that the answer must contain an analysis of both. Stronger answers were those that offered an analysis of both features and which were focused upon how these were used to show the relationship between Maggie and Tom. Weaker responses wrote about only language or structure or only offered comments upon features and did not clearly explain the effects that the writer had sought to achieve and were not able to to examine in detail those features and so reach the marks in levels two and three.

3 In lines 10-22, how does the writer use language and structure to show the relationship between Maggie and Tom?

Support your views with reference to the text.

In line 10, Tom speaks ~~with~~ "in a voice of deep astonishment", which clearly indicates they haven't seen each other in a long time, and that he wasn't expecting his sister - no matter their bond - to come and see him. The dynamics of Maggie and Tom's relationship are amazingly explored in lines 17-22. After getting out of a ~~situation of emergency~~ <sup>situation of emergency,</sup> they both realize that they are now helping each other, facing difficulties together: and the fact that they are, Tom feels so helplessly surprised that he can't even speak, ~~what~~ <sup>having</sup> had this "new revelation" - words such "revelation", "deep", "beyond his vision" and the word "life" - repeated twice in the lines - make the reader feel like ~~something~~ <sup>what is happening</sup> was nothing other than destiny, like they are now seeing the grand scheme <sup>of events</sup> that life is - ~~being together~~ <sup>all of them leading to</sup> the



battle of life against death, which has to be "fought in a joint effort."  
~~then~~ who really is at fault in their relationship is ~~easy to discern~~ <sup>not to discern</sup>  
while Maggie has a "heavy <sup>beaten</sup> ~~pale~~ face" - as a victim would - Tom  
looks pale with "awe and humiliation", feeling shame for ~~being~~ <sup>being</sup> saved  
by his sister even though he ~~wasn't~~ didn't deserve it.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

An answer that successfully interweaves analysis of language and structure. This answer does not signpost which of the two features it is addressing, rather it gives a well-integrated analysis of the passage that includes both language and structure. The answer begins crisply without any unnecessary introduction. The first part of the answer identifies language techniques, quotes extensively and with discrimination from the passage and above all, offers a perceptive analysis of their relationship. This candidate is focused upon directly addressing the question rather than simply amassing elements of language and structure.

The second part of the answer is focused upon structure with the quotation of the matched phrases about their facial expressions and a subtle insight into their relationship identifying Maggie's role as the 'victim' and Tom's shame at being rescued by his sister, someone he perceives as weaker than him and who owes him little, particularly being rescued in this manner. This is an answer that is focused upon addressing the question and not merely feature-spotting elements of language and structure and which offers both of the required features and a perceptive understanding of the relationship of the two named characters.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Always remember how many marks are available and so how much time you should spend on this question. No need for an introduction; get straight into your answer. Remember to focus upon the question and not simply spotting language features without relating them to the focus of the question.

3 In lines 10-22, how does the writer use language and structure to show the relationship between Maggie and Tom?

Support your views with reference to the text.

The writer uses language to show that Maggie and Tom have a caring relationship.

'Get in quickly' shows that Maggie wants to ensure Tom's safety as quickly as possible.

'quickly' helps to emphasise this ~~as~~ as the adverb shows the ~~text~~ action that Maggie wants Tom to perform.

The writer <sup>also</sup> uses structure to show the caring within the relationship. The use of short sentences 'to bring me... no one else' allows the reader to hear the urgency within Maggie's voice. Therefore indicating she wants Tom to be safe as soon as possible.

The writer also uses language to show the relationship is close between Maggie and Tom. 'Humiliation' is used to describe how Tom feels about being rescued. This may be because he is embarrassed about being helped by Maggie or feels he should've helped her first.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

This is an example of an upper level 2 response which was given a mark of 4. The opening language comment is valid and is supported but lacks detail in the quality of the explanation and on its own would not move out of level 1. The correct identification of an appropriate adverb could have been improved by a more insightful comment. The middle paragraph relates to structure and with its focus upon the urgent tone of Maggie's voice it is clearly out of level 1 and into level 2, explaining rather than merely commenting.

The final paragraph returns to a point about language and offers a more subtle insight to their relationship and succeeds in moving this answer into the upper level 2 marks. The answer has a good focus upon the question and makes good use of its time by not including an introduction or conclusion of any sort.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Make sure that you are clear about what you think the question is asking and what your response is and then go and look for features of language and structure that support what you want to say. Don't begin with the quotations or techniques, begin by knowing what your answer is.

3 In lines 10-22, how does the writer use language and structure to show the relationship between Maggie and Tom?

Support your views with reference to the text.

The writer uses language and structure to show the relationship between Tom and Maggie by using short and ~~sharp~~<sup>sharp</sup> lines when they are talking to each other, this shows that they don't really get on, but they have to communicate to be able to be safe. Another way would be Tom's actions and giving out orders; shows that he thinks that he can order Maggie around. Their facial expressions show that their relationship is bad as well, because Maggie's facial expressions show that she's a little shocked and angry about the way Tom has reacted, and Tom's facial expressions show that he feels a bit concerned about what to do or say because of his past relationship with his sister. Lastly the silence shows that the relationship is bad because siblings normally talk all the time ~~however~~ however Tom and Maggie just sit there looking at each other confused and nervous about what to say to each other.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

This is an example of an answer that achieves a level 1 mark of 1. It cannot be given a higher mark because it does not make any comment about structure. It is often not very clear in what it means and it does not offer enough supporting references.

The opening of the answer refers to 'short and sharp lines' without ever indicating what it is referring to. It would be true to say that there are some short sentences used by both characters, but these are often part of a longer block of speech by the two characters and do not represent 'short and sharp lines.' As we do not know which lines are being referred to, it is not possible to credit the interpretation, part of which is taken from the italicised introduction.

Credit is given for the recognition of the use of the imperative, although this candidate does not say that and does not offer any text in support of the point made. The section about facial expressions again lacks clarity and focus, is largely impressionistic and does not offer any distinct language or structural focus. The conclusion is based upon a sweeping and unsupported conjecture about the nature of sibling relationships and once again, does not direct the reader to any particular element of the writer's technique or any particular words or phrases used. In essence, this candidate has not focused upon the key wording of the question, 'how does the writer', with sufficient clarity as to be able to achieve a mark beyond level 1.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Always make sure that you are answering the question. Whenever you make a comment always say where in the text you found that, giving a direct quotation or referring to it very closely so that your reader can follow what you mean.

## Question 4

Question four is the highest mark tariff question in Section A and candidates would be wise to ensure that they allocate sufficient time to this question. This question tests candidates ability to evaluate texts critically and support their evaluations with appropriate textual references. The focus of evaluation is upon how well something has been achieved, not merely upon how it has been achieved; it is an assessment of the relative success of the writer rather than simply an explanation of the techniques that have been used. It is true that in order to offer a meaningful evaluation one must be able to show a well-informed understanding of the text and be able to support this with close reference to the text.

The focus of this question was upon the creation of strong feelings in the reader. Once again, candidates must focus upon the question asked if they are to be successful. Better answers offered wide-ranging evaluations that were closely focused upon the Assessment Objective and which used apt text selection to support the points being made. Weaker answers were often brief and showed only a partial understanding of the text, which limited their ability to evaluate how successfully the writer had achieved those effects. Weaker answers often generalised about the nature of family relationships, even their own family relationships, rather than focusing upon the text as a crafted artefact with the question asking them to focus upon how well the writer had created strong feelings in the reader.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

The writer uses written as well as multi modal language to invoke strong feelings within the reader.

The writer powerfully does this immediately with the opening discourse as Maggie manages to get to the family home through all the "distress" which makes the reader feel a strong feeling of relief. Furthermore, in the opening dialogue we see a conversation between Maggie and Tom and this would cause strong feelings within the readers as Maggie is surely her brother who she has recently had a bad relationship with.

When Tom says "Alone Maggie," this shows us shock at his sister being able to do what she had had done and shows appreciation as well as concern which is a natural brotherly feeling and would represent to the audience the clear development of a relationship between the two characters.

Strong feelings are effectively invoked in the reader in the tense scene where both Maggie and Tom sit staring at each other in silence "with eyes of tense life." The audience would also feel very tense

while reading this wondering what will occur next and the lack of discourse between the two characters creates an even more intense atmosphere. The author uses specific verbs to make the reader connect and feel sorry for the characters. The extensive use of adjectives such as beaten, weary and pale are inserted intentionally to create the scene clearly for the reader so they can have strong feelings while reading. The tense starts ends with Tom uttering his "Maggie," which is clearly a childhood nickname and this would create emotional feelings within the reader as it represents the turning point in the relationship between the two and prior to this the writer had created a connection between the audience and the characters.

Anxiety within the audience is slowly developed and it begins with the quote "Nothing else was said," which acts as a discourse marker to introduce the impending danger that faces Maggie and Tom up ahead. As "some wooden machinery," began to float westward and ~~the~~ the sound came the reader no start freely removed as they wonder what their fate will be. The use of Tom to realize that death was now closer a certain certainty would have readers feel extremely melancholy however, in one last moment ~~the author~~ Maggie and Tom have one last embrace as Tom held onto Maggie and the author relates it to when they had been younger and "roamed the dairy fields together." The use of this ending was to ~~very~~ imply that Maggie and Tom had reformed the love that had been lost which would be heart-breaking for readers as they had ~~not~~ ~~known~~ when they had just rekindled their relationship.

However, the writer could be waited longer before causing Maggie and Tom to meet their ~~deaf~~ dreadful fate to allow readers more time to connect with them which would have caused even stronger feelings when the accident happened. Overall the writer successfully and effectively makes strong feelings within the reader in this extract.





**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is a strong level 4 response that begins with an introduction which is not wholly clear or helpful, but which develops strongly after that point. The opening paragraph successfully identifies a range of strong feelings: distress, shock, relief appreciation and concern. This is a useful indicator of the quality of insight and appreciation of the subtleties of feeling that are represented in the passage and which this candidate is sensitively aware of. Weaker answers often represented the strong feelings of the question in much simpler terms.

It is after paragraph one where this answer becomes more consistently evaluative in its analysis of the relationship between Maggie and Tom and the strong feelings that are created. This can be seen in the focus upon on the range of adjectives on the second page of the answer. One of the strengths of this answer is its clear recognition of the reader; writer relationship and its evaluation about how successfully the writer is being in communicating to that readership. The final paragraph is strongly and critically evaluative, building upon the perceptive point made in the previous paragraph about the successful creation of a relationship which is then quickly destroyed.



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**Examiner Tip**

Remember that the question is asking you to focus upon how well something has been done, not just how it has been achieved. Try to include evaluative comments that are closely integrated in your answer with what you think about the passage and how successful the writer has been.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

Firstly, the writer has successfully ~~created~~ attempted to create strong feelings in the reader.

Furthermore, in the <sup>opening of the extract</sup> ~~first paragraph~~ the writer has set the setting ~~of~~ to show the there end to create ~~imagery~~ for an image in the reader's mind. 'she heard no sound, she saw no objects moving. Her foot lay on a level with the upstairs windows.' This suggests something tragic or sudden has happened. This makes the reader imagine what the scene looks like and it can create a strong ~~feeling~~ sense of danger from the words 'no sound' and 'no objects moving'.

~~Continue in a list~~ Also, just after the opening at the end of the opening the tone of the girl character is ~~never~~ revealed. 'she called out in a loud, piercing voice, 'Tom, where are you? Mother, where are you? Here is Maggie!'' The tone is shown to be quite stressed, worried and afraid. This creates a strong feeling of sadness from the reader because you want to help the girl ~~and~~ but can't. ~~and~~ can also ~~and~~ the words 'loud' and 'piercing' could provoke ~~or~~ feelings of pity for the child from the ~~writer's~~ ~~choice~~ of vocabulary.

Secondly, A rhetorical question the writer uses could provoke a mixture of emotions from the reader. 'Alone Maggie' this could suggest everyone is dead ~~or~~ missing or gone. This bit creates strong feelings of pity, sadness, a bit of ~~hope~~ and a bit of happiness that she ~~isn't~~ isn't done, but this extract so far seems like a little ~~tragic~~ over-dramatic ~~type~~ survival TV show at the moment.

Continuing on. The writer has used a compound sentence to create strong feelings of relief in the reader. 'God has taken care of me, to bring me to you.' This to ~~make~~ makes the reader feel relieved that she isn't done but also creates a strong desire to want to save the children and to help them.

Another feeling the writer has created is fear this is shown by emotive language such as 'ple', 'intense', 'betwixt' 'veers'. These words

are a very good variety of vocabulary used to make the reader feel ~~at~~ for the children's safety, and to ~~feel~~ create a sense of hope that they will survive.

Finally, the writer has used one sentence ~~provides~~ to show the tense and dangerous atmosphere. For example 'Maggie could make no answer

but a long, deep sob of that mysterious wordless  
happiness that is one with pain; that creates  
a strong feeling of emptiness or doom that  
was beyond the children and that that  
the reader picks up on in the same  
paragraphs.

In conclusion there is quite a variety  
of feelings created and I think the  
writer has successfully created that  
and has created an excellent piece  
of text.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a mid-level 3 answer that exemplifies many features of that level. The answer works steadily through the passage, section by section. The answer identifies a range of strong feelings explains where they come from, sometimes with greater clarity than at other times. The interpretation of Maggie's 'loud and piercing voice' evoking pity from the reader and creating feelings is explained but not strongly justified; the quotation offered in support is long and not closely focused. What follows is essentially an attempt at a clear explanation of a range of technical features focused upon the creation of strong feelings, variable in its success. There is some misinterpretation of Maggie and Tom as being children, but this does not strongly detract from the nature of the comments made about feelings. The concluding sentence includes a broad and unfocused evaluative statement that does not lift this answer out of level 3. The selection of references is not sufficiently targeted and the quality of insight and understanding does not enable this answer to analyse but merely to explain in most instances. A strong personal response is evident.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When you look for quotations to support the points you have made, try to use as little as you need. Keep quotations as direct and brief as you can, whilst ensuring that they support the point you are making.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

I do believe the writer has been successful in creating strong feelings in the reader. Firstly the way the writer uses small speech segments keep the reader engaged, if that was a lot of text with long paragraphs of speech the reader would start to get bored and lose interest. So they the writer uses small short pieces of dialog is successful as it will keep the reader interest and open for their feelings for the book to be created.

Secondly at the start of the extract straight away you don't know what's happen but your creating a feeling of fear for Maggie as she is in a dangerous position and you don't know why yet. "At first she heard ~~nothing~~ no sound, she saw no object moving. [...] she called out with a piercing voice, 'Tom where are you? Mother where are you?'" This quote is the probably the best example to prove my point also the way the writer

describes her shout to be ~~pe~~ piercing gives the ~~res~~ effect that Maggie is panicking and is in distraught as she is alone and can't find her family in this disaster.

on the other hand I believe he could of done better to be more successful near the end as I believe he could have put more detail into ~~to~~ what was coming their way and what capsized the boat ~~as~~ because if he did this then I believe that the reader could of had a better understanding leaving them with stronger feelings for Maggie and Tom at the end.

To conclude I do believe he is successful with creating feelings as he has a good use of language and ~~and~~ structure but to be clear I also believe he could have done better at putting more detail to the ending therefore even though I believe his ending should of had some more detail overall ~~to~~ I think he was successful.



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### Examiner Comments

This is an upper level 2 response because of its ability to offer straightforward opinions and comments but it does not offer clear explanations or effective support. The opening paragraph recognises the use of dialogue as a means of interest to the reader, but does not offer any textual support and by way of explanations falls back on the oft-used and incorrect belief that long paragraphs are, by their very nature, 'boring'. The candidate is able to comment upon the creation of fear and offer some support, albeit not particularly selective. The penultimate paragraph attempts evaluation but is too broad and sweeping in its assertions and offers no support. The reader is aware of what capsized the boat, making this part of the comment invalid.

The final point that it would create 'stronger feelings' for Maggie and Tom at the end is a valid comment, but the candidate is not able to explain the nature or type of feeling and neither is it able to offer any support. Although there is a better comment at the top of the second page of the answer it is this pervading characteristic of the answer, seen once again in the conclusion, that means it is accurately rewarded with a level 2 mark but struggles to demonstrate the qualities needed for level 3.



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### Examiner Tip

Think carefully about what you are trying to say and make sure that you are being clear and precise, not being too general or broad in your comments.

## Question 5

The specification entitles this section, Imaginative Writing, and it is worth reminding yourself about the range of what that entails. There is no set text type for this section; candidates are expected to produce clear and coherent text and to write for impact. Each question tells candidates that their work will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The question is marked against two assessment objectives and does not include a separate mark for SPAG. The two assessment objectives are AO5, which assess how well candidates can communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences; and in addition how well they organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. That Assessment Objective is worth 24 of the 40 marks available. Assessment Objective 6 accounts for the remaining 16 marks and assesses how well candidates use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. Candidates must choose one of the two questions available to them and are recommended to spend 45 minutes on this section. One of the questions will always make reference to a pair of printed images and in this instance, this was question 5 where candidates were asked to write about a childhood friendship. There is a deliberate and thematic link to the text that has been read for Section A and this is intended to encourage and support candidates in their writing. Candidates are free to make use of the images, or not, as they choose.

In November 2017, there was a reasonable balance between responses to question 5 and question 6. Many candidates seemed to draw upon childhood memories of school and the formation of long-lasting friendships. Most candidates were able to complete a piece of writing in the available time. For those who had not left sufficient time for the writing they should be aware that the mark scheme makes specific reference to structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. Therefore incomplete texts will not be able to access the full range of marks that is available for this question. As in the summer, there was a wonderful range of writing with many candidates writing movingly about friendships gained and sustained, or those that have been lost, all creating a genuine connection with the reader. Question 6 asked candidates to write about an exciting experience, featuring many fairground visits and moments of sporting triumph. Better responses were able to craft a response that had emotional depth, accessible characters as well as a defined structure. Both questions invite candidates to write about an experience that is real or imagined. Whichever is chosen, it is important that candidates remember the purpose of the writing task which is to write clear and coherent texts, and they should avoid the tendency to prioritise remaining true to a factual recount of a real incident over the opportunity to be creative in their imaginative use of language.

Once again, weaker answers were often incomplete, lacking in accuracy or assumed an understanding of character or setting that was not shared with the reader, making it difficult to fully engage with what was written.



Write your answer to Section B here:

In those <sup>later</sup> years of childhood, about twelve or thirteen, when one is on the cusp of a new chapter in their life, we need someone who will have our back and face ~~these~~ new challenges with us. For me, that was my friend Isaac. What made us gravitate towards one another was the fact that we had come from such different backgrounds but were so alike in spirit. I come from an ~~an~~ Indian family, ~~kids~~ and he from an English family that was English through and through. He relished coming to my house on those cold ~~these~~ winter Tuesdays, after football practice so he could step inside the incense infused atmosphere, browns and yellows and golds furnishing the house. He'd always take a long whiff upon entering and jokingly say 'ahh! Little India!' Indeed! It was a little India. My mum would always make us a curry after football, and Isaac would always ask for a re-fill on his milk, for his small English tongue <sup>was</sup> always unprepared for the spices. ~~My mum~~ This one winter he asked what I was doing for Christmas, and I told him I'd never celebrated it because I was a Muslim. I could tell by the astonished look on his face that I would be spending every December 25<sup>th</sup> for the rest of our friendship at his house. My first Christmas dinner was one of the happiest days of my life, because I had spent it with a person which I knew was always helping me grow, and I too would help him grow.

We spent long hours in the summer retreated in the woods, a dozen packs of Doritos being the days meals. We'd sit opposite each other, looking through the flickering heat of a campfire, and talk about anything and everything. We told each other our dreams; deepest secrets; who we had crushes on; our greatest fears; ~~and~~ at our young age we even talked about religion and whether God existed. When ~~the day's~~<sup>a</sup> ~~began to end~~ long day of philosophising came to an end and the sun's light that beamed through the leaves was now weaker than the flame of the fire, we knew we had to leave. Isaac was afraid of the dark.

One day, however, I'd devised a plan to rid him of his fear. In my backpack was a long and old cloth I had drenched in nail polish remover. ~~Once~~ when it began to get dark, and Isaac indicated he wanted to leave, I insisted he stay. I took the cloth out of my bag, cut it in two and wrapped each around it's own ~~or~~ thick and dry log. I could see that Isaac was increasingly aware of the ever imminent darkness. I gave him one of the small logs with their tips now wrapped up, and told him to hold it to the flame. To his amazement the wrapped side lit up into a torch.

'Wow!' he screamed, 'Is this what your dad learns in India?'

'No, you numpty!' I snapped back in humorous fashion, 'I learnt it from YouTube!'

I insisted that we now go for a stroll in the woods whilst it was dark. His crippling fear of the darkness had seemed to at once vanish, and he was now more eager than I. I remember that night vividly, us both wandering through the dark forest with our handmade torches. We felt like cavemen, warriors, hunters - although our constant ~~eat~~ crunching of Doritos Cool Original would always remind us that we were just pre-teens poking about after their curfew.

When we left the forest that night, and were walking down the road home, Isaac casually asked me, 'did you make those torches so ~~we~~ you could help me not be afraid of the dark?'

I was taken a back. 'No... I just thought it'd be a cool idea... y'know.'

He looked me straight in the eyes, and nodded. It came time that we part ways. Before he took a left down his road, he gave me a huge bear hug - as opposed to the ~~usual~~ usual handshake.

'Goodnight, pal' he said, and he went home.

He knew why I made those torches, and he knew that I knew that he knew why I'd made them. He told me his fear, and I helped him get over it. He'd done it for me countless times (I could barely talk to girls before he pushed me into my crush and made me talk to her!). I guess, in a way, that is what friends are for: to complete us.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This answer is one that excels in its maturity and control and its ability to sustain this throughout the narrative, and for these reasons, it was awarded full marks for each of the assessment objectives.

From its gentle beginning, this answer uses an extensive vocabulary in a manner that is not forced or ostentatious in any way. Its easy use of 'cusp', 'relished', 'gravitate' and 'incense infused atmosphere' all begin to mark this answer out as one that is in level 5 for A06. There is a sophisticated and sustained control of structure that creates a strongly cohesive answer that keeps the reader engaged right up to its final phrase, which is strongly emotive. The response shows a control of sentence structure that is truly impressive. The middle paragraph on the second page of the answer for, example, shows a flawless ability to control complex sentences to evoke a gentle nostalgia and to deepen our understanding of the central relationship in the piece.

As the paragraph comes to an end, and the day in the woods also comes to an end, there is a subtle declining cadence in the sentence that ends, 'we knew we had to leave.' This is followed by the short sentence that focuses the reader's interest upon a new feature of the story and so the reader's interest is sustained. A06 shows in its ability to control a wide variety of tone from the lush description of the Indian home to the wistful memories in the woods. The introduction of dialogue and the wonderfully bathetic use of teenage slang with, "No, you numpty! ... I learnt it from You Tube!", shows a further level of control that this writer can demonstrate. The final scene subtly portrays the insouciant bravado of teenage boys with a delicate sensitivity depicted in the simple but poignant dialogue, 'Goodnight, pal.' In this sentence, even the humble comma is well used to create a pause that enhances the sense of pathos. The final sentence with its use of the colon delivers the lesson that this writer has crafted from the opening line of the piece and which offers a mature and subtle insight into the nature of friendship.

This is writing that is deliberately sophisticated in its control of structure, use of imagery, creation of character and place; all created with the use of a wide vocabulary that is used to excellent effect. This candidate always knows the effect that they are trying to achieve and shows an outstanding and understated control of a wide range of writing techniques to achieve those effects. Precise vocabulary choices have been made and the reader is gently led deeper and deeper into the heart of their relationship until the final phrase, demonstrating a sustained control of structure and a powerful sense of textual cohesion that connects strongly with the reader.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Know where you are going to end as you begin to write. Plan the major elements of your writing as you begin; in that way your writing will have structure and a sense of shape.

Write your answer to Section B here:

Me and Jamal. We were and still are and will always be the best friends. Everything I have been through has been with him right by my side and we have enjoyed some amazing adventures that are etched into my memory for life and surely his also. From the age of 8 ~~to~~ up until now we have been inseparable (although teachers have tried many times)! From primary to secondary to College it has been me and him through thick and thin ~~with~~ whilst also meeting new people to enjoy our life journey with.

Stratford. The area that we were both raised and would eventually become with our childish antics. Using our own personal levi we were able to plot and know jokes without anybody realising. Although it carried no overt prestige as to the general world we were speaking completely wrong English, it carried high covert prestige as anyone who could speak that way gained instant respect. We would spend our days playing football in the park or exploring the whole estate seeing new things as each day went by. "You ain't no Me and Jamal." is what we would hear every 5 minutes. Everyone knew us. As night was about to crash upon our day we would ~~not~~ ball make our way home recalling the day's activities and laughing at the trouble we had caused.

I We engaged in all type's of communication written, multi modal and spoken. Any chance we got to speak we took it. We had various sleepovers which would always turn out to be the best night as I would please with my Mum "Pleaseee can Jamal sleep over." She could never bare to deny me and I would quickly speed over to his house to inform him and he would do the same. "Pleaseee can I sleep at Ma's house?" She would always let him and once there would never even be a nightmare.

On one specific sleepover Jamal had slept early and I knew this was my opportunity to create a lifetime memory. I filled my large 6 litre jug with ice cold water. I shivered just looking at it. I creek back into the bedroom giggling as I approached my practically lifeless body.

Splash!

I unloaded the entire jug of water onto him and he arose like a person from the dead. A piercing laugh left my mouth and rang all around the room as Jamal stared at me without emotion on his face. Water dripped from his face but he could not contain it as a huge smile came across his face and we both laughed. However, the joke was on me as Jamal proceeded to sleep on my bed leaving me the over bed to sleep on. Heartbreaking.

School was no different apart from the fact teachers consistently told us to stop what we were doing, that never fazed us though. We would consistently find ourselves in detention preaching our innocence as we displayed discontent when the teacher ignored us. We sat feet face to face during detention and could not contain ourselves, as the teacher always added extra minutes for our laughter. During secondary school teachers labelled us the Chuckle Brothers as some saw the funny side of the Maths we did but Moody Margarita never did. This was our Spanish teacher Mrs Margarita in class but outside we gave her the nick name Moody.

She would always keep us back after lesson and with us being young we laughed and mocked her Spanish accent which would not make situations any better.

Why we did it? I can not sure myself and with her not being a natural English speaker she would often make syntax errors and laughter would erupt the whole room only for her to turn and see it was just the old total laughing. We are a bit more mature than that now but still like to look back and laugh at our younger years.

Football was our main source of connection and we actually became friends through playing football. We would watch videos and shared our world star stars like Rooney and Ronaldo and we had intense chemistry on the football pitch. "Through ball Jamal," or Jay or I would call him and he would play me the ball and when would more than often result in a goal.

Our childhood was spent together doing crazy antics and playing football and we created everlasting memories along the way and which will always stay with us. Mo and Jamal are the best of friends.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

This is an example of an answer that also scores in the top level for A05 and A06 but at the lower end of the mark range. This reflects the fact that, although an undoubtedly strong answer, it does not control structure as well as the previous example and nor is its use of vocabulary and sentence control quite as strong.

There is a deliberate structuring effect used by the writer with single word or short phrases used to introduce each section and to orientate the reader. This is a deliberate effect created by the writer and is effective but not fully sustained to the end of the answer. Like the previous answer, this answer also manages to create a strong sense of nostalgia and a real sense of a relationship. There are some complex ideas which are well-handled and succinctly expressed through a precise use of language, such as the distinction between 'overt prestige' and 'covert prestige' on the first page of the answer.

The extensive vocabulary, used strategically, which is a feature of the A06 mark scheme, can be seen in a number of places, such as the incident with the water jug towards the bottom of the second page of the answer. The sentence, 'I crept back into the bedroom giggling as I approached his practically lifeless body' demonstrates a strong control of vocabulary, building suspense for the reader with the description of the 'practically lifeless' sleeper, an intensifier that helps to build the effect. Describing his friend as a 'body' deepens our appreciation of just how deeply asleep he is, and so how shocking the moment is going to be. This answer controls idiom, makes use of simple dialogue and also makes deliberate use of alliteration for comic effect. It reaches a strong and emphatic conclusion expressed in a simple sentence, a conclusion that the reader has appreciated and understood through reading the piece. This answer does enough to get into the lower levels of level 5 but lacks the wider control and sophistication that we have seen in the previous answer.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Try to think about how you want your reader to react at different parts of your writing and choose the best techniques that you know to achieve those effects.



Write your answer to Section B here:

cold, worried, ~~and~~ <sup>hungry</sup> ~~scared~~ - What way should we be turned? As me and my best friend bethany walked slowly through ~~the~~ the pitch black, freezing woods all we could see was ~~shew~~ shadows around the floor ~~we~~ & were we walked. ~~holding hands~~ squeeening & are hands together me thinking to myself if Bethany holds my hands any tighter my blood vessels are going to pop like a balloon getting pop with a pin. "Ow!" I shouted "what?" said Bethany "your hurting my <sup>hand</sup> ~~head~~" I said ~~quietly~~ quietly. ~~oh~~ "Ahhhh!" ~~scarmed~~ Bethany I turned my head and my eyes popped out of my head all I seen was a tall black figure stood in the distance and I notice something long and ~~shiny~~ shiny in his hehel from where the moonlight shone onto it.

Me and Bethany took one step back turned around and Boo! the black figure was ~~s~~ there that close to are faces I could feeling him breathing on me. Run!!! Bethany shouted with fear.

Running for my life with my best friend ~~dragging~~ dragging me down behind I told her "Keep running Beth". As we ran I could see a big bright light so I pulled Bethany and ~~kee~~ kept running as fast as I could.

We ~~ran~~ got to the light and nothing no way to get out, no one to help us nothing. I looked all into the sky and sobbed "I am ~~every~~ ever going to get out of here!"



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a relatively brief response that achieves marks in level 2 for both A0s. For A05, there is an awareness of audience and this can be seen from the deliberate use of the triple to open with. Though this may not be well controlled, it does show a deliberate intention to write with a reader in mind. The answer orders its information across a number of paragraphs such that the reader is able to follow the nightmare-like narrative. The answer ends very suddenly and without any real sense of resolution. One may speculate that this is an issue of time. However, whatever the reason, it leaves the reader without a real sense of development or satisfying conclusion. This answer makes use of simile, though after the first paragraph which strove towards a more expressive vocabulary with 'pitch black freezing woods', the language choices quickly become simple, such as, 'something long and shiney' or 'big bright light.' It is for these reasons that the A06 mark remains in level 2. As the answer moves onto the second page, there is a significant degree of repetition involving running which is not presented in a manner that engages the readers interest. The final paragraph does end on a simple cliffhanger with the attempted use of a rhetorical question to create mystery and suspense, although the choice of exclamation mark over a question mark here indicates where this candidate could have improved. This answer is firmly in level 2 because of its ability to show an awareness of audience and write with a range of correctly spelt vocabulary, but not being able to select material for successful rhetorical devices and not being able to vary its language choices for interest and effect.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

If you are using dialogue, try to use it to move the story along or to give the reader additional information or an insight into a character's thoughts and feelings.

## Question 6

As candidates have a choice of writing response, much of what was written to introduce question 5 applies here. The assessment objectives are identical to question five and the need to produce writing that has impact and which is accurate, clear and coherent for the reader is equally paramount. Question six also had a thematic link to the passage with its focus upon an exciting experience that happened to you or someone that you know. Candidates made good use of the source material whilst others wrote about a wide range of experiences which were lively and interesting to read.

Write your answer to Section B here:

Splash! The wave dribbled up onto the beach ~~as~~ as I flicked up. To this day my favourite holidays were beach holidays, when the sun shined like a flashlight. The gently breeze swept my hair as I excitingly ran back and forth into the calm, blue, beautiful water. What would I do for an experience like this again? Anything. The water sweeping back the sand. Others enjoying the times they never knew would come. As I ~~turn around~~ <sup>ran</sup> after running back into the water, I turn to see all the families around me with smiles as big as a giraffes neck. It was the best feeling anyone could ask for. // I ~~see~~ saw a little boy about 15 years younger than me, he was making, what looked like a kingdom however a mean wave came to crash it down, ~~it came~~ the kingdom came crumbling down like a biscuit. I couldn't not help him. ~~I picked~~ The boy was livid. I picked up his bucket ~~and~~ ~~stand~~ and thought to myself, I never want to grow old. I suggested

to the boy,  
"Why don't we make a bigger castle?"

The boy's face lit up like the sun and his smile ~~on~~ came back to life. We made the biggest castle.

I thought this day could not get any better.

Suddenly music came on, I looked around, everyone was up on their feet dancing. The feel of how excited I was ~~was~~ just un-describable. Speechless, I was speechless.

~~I thought~~ It was only 1pm, what else could ~~it~~ happen?

The music faded and I felt relaxed. Lying there, on a sunbed, there's no place I'd rather be. I thought I'd take a little nap.

"Amy!" I kept hearing my name.

"Amy, Amy, Amy"

I felt a sudden shock.

They'd come to see me, my friends. What a dream.

Ibiza was looking up for me.

That evening we all gossiped and looked gorgeous as we got ready to go out together and make the day perfect.

Beep! The taxi was here and ready to take us to the club. I felt nervous yet so excited, this was my first night out, and what a night it became to be.

At the club the music was booming; every space was filled; all faces had smiles. What more could you ask for? No one had a shy spot that night, we all let our hair down. We partied the night away, as they say. Everyone was laughing like as if we was watching the funniest comedian on earth.

Next thing we knew a horse and carriage was waiting outside for us. We hopped in without having a care in the world.

I couldn't ask for better friends; a better day; a better night; better people around that day. It was just perfect.

All I thought the holiday was going to be, a lonely, relaxed, quiet few days away. In the end it turned out to be a relaxing couple of days and a full on perfect day.

I woke up, in my hotel room. Thankfully! With my girls and before we left that evening, we took a walk up a hill to watch the rise. It was the most enchanting, speechless, beautiful thing you could ever see.

We couldn't leave without a peaceful day, catching the last bit of that sun that shined like a flashlight. The music that came on at 1pm, and watched everyone jump on their feet while we all waved our hands around that a flag.

We got ready to go the airport and my experience was like no other. The time I had was unforgettable and I shall cherish it like a man cherishes his money.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

This is a level 3 answer that achieves level 3 marks for both A0s. It attempts a wide range of rhetorical devices, some more successful than others. It is this lack of consistency and overall effect that prevents this answer from rising further up the mark scheme.

The answer begins with a deliberate rhetorical device, though it does not capitalise on this in the early section of the story. This use of rhetorical devices is a feature that is seen again in the story as its lack of subtlety in its use of these features. The answer is able to communicate meaning effectively, although the narrative rambles across a number of incidents, not all of great interest to the reader. This candidate would have been better focusing upon a smaller number of incidents and developing the readers understanding of character and event more than it does. There is a varied vocabulary in use, but the control of some elements of vocabulary is not strong. The candidate is not able to successfully use a range of superlatives and offers 'enchanting' and 'beautifulest' in its effort to paint a picture of a sublime sunrise. There are other characters in this tale alongside the narrator, but these are never given any real definition and the reader does not have any interest in them as a result. The candidate tries to use a number of language devices with varying success, such as the use of simile. The comparison of a wide smile being 'as big as a giraffe's neck' produces an odd mental image for the reader that does not fully enhance the effect being created. Similarly the final phrase about how much the writer has enjoyed the experience being 'like a man cherishes his money' also introduces an unusual element to the story that has not been present before and which takes away from the final climax of the story.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

If you have other characters in your story alongside you, try to give the reader some sense of who they are and their relationship with you.

Write your answer to Section B here:

The Wind beat down against the building like a bully. The Trees did not just sway, yet they were bent and moaned in agony. The building creaked too. The limbs of trees were being violently ~~slowly~~ ripped off, and the leaves became ~~conspicuous~~ but like at a funeral. All ~~the~~ twenty eight children watched the clock tick by, so slowly it could be described as watching iron crumble at the ~~face~~ ~~of~~ perale of rust. ~~However~~ John sat with an odd ~~and~~ posture and hair like golden silk waiting on the ~~the~~ ~~the~~ sweet melody of the home time bell to sound. School had made his skin like a book, which also people may read the simple word. ~~As~~

Board.

As soon as the bell sounded he exploded out of his seat like a ~~rocket~~ ~~rocket~~ rocket and dashed for the door. His slowy hair glowed in the wind as he leped for the door. His tolred shoes sounded like slip slaps on a holiday. The smell of ~~the~~ sweaty venages sudenly disappeared. John raced



home, however the sun came out of hiding and ~~made~~ made  
cars even the blackest black glimmer white.

John was not just excited because it was the weekend, however  
because he was doing the gold Monkey Food race ~~for~~  
~~series~~ series that evening. It was a relief from daily life  
and the only thing to look forward too after a school week  
of monotony.

~~John~~ John got home in blistering time and leaped up  
upstairs to get changed. ~~Before~~ ~~then~~ he drank some water, went  
to the toilet, threw down some food. Got out his bike from the garage  
set off to ride to the race. This was something he adored  
doing. ~~As he set off to get to the race he~~ John  
loved the house and was enjoying his ~~the~~ wonderful ride in the  
sun wore the birds sang and the trees waves hello in the gentle  
breeze. ~~Something~~ Something did not feel quite right he felt the  
road had ~~got~~ hardened and then he realised he had got a  
puncture. And with nothing to repair it with he had to run  
2 miles to the race.

When he arrived ~~to~~ ~~the~~ sign on for the event was closed and ~~over~~ the one thing he had ~~to~~ wanted to do all week, he couldn't do!!! This was awful. However some of his best friends, with black hair and a tall stature help him finish. After this he did the race and won. This was a very exciting time for John! ~~to~~



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer is similar in some ways to the previous question 6 answer in its attempt to use a range of rhetorical devices. However, this answer shows a wider range of features being used and a wider vocabulary, meaning that it achieves a higher mark for both A0s with level 3.

The opening paragraph deliberately tries to create a sense of place and atmosphere. The opening simile is simple but effective and adds to the oppressive atmosphere being created. The inclusion of the boy with 'hair like golden silk' is at odds with the atmosphere and does not contribute to it being sustained. The answer attempts to make use of a powerful single word paragraph. The prominent homophonic spelling mistake is more noticeable as a result. The earlier atmosphere is dispelled with the use of movement created through the use of a simple simile as the boy 'exploded out of his seat like a rocket.' There are some flashes of a wider vocabulary such as 'monotony' and 'blistering'. These are balanced by the cliché of the rocket and the birds singing in the trees both of which are an indication of why this answer is not achieving level 4 for A06 as it lacks the wide and selective vocabulary needed at this level. In terms of structure, the answer is building up some sense of expectation about the narrator's involvement in the race. Tension is further heightened when the narrator has a puncture, but then the story finishes with alarming haste that fails to deliver on the audience expectations. One suspects that this candidate may have been running out of time. If that was the case, the story would have been better to have progressed to the all-important race rather than using up its valuable time on the events that preceded it. The result is an answer that struggles to move into level 4 because of its lack of effective structure. Spelling is variable but not secure and this is a factor in the mid-level 3 mark given for A06.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to make sure that your writing has a clear beginning, middle and end, however much time you are able to spend on it.

## Paper Summary

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

- Read the passage in section A very carefully, identifying the different ways in which the writer has tried to engage you as the reader.
- Don't have pre-set ideas about the sort of writing that you will meet; read and respond to each piece with care.
- Pay particular attention to the opening and closing of the text as these are important points for any writer and they will help you to see how the writer has shaped their text to initially gain the interest of the reader and then to leave them at a particular point.
- On question 3, try to cover points on both language and structure within the space you have been given and with a time allocation that is appropriate to the six marks the question offers. There is no need for an introduction or conclusion on this question.
- On question 4, try to identify the different techniques that have been used by the writer and how successful you feel the writer has been.
- When you are writing, always think about your reader, what you want them to understand and how you want them to react at different parts of your writing; then choose the best words, phrases or techniques available to you to achieve those effects.
- Think about how other writers that you know have achieved their effects and try to use some of the same techniques.
- Think carefully about how you will begin to write so that it is imaginative and engaging for your reader from the very start.
- As you begin to write, know where you will end. This will help you to write in a manner that is cohesive and coherent for your reader.
- Take care throughout with accuracy of all sorts: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Keep a close eye on the time during the examination and use the number of marks available for each question as an indication of how long you should spend answering each question.

## Grade Boundaries

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>



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