

**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ENGLISH (Specification 1900)**

**2431/1**

UNIT 1 Non-Fiction, Media and Information (Foundation Tier)

**WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY 2008**

Morning

Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

**Additional materials:** Answer Booklet (8 pages)



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Write your name, Centre number and Candidate number in the spaces provided on the answer booklet.
- Read each question carefully and make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- Answer **all** the questions.
- Write your answers, in blue or black ink, in the answer booklet provided.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The number of marks for each question is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **63**.
- **Section A** is worth 42 marks. You are advised to spend **no more than 1 hour 10 minutes** on it.
- **Section B** is worth 21 marks. You are advised to spend **no more than 35 minutes** on it.

This document consists of **7** printed pages and **1** blank page.

## SECTION A

You are advised to spend **no more than 1 hour 10 minutes** on Section A.

**Reading: NON-FICTION**

*Here is a passage expressing one person's view of Blackpool.*

Read this passage carefully, and then **answer questions 1(a), (b), (c) and (d)**.

*These answers will be marked for reading. Plan your answers and write them carefully.*

Blackpool – and I don't care how many times you hear this, it never stops being amazing – attracts more visitors every year than Greece and has more holiday beds than the whole of Portugal. It consumes more chips per person than anywhere else on the planet. (It gets through 40 acres of potatoes a day.) It has the largest concentration of rollercoasters in Europe. It has the continent's second most popular tourist attraction, the 42-acre Pleasure Beach, whose 6.5 million annual visitors are exceeded in number only by those going to the Vatican. 5

It was the illuminations that had brought me there. I had been hearