

Examiners' Report  
November 2020

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. Students 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 2020, this was an extract from *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. There are four questions on the text which are stepped 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 students 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 students are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing. In the November of 2020 students 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 students' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This low-tarif question is intended to lead students into the examination and was successfully done by the majority of students in the November 2020 paper. The examples below indicate common responses with most students able to successfully answer this question by identifying the key word in the answer, 'young', though others gave the full phrase 'my dear young friend'; all of these responses were awarded the single mark that was available. Some students who were unsuccessful mistakenly chose the word 'old', which describes the castle rather than the narrator; others either chose a section of the text from lines 2-4 which also did not answer the question or chose text from outside the line references given.

- 1 From lines 2–4, identify a word or phrase which shows Count Dracula is older than the narrator.

"my dear young friend"



This candidate successfully identifies the key phrase that contains the key word, 'young', and gives the whole phrase as the answer. This is awarded the one available mark.



The question asks you to 'identify a word or phrase'. The key word in this answer is 'young', therefore it is not necessary to write out the whole phrase. You still get the available mark, it is just not the best use of your time to write out additional words that are not required for the answer.

- 1 From lines 2–4, identify a word or phrase which shows Count Dracula is older than the narrator.

It is old, and has many memories and there are bad dreams.

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



This answer selects the key word as 'old'. This is incorrect. The question asked candidates to focus on Count Dracula and how we know he is older than the narrator. The answer chosen here refers to the castle and not to the Count.



Candidates should read the question very carefully in order to avoid any misunderstanding. Sometimes other words may seem to be the right answer if you have not read the question carefully.

- 1 From lines 2–4, identify a word or phrase which shows Count Dracula is older than the narrator.

young



This is the most economical and direct response to the question and achieves the one mark available for this question.



Notice how economical this answer is and how it focuses entirely upon the key word that answers the question.

- 1 From lines 2–4, identify a word or phrase which shows Count Dracula is older than the narrator.

A phrase from lines 2-4 ~~the~~ which show that Count Dracula is older than the narrator would be, "Let me advise you, my dear young friend". (Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



This answer does make a correct selection from the given lines and so is given one mark, however it repeats the wording of the question in an unnecessary manner that takes up valuable time in the exam.



Make sure that you make a selection from the lines given in the question and do not simply copy out all of the lines in the given text. In addition, try to only include the words of the answer in your response and not add in unnecessary words.

## Question 2

Question two is worth two marks and, like question one, tests students' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This question develops from question one by asking students to focus upon a longer section of text and by allowing students to express answers in their own words as well as using quotations from the text. The question asked students to 'give two ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive.' The layout, with its use of separate lines numbered 1 and 2 is intended to structure the answer for students 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 vast majority of students. Where students were unsuccessful they sometimes mistook the word 'gorges' for 'gorgeous' or chose text from outside the defined line references.

2 From lines 17–20, give **two** ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive.

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

1 I looked out over the beautiful expanse

2 Peace and comfort in every breath.



This answer uses two quotations from the given lines of the text and identifies two ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive and so is awarded the two available marks. The two parts of the answer respectively come from bullet points one and nine of the mark scheme. In addition, the candidate makes use of the layout of the question to separate the answer into the two distinct elements that it identifies.



The layout of the paper is designed to help you. It tries to make sure that you have given 'two ways' in your answer and that these are separated on the page under numbers one and two. Use the layout of the paper to help you with your answer.

2 From lines 17–20, give **two** ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive.

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

1 "There was peace and comfort in every breath I drew"

1 Shows it is relaxing and clears the mind.

2 "The mere beauty seemed to cheer me"

1 Shows that it brought happiness and joy.



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Examiner Comments

The answer successfully identifies two ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive, and so is awarded full marks, two marks for this question. This answer also includes explanations for each of the selections made. These are not required by the question and do not attract any additional marks.



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Examiner Tip

Focus on what the question is asking you to do. If, as in this question, it asks you to 'give two ways' then there is no requirement for you to explain or evaluate. When the question wants you to do these things it will ask you. If you are adding additional and unnecessary features in your answer then you are probably spending more time writing your answer than you are supposed to.

2 From lines 17–20, give **two** ways in which the narrator finds the landscape attractive.

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

1 The writer uses a metaphor to describe the landscape.

"Till it was almost as light as day"





This answer only gives a single correct point in its response and not the two that it asks for and so is awarded a single mark. The one point it makes uses bullet point three from the mark scheme in its selection of text. This question is not asking about technique and so there is no credit given for the reference to the use of a metaphor.



Be sure that you are answering the question that has been asked - if it asks for 'two ways' you should give two points in your answer and not one. In addition, if the question does not ask about technique then you should not refer to it in your answer.

## Question 3

Question three is worth six marks and tests students' 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 students 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 students should use the mark tariff as a guide about how much to write in response in this question. It was a feature of some responses in the November 2020 paper that students 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 narrator's thoughts and feelings. Weaker responses wrote about only language or only structure or simply selected text and offered comments or personal opinions but did not clearly explain the effects that the writer had sought to achieve. Where a candidate writes, 'The dracula puts fear in the narrator because of his imortality', this is not only factually incorrect but demonstrates a type of response that does not seek to make a comment about either language or structure. As it was not always possible to discern whether the points made were focused upon language or structure in such answers they were not able to reach the marks in levels two and three.

3 In lines 24–38, how does the writer use language and structure to show the narrator's thoughts and feelings about the Count?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

Throughout the extract, Stoker conveys the character of the count through the perspective of the narrator.

Firstly, Stoker

Firstly, Stoker

Firstly, Stoker suggests that the narrator has conflicting feelings towards the count. This is achieved through the phrase "But my ~~feeling~~ very feelings changed to repulsion and terror." This phrase creates a shift in the tone from the beginning of the paragraph as the narrator's reaction to the count changes from admiration to fear, implying that the count can be at first deceiving ~~and not what he had initially~~ until properly encountered.

Furthermore, throughout the extract the writer conveys how different the count is to the narrator himself, by suggesting that the Dracula is more beast-like than human. This is demonstrated through the <sup>line</sup> ~~sentence~~ "Face down with his cloak spreading out like wings." Stoker The use of this simile portrays the count as immensely powerful, as he appears to have many animalistic features, which we can infer, cause the narrator to feel inferior and in terror of him.

In addition, Bram Stoker presents the narrator as being unaware of the potential dangerous potential that the count possesses; and therefore the narrator has more exaggerated thoughts about what could happen to him.

This idea is conveyed in the phrase "I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not to think of." This <sup>suspenseful</sup> final line, ending with ellipses, ~~great~~

highlights that the narrator fears what is to come after having this encounter with Dracula; this fear is ~~highlighted~~ further enhanced by the fact that the narrator can't even bring himself to think of the consequences.



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Examiner Comments

This is an immediate, confident focus on the question suggesting clear understanding of the text. It is interesting to note that the crossed out opening was about to focus upon the stance of the first person narrator rather than the focus of the question which is upon thoughts and feelings. Note how the final answer directly addresses the question. The opening paragraph identifies a subtle element of structure with a 'shift in tone' within the line references. The candidate is able to identify implicit meaning, which is a higher-order reading skill. There is sensitive understanding of the use of the simile and a discriminating use of embedded textual reference with analysis, which never loses a close focus on 'thoughts and feelings' from the question. The response ends strongly with the structural analysis of ellipsis. This meets all of the criteria for an upper Level 3 mark.



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Examiner Tip

Show that your reading of the text has been detailed and careful and that you are aware of the more subtle elements of a text, such as variations in tone and are able to use these insights to directly address the question.

3 In lines 24–38, how does the writer use language and structure to show the narrator's thoughts and feelings about the Count?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer uses language to show the narrator's thoughts and feelings about the Count by describing him as a creature. As he began to 'crawl down the castle wall over that dreadful abyss' implies that the way he's moving is like an insect, as 'crawl' has a sneaky effect, which is what creatures do, as they 'crawl' around. This shows that his feelings towards Count are negative. 'But my very feelings changed to repulsion & terror' shows that he is frightened of the Count, suggesting that ~~the~~ the presence of the Count makes him feel very unsafe.

The writer also uses language by using repetition to show the narrator's feelings. 'I am in fear—in awful fear'. The repeated word 'fear' has connotations of worry, scared and nervous, which is what the narrator is going through as he's being overpowered and there is nothing he can do.

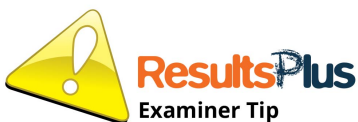
Also rhetorical question used

The writer also uses structure to show thoughts and feelings about the Count by having a whole section to describe ~~what~~ his movements. As first it shows the way he approached everything, and is described moving like a lizard (similar).

There is also structure by there being a smaller paragraph at the end, finishing it with no way out, ~~showing it ends~~ in making it effective.



There is an immediate focus on the question in this answer, adopting a Point Evidence Explanation approach and making a valid language point. It is not necessary to use any particular approach to structuring a response, however some students find it helpful to use such approaches. The final point in the paragraph has a clear and effective explanation of how this writer has created language effects. At the start of the next paragraph the candidate suggests a language point is to be made but there is also a structure point included and this should be noted. There is some thoughtful explanation here though the expression is somewhat awkward at times. A reference to rhetorical questions is made but no textual reference or comment is given. Further structure points made are valid though slightly unclear. The response starts to move towards analysis but does not possess sufficient quality to move out of Level 2, hence a Level 2 mark.



Once you have identified the techniques that the writer has used make sure that you develop these into an answer that is analytical and you are doing more than simply spotting features.

3 In lines 24–38, how does the writer use language and structure to show the narrator's thoughts and feelings about the Count?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer use different lengths of sentence to create more effect on the reader by doing different lengths the reader will stay more focussed on carrying on reading the text. Also the writer has done different sized paragraphs which makes the reader want to carry on reading.

The writer uses different language in the text to make it more enjoyable to read, the reader has used a simile 'his cloak spreading out around him like great wings' by saying things like this makes the reader think. Another thing which has been used is punctuation, this breaks the text down and makes it easier to read. '... in the semblance of mean?' this quotation makes the reader think before getting an answer.

By using structure and language  
it shows that the writer has  
made it so they think it's a  
horrible place:)



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Examiner Comments

The opening paragraph contains simple generic comments which are not directly focused on this particular text and as a result contain no textual references or quotations. A structural point is attempted through an awareness of punctuation. The reference is valid, but the comment gives a very generic idea of effect and does not qualify as explanation, which is a Level 2 criterion. There is a reference to simile with a supporting quotation but only a basic comment is given, hence a Level 1 mark is given.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure that you are focusing directly upon the passage you have read in the examination and that you explain how language and structure are being used by the writer to achieve effects.



## **Question 4**

Question four is the highest mark tariff question in Section A and students would be wise to ensure that they allocate sufficient time to this question. This question tests students' 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 an atmosphere of mystery. This is a familiar focus for students. Once again, students 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.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create an atmosphere of suspense.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

P  
E  
E  
E

S  
I  
T  
E

(15)

The writer successfully creates an atmosphere of suspense ~~is~~ through a theme of threat.

~~The~~ This is masterfully shown when ~~the~~ the Count ~~is~~ says "there are bad dreams for those who sleep unwisely. Be warned", this ~~shows that~~ effectively shows threat as the Count is warning the narrator of the bad things that will happen to him if he leaves the room.

This is further ~~emphasised~~ amplified through the exclamation "~~Be warned!~~" "Be warned!" <sup>showing the reader how powerful Dracula is.</sup>

This also ~~implies~~ suggests to the reader that there is an ~~on~~ ongoing, awaiting threat - further ~~is~~ successfully creating suspense, as he is threatened not only by Dracula but also the 'bad dreams'.

"unwisely", ~~is~~ implies that if the ~~narrator~~ ~~would~~ Count is threatening the narrator ~~and~~ with the consequences of his actions.

The writer ~~is~~ effectively creates ~~suspense~~ suspense through the narrator's idea that he is trapped. This is ~~clearly~~ <sup>wonderfully</sup> shown when ~~the~~ it says "unnatural, horrible net of gloom and mystery which seemed closing in around me".

This shows that the ~~the~~ narrator feels like he is a "prisoner". ~~The~~ "mystery" & successfully creates suspense as ~~as~~ it creates a sense of ambiguity because the narrator does not know what awaits ~~the~~ for him but he knows that there is "no escape". This creates suspense as <sup>the verb</sup> "closing" ~~is~~ implies that he feels more and more trapped, ~~and~~ not only by the ~~Dracula~~ chamber Dracula is holding him in; <sup>implying to the reader that he is</sup> but also ~~by his own thoughts~~ feeling trapped by his own thoughts as he knows there is no way of getting out. ~~This implies to~~

~~The~~ stoner masterfully ~~shows~~ creates suspense through the brief lack of it. This is shown when the setting is described as peaceful. "Beautiful expanse"; bathed in soft yellow moonlight", "~~soft light~~ "in the soft light the hills became melted". This is effective because it gives the narrator a break to calm down "there was peace and comfort with every breath I drew", ~~allowing him to not think for a second~~ and the repetition of "soft" ~~success~~ contrast the narrator's thoughts and feelings and suggest that he wants to be free. This is powerfully contrasted later on when he suddenly feels "repulsion and terror" as he sees Dracula, bringing his thoughts back to reality and hopelessness, ~~this~~ showing the reader the "grusome" reality of the narrator's situation - <sup>once</sup> again creating suspense.



This answer begins by identifying the strong sense of threat throughout the extract. Evaluative adverbs ('masterfully', 'effectively') are used and we can see how this answer shows a detached critical overview illustrated in the phrase 'This is further amplified'. The discussion of 'trapped', and how this entrapment is both mental and physical, shows a perceptive and subtle reading that is alive to potential meanings and its understanding that 'it creates a sense of ambiguity'. The final discussion about how Stoker 'creates suspense through the brief lack of it' is particularly impressive and shows an understanding of the dynamic patterning of the extract, how the initial tension is briefly suspended, only to return with greater intensity. This is a familiar narrative pattern and one that candidates should be aware of. The highly developed skills of critical overview are again evident in the sentence which begins 'This is effective because...'

This response is fully focused on the task and meets all of the bullets in Level 5. It evaluates themes and settings, shows sustained and detached judgment and there is discriminating use of reference and as such it was given a top Level 5 mark.



Be aware of how your answer will be marked and what qualities you need to demonstrate in response to each question. Question 4 asks you to evaluate and therefore you must do more than explain how effects have been created, you should be able to evaluate, meaning that you can consider how well something has been done by the writer, not just what has been done. In addition your reading should show a detached critical overview, indicating a level of thinking about the text as a crafted artefact, deliberately constructed to achieve certain effects.

change in context

dialogue focus

pace

structure

language

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create an atmosphere of suspense.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

The atmosphere of suspense is achieved in <sup>beyond</sup> the <sup>15</sup> text through the use of exclamation sentence: "Be Warned!" This creates suspense as the count is giving the narrator a warning, what is it for? which creates mystery as it suggests the count could be threatening the narrator, the exclamation mark creates more suspense as it creates a moment of silence which emphasises on the suspense, the effect this has on the reader is they would ask rhetorical questions such as "why should we be warned?" and engages the reader as the suspense is increased.

The quote "I felt that I was indeed a prisoner" creates suspense the word "prisoner" suggest the narrator would be isolated and extremely restricted however this is suspenseful as the effect it has on the reader is confusion as we would wonder what the narrator would want him as a prisoner for? as well as the intimidation creating suspense of danger.

The writer changes the focus of the narrator in the quote "my eye was caught by something moving" creating emotions such as fear and confusion. The change of focus creates suspense as it is so sudden and quick. The pace begins to increase. The effect this has on the reader is they become tensed as they are not fully engaged about the Count's actions creating discomfort and suspense, as the narrator itself is still in words this creates suspense as the castle is isolated and no one else should be there.

⇒ The writer uses the quote "white man slowly emerge from the window" the word "slowly" creates an atmosphere of suspense as this moment is reoccurring for the narrator and the reader. It makes the quote drag on creating more tension and suspense.

The quote "I dare not shut off...."

The writer successfully uses an ellipsis at the end. This creates an atmosphere of suspense as there are a range of emotions such as confusion and fear as well as shocked and the pause from the ellipsis creates an fearful suspense from the shock, the effect this has on the reader is they feel shocked and are in suspense as to what will happen from the characters actions next.



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Examiner Comments

This answer consistently focuses on the response of the reader, tracking through the extract to analyse a number of language features and their effects. The opening paragraph makes a strong point about the effect of rhetorical questions and the creation of a suspenseful silence. There is clear evidence of analysing punctuation and word choice, such as 'prisoner' with some success, though the explanation at the end of the second paragraph is less successful. The selection of references is appropriate, detailed and fully supportive. This answer therefore meets two of the bullets in level 4 and although critical judgement is not fully developed a best fit-mark places this in Level 4.



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Examiner Tip

As a matter of style students should be aware that writers do not 'use quotes'. A quotation is something that has been written or said by another writer, that is being repeated for some reason. The writer here is being original and is not quoting anybody. Therefore rather than saying the writer 'uses the quote' simply say 'the writer uses the expression', or even more simply 'the writer says'.



4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create an atmosphere of suspense.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

The writer uses language and structure to create suspense and atmosphere. A quote that shows this moment is pause said: - "The writer creates pauses in the text creating suspense for the reader as we wonder what will happen next creating suspense.

The writer uses language to create suspense. A quote that shows this is "let me warn you with all seriousness." The word "warn" suggests that the castle may be dangerous creating suspense as we for the reader as we don't know what the danger is or if ~~it is fatal~~ it will be deadly for the narrator.

The narrator uses language to create suspense for the reader. Some quotes that show this are "gruesome", "unnatural, horrible". ~~these~~ The words used are all associated

with the horror genre, creating suspense for the reader as we wonder if some thing bad is going to happen to ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> narrator.

The writer uses language to create suspense for the reader. A quote that shows this is "indeed in ~~prison~~ prison". The word "prison" suggests that there is no escape and that he is trapped, creating suspense for the reader.

The writer uses language to create suspense. Some quotes that show this are "manner of creature", "Semblance of man?". The writer describes the count as a "creature" showing that the count is not human, like a monster creating suspense for the reader as we don't know what will happen to our narrator or what will happen next.

The writer uses language to create

Suspence. A quote that shows this is "terrors that I dare not think of...". The writer uses the phrase "dare not think of" this creates suspense for the reader as it shows that the narrator doesn't even want to think about things that might happen to him, making the reader wonder what will happen to him and how awful the outcome could be creating suspense for the reader.



This answer adopts a certain style in terms of paragraph openings which is a little formulaic and repetitive; however, there is a clear attempt to explain language and effects such as the use of pauses, the choice of words such as 'warn' and 'prison' and a wider awareness of the the semantic field of the horror genre. The quality of some explanations is better than others, for example compare the explanation of the word 'warn' in paragraph 2 with that of 'prison' in paragraph 4 and you will see an improvement in quality. There is a general appreciation of how the narrator is feeling and how suspense arises from his doubts and fears. Bullets 1 and 3 in Level 3 are clearly met but there is a need to develop 'informed judgement'. A best-fit mark places this answer in mid-Level 3.



'Informed judgement' means that you are starting to ask yourself why the writer made the choices he or she did, in terms of word, sentence and text-level choices. This will make you begin to think about what the writer was trying to achieve in different parts of the text. Your ability to explain these choices is what we call 'informed judgement'.

## 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; students are expected to produce clear and coherent text and to write for impact. Each question tells students 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 students 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 students use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

students 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 6 in November 2020. For this task students were asked to write about a time when they visited a place that was new to them. 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 students in their writing. Some centres may advise their students to start the examination by completing the Section B answer and this is their prerogative, however it does negate the thematic link which is intended to be supportive. In the November 2020 examination question 5 was the more popular of the two writing questions with many students choosing to write about holiday destinations, fairground visits and other locations. Most students 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. There was a wonderful range of writing with many students creating a genuine connection with the reader, crafting a response that had emotional depth, accessible characters as well as a defined narrative structure. The question invites students to write about an experience that is real or imagined. Whichever is chosen, it is important that students remember the purpose of the writing task 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. 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.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box  and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 5  Question 6

Write your answer to Section B here:

It was Friday morning, bright and early. "Today's the day" I ~~ex~~ said to myself. "Today is the day I get to visit a new place with my family." Excited and interested I got up and got myself ready.

"Let's go!" I screamed at the car waiting for everyone else to get out of the house.

Once we were at this new place it was not like anything I had seen before! The village ~~town~~ we were visiting was the most beautiful place I had ever seen. ~~The sun was as bright as the~~ The new place even had a fair, I have never been to a fair before either.

Dad decided we had to explore the village before we could go to the fair. Strolling through the village we could see all the different houses

and shops. This place really was like no where I had seen before. It was amazing. There was brightly coloured flowers in every flower pot and every grassy area. As we were walking around the village we noticed a small old-fashioned shop. "Can we get ice-cream" shouted my little sister Becky "please!" feeling convinced that it was a good idea, Dad brought us all one. It looked like heaven and tasted so creamy.

Lunch time came around so quickly but it was finally time to go to the fair. As we were walking towards it I could feel the excitement building up inside me. It looked so fun.

Whilst walking through the fair the smell of ~~sizzit~~ sizzling sausages was all that filled the air. The lights from all the rides were as bright as the sun. The people shouting and screaming was all you could hear.

The time came where it was my turn to have a go on the ride. I have never felt so nervous but excited at the same time.

Me, my brother Luke and Dad all went on a big ride. The lights were blinding. Anxious, nervous and excited I stepped onto the ride and sat down. The ride chucked me around everywhere but it was so much fun. Excited to continue going on the rides I ran around the fair. "THIS IS THE BEST DAY OF MY LIFE" I screamed whilst queuing for another ride.

Extrordinerally, the day seemed to fly by and before I knew it it was time to go home. Driving home everyone in the car was chatting about how good their day was at the fair.

"I love going to new places" I thought to myself. Have I ever experienced a day so good? I'm not sure as it was an amazing day with ~~ex~~ amazing people and great fun.



This is a strong Level 3 response. The response opens with an establishing sentence which shows an awareness of audience and purpose. Ideas are clearly ordered, with effective use of paragraphs. The narrative lacks imagination in places but is always clear. A range of rhetorical devices is used though these are not always sustained, placing this within Level 3 rather than Level 4. The candidate makes use of a range of techniques including sibilance, varied verb choices, short sentences for effect, such as 'It was amazing'; similes are used 'The lights from all the rides were as bright as the sun' and some simple use of speech. The answer makes a deliberate attempt to use a range of senses as a way to appeal to the reader. There is some attempt to create tone and atmosphere. The candidate makes some simple assumptions about the readers' knowledge of his family which does affect our understanding of characters. There is evidence of a varied vocabulary such as 'anxious, nervous and excited'. There is a deliberate and effective rhetorical question in the final paragraph and a clear expression of enjoyment is successfully developed. The overall textual structure is simple and structural features are only used at a simple level to create textual cohesion. Meets the criteria for Level 3 in A05 and A06.



When you write about characters who are familiar to you, such as your own family, always remember that the reader does not know them. Therefore you must tell the reader anything about them that is important to your imaginative writing, such as their appearance or their age or how they respond to each other. You will need to tell the reader your own thoughts and feelings about characters such as this. If you just assume that the reader will know that your dad is funny or that you don't really get on well with your older sister then you will affect their ability to fully understand your writing, which will make it less effective.



Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box  and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 5  Question 6

Write your answer to Section B here:

~~On~~ On June, 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, I went to ~~Spain~~ Spain, Madrid to watch the ~~Champions~~ Champions League Final. In the Final the match was between Liverpool VS Tottenham Hotspur, the match was 7:45 PM kick off. There was a party for the fans of both teams in the day time before the match. I am a Liverpool fan so, obviously I went to the Liverpool party. The atmosphere there was amazing. There was like 80,000 football fans all together partying in a different country. Jamie Webster was on the main stage with his guitar playing all the Liverpool songs. All of the fans was dancing and singing along. This was such a big occasion for Liverpool fans because we haven't reached a Champions League Final in over 10 years, so all the fans were just excited to be there.

and support there team in a major cup final. It was about 5pm and all the fans started to head the stadium and some were trying to get in with fake tickets and trying to push past. The police was beating the people who tried to sneak in with police batings. We left the stadium about 30 mins before kick off to find a restaurant or bar to watch the match. We found a bar just before kick off 10 mins into the match the ball hit ~~and~~ Tottenham players, hand the referee blew for a pen and Mohamed Salah scored it to make it 1-0 and there was fans dancing on tables, screaming. After half time Divock Origi came off ~~of~~ the bench in the 80<sup>th</sup> minute to make it 2-0 and Liverpool won the 6<sup>th</sup> European cup. The whole of Madrid was covered in ~~the~~ reds.



It is worth comparing this answer to the previous one in the report. You will see that the opening, establishing sentence here is less controlled and effective. The previous answer tells us that the writer is excited and interested, which invests the event with some personal interest from the start, which engages the interest of the reader. This answer tells us what is happening in a factual manner but it some time before the writer shares any thoughts and feelings with the reader, 'the atmosphere was amazing'. It is clear from the opening line and its incorrect use of a lower case i, 'i went to Spain', it is likely that this is not going to achieve Level 3 for A06. In addition, there are random commas throughout the response which are seldom used for their intended purpose. A range of sentence structures is used but these are not always secure. The strongest A06 feature is vocabulary and some accurate spellings such as, 'European', 'Stadium', 'Tottenham', 'occasion', 'atmosphere', 'partying', however at other times there is some misunderstanding e.g. 'battings' for 'batons'. The writer assumes knowledge that the reader may not have, such as the colour that Liverpool FC play in and the identity of Jamie Webster, which affects the reader's understanding a little. Straightforward ideas are expressed and ordered and there is description. The writer tries to evoke a sense of atmosphere, but there is little use of rhetorical devices, which is one of the features that keeps this answer in Level 2. There is some use of controlled punctuation though not consistently. This meets all the bullet points in level 2 for both A0s.



Look at the way this answer prioritises telling the reader the order of events and neglects to fully develop a connection with the reader by helping us to appreciate the importance of this event and how the writer feels about it. Try to include thoughts and feelings rather than thinking that you have to include every detail of an event.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 5 ☒ Question 6 ☒

Write your answer to Section B here:

The air was pungent with the odour of exotic fruits and the overpowering stench of kanakambaram, known as the firecracker flower. These flowers were hung in ready made garlands for women to adorn their hair with. So vibrant, the orange of the flowers, like a mango split open.

These smells attract crazed bees who buzz by, criss-crossing each other's flight, ~~They~~ en route to suckle their blossom. They brush their hairy bodies against the blossom to sample their syrupy perfumed juices.

Various things are being displayed : spices, dried fish, meat, as well as the blood from butcher's' shops running into open drains. Dazzling customers to the core was, the sight of many colourful bazaars, raucous with the cries of vendors and the fierce bargaining of women shopping.

~~A lot~~ Many tables are placed side by side, and positioned on top are an assortment of fish in a plethora of shapes, colours and sizes.

I walked past the fish stall and run my fingers across the coarse skin of the fish. I feel it ripple under my salt fingertips.

Sri Lanka, this was the beautiful home to my parents, never have I seen anything more picturesque.

The soft, ocean's breeze kissed my cheek as I took a stroll along the harbour of the beach. In some distance, I could see the temple, already feeling the positive energy that were radiating from it. How could one create such a piece of an art! The ~~intricacies~~, intricate detail, small carvings and the robust state of the temple.

~~I was told to rinse my water with water before entering the building "Kalavu,"~~ the priest of the temple was saying he wanted us to rinse our faces with the holy water to wash off any negative energy. So magical, the water felt velvety smooth, ~~so~~ so different the texture of the water.

Such a surreal experience, it really felt as if I was in another dimension, ~~or~~ was I in heaven? Marigold, white flowers were being ~~sp~~ what my hair was being bathed in. Call me Princess Jasmine.

Inside the prayer room, all <sup>I</sup> you could see was the glow and glistening of their costumes; golden light diffusing off their costumes.

"Aiya", <sup>My</sup> My mum was calling for the priest. We were going to

Sing some Mandras. These were chants only said by the women,  
about thanking the Gods' and Goddesses for giving us the Earth.

Thank you, Sri Lanka!



This answer has a strong and highly evocative opening. There is a clear variety in sentence structure and a maturity in expression that is impressive. The writer uses an extensive and imaginative vocabulary accurately and very effectively, such as when writing about the bees in paragraph 2 who 'brush their hairy bodies against the blossom to sample their syrupy perfumed juices.' . At this stage it is clear that the writer is deliberately and subtly trying to evoke a multi-layered sense of place, appealing to a wide range of senses, without actually telling the reader where we are. This is enigmatic and engaging. As a structure we see the writer deliberately appeal to a full range of senses very successfully, from the 'cries of vendors and the fierce bargaining of women shopping' in paragraph 3 to the tactile description of the fish stall in paragraph 4, 'I walk past the fish stall and run my fingers across the coarse skin of the fish. I feel it ripple under my soft fingers'. The writer makes use of powerful imagery and uses a range of techniques including deliberate alliteration, triples such as 'shapes, colours and sizes' and similes such as 'the orange of the flowers, like a mango split open'.

As you read on it becomes clear that this answer seems to fall into two halves. Up to this point it has sensitively evoked a sense of place using sophisticated techniques and an extensive vocabulary. As it moves into the top of page 13 it is noticeably less descriptive, 'Sri Lanka, this was the beautiful home of my parents, never have I seen anything more picturesque'. The vocabulary is simpler and the comma splicing shows a lack of control. There is still evocative writing but there are also less successful expressions, such as 'the harbour of the beach', which are less controlled than we have come to expect from this writer. The sustained control of tone is not always as evident. One wonders how to read 'Call me Princess Jasmine' - is this playful, ironic or exultant? The absence of exclamation marks does not help the reader in their interpretation. The final line seems to arrive relatively abruptly and does not show the skills of a writer preparing their reader for a conclusion. It may be that the candidate ran out of time. It is unhelpful to speculate.

It is notable therefore that the second half of this response shows less control and the move from pure description into narrative is less well-handled. There is effective use of speech in the later section which adds an additional element to the writing. This is an example of an answer which is stronger on A06 than A05. The Level 5 mark for A06 rewards the extensive vocabulary, rare spelling errors and the range of sentence structures and punctuation that are used sensitively and accurately to achieve effects. The A05 mark recognises the writer's ability to select and adopt tone and register but also recognises that this subtlety of approach is not fully sustained, giving it a high Level 4 mark rather than a Level 5 mark.



Think carefully about how you will end your writing. Textual cohesion is about the shape of your writing and taking the reader with you from the opening, through the middle and on to a successful conclusion of your written answer. To achieve this you should know how your writing is going to start, how it will develop in the middle and how you will finish. This means that you should have a plan before you start. You do not need to write your plan down, though some people find this helpful. If you know how your writing should end then you are more likely to prepare your reader for it, whether it is building to an exciting climax or ending on a cliffhanger. There are many successful ways to end your writing and your writing will have a clear shape if you know the end of your answer as you start to write.

## **Question 6**

As students 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 when the student or someone known to them experienced something that was amazing or surprising . In addition question 6 contained the two images depicting a childhood sledging adventure or the suggestion of an online discovery. Some students made good use of the images and the source material without plagiarising it. There was a wide range of responses which were lively and interesting to read.





This is an outstanding response that repays repeated reading.

The opening is original and immediately engaging, humorously making use of the clichéd 'roving reporter' tone and style of presentation. This involves altering word order in the second sentence to build to the climactic word, 'unconscionable'. This is an example where spelling does not have to be perfect for such an appropriate and ambitious vocabulary choice. This tone is a deliberately controlled leading to an enigmatic and original narrative hook at the end of the first paragraph, the 'metallic prize'.

Moving into paragraph 2 there is a clear evidence of the writer shaping the audience response with subtlety and sophistication, such as in the creation of bathos and humour in paragraph two. Here the sense of occasion is built up with the single sentence 'Finally!' only to be bathetically deflated as the writer finally arrives at his destination, 'a field.' This is followed by the sentence patterning of 'Oh yes' followed by the next sentence opening 'Oh no'. The writer is able to balance the humorous references to Bach and the combination of 'oil and manure' smells that you 'don't smell every day' with how impressed the writer is by the first sight of the plane, 'quite magnificent'. Students should note that creating and sustaining humour is notoriously difficult in writing, particularly this gentle, ironic almost self-mocking style of humour and this writer's skills in adapting tone, style and register to achieve this should be recognised.

This is the first point where the writer inserts asterisks and adds additional text. This shows that the writer has clearly reread and redrafted the answer in order to achieve its desired effect and whilst this may make it difficult for the reader to follow in no way is this a factor in marking and does not detract in any way. Students should be encouraged to reread their answers and make any corrections or amendments that they need in order to express themselves well.

Paragraph three sees a change with the introduction of pace as we prepare for the take off, 'It was time'. The writer introduces this with the oxymoron of 'gracefully forcing myself into the claustrophobic space of the cockpit'. Then, just as the the writer is building up speed there is another evocative oxymoron as 'Time stopped as we hurtled up that hill'. The complex sentence builds with pairs of repeated words 'faster and faster, louder and louder' and is followed by three single word, abstract noun sentences, 'Peace. Serenity. Freedom.' This is a writer who has such a confident control of sentence structures and vocabulary choices, moving from the simple but effective 'louder and louder' to 'serenity'.

The additional paragraph at the bottom of the page inserts here and sees the writer capturing the experience of looking down on the earth from a great height with the use of metaphor and aptly chosen and sophisticated vocabulary choices, 'dwarfed by perspective'.

As we move into the final paragraph we should note the use of temporal markers to structure our reading experience; 'After days of waiting', 'it was time' and now 'All too soon it was over'. This successfully creates textual cohesion and signals to the reader that the flight and the piece of writing are coming to an end. The opening simpler sentences are followed by complex sentences that reflect on complex ideas. There is an unspoken allusion in the final sentence to the well known expression, 'as free as a bird' but the writer needs only to allude to it, not to state it. The Level 5 criteria, 'manipulates complex ideas' can be further seen in the final sentence through the sentence structure and vocabulary choices. The writer does more than write about the freedom of movement afforded by being in a plane, rather it

reflects on being 'without the constraints of physics and society'. This is deeply thoughtful and epitomises what is meant by the first bullet point in the Level 5 criteria. This is partly what was meant when it was stated at the start that this answer repays repeated reading.

In conclusion, this is an outstanding piece of writing that genuinely demonstrates a wide range of skills and techniques which are used to communicate thoughts and feelings with subtlety and humour. The writer is skilfully able to adapt tone and style to shape the reader response, moving from jokey humour through the pace and excitement of the take-off to the reflective and philosophical musing in the final paragraph; a difficult feat that is effortlessly achieved, showing a sophisticated and sustained control of technique.

The vocabulary is extensive and ambitious throughout. There are rare slips in spelling, but these are outweighed by the ambitious vocabulary choices, such as 'unconscionable'. A wide variety of sentence structures is used with accuracy to achieve sophisticated effects. Punctuation is creative and effective and is accurate throughout.

A very powerful piece of writing that meets all of the criteria for top Level 5 marks in both AOs.



When you think about tone you should think about how you want your reader to react. If you want them to be amazed and excited by what you describe, then you will make different choices about language techniques and structure than if you wanted them to be sympathetic or to share in your sense of humour. Try to read writers who create different tone in their writing and look at the language choices they make to achieve this. With practice this is something that you will be able to achieve.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box  and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: **Question 5**  **Question 6**

Write your answer to Section B here:

It was August 28<sup>th</sup> results day. It felt like I had been waiting for this day forever! Me and my friends are waiting to go pick up our results... were nervous but excited. As I'm walking to go and meet them I get two emails through from the results board. One for English and one for maths; this was it. So I hesitantly click on my maths result at the time the only one I cared about passing. As I scroll down to find out my grade I get so overwhelmed I start tearing up. Oh My Gosh I passed eventually; not only did I pass I got a grade 5; Amazing. I'm so happy I didn't even think twice I ring my mum at work to tell her the amazing news. I meet up with my friends to hear my



This is a Level 2 response, shown by its straightforward tone and style and simple awareness of audience reactions. The answer is a single paragraph and so the answer has to rely upon sentence openers to build the narrative as there is limited paragraph structuring within the answer. The response focuses on the task and deliberately makes use of the wording of the question, 'amazing'. There is an attempt to engage the reader with a build-up of tension and there is a sense of the candidate's voice 'Oh My Gosh', however at other times there is a lack of clarity such as the unpunctuated sentence, 'I'm so happy I didn't even think twice' describing her confusing reaction to receiving her results. The answer begins in the past tense but then moves into the present tense for the remainder of the answer. This inconsistency of expression and control means that it does not cross into Level 3.

There is some accurate use of punctuation and at times the candidate does strive to create an effect through variety e.g. ellipsis, exclamation marks, however this is inconsistent. Though there are spelling errors, these do not impede clarity. Vocabulary is varied with some more ambitious words being spelt correctly, such as 'overwhelmed', though there is overuse of 'So' as a connective and sentence starter and repeated use of 'amazing'.



You should always try to paragraph your work. Make a simple plan in which you think of the main parts of your writing, or the main events in your story. Use this plan to show where you should start each new paragraph.

# Paper Summary

Based on responses to the November 2020 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.
- Read the questions very carefully and make sure your answer contains what has been asked for: questions 1 and 2 ask you to identify text and to 'give ways'; question 3 asks you to explain how the writer achieves their effects and asks for points on both language and structure; question 4 specifically asks you to 'evaluate', not to 'explain'.
- 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 with the time allocation that is appropriate to the six marks the question offers. There is no need for an introduction or conclusion on this question.
- For 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 carefully about how you will begin your writing so that you engage 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>

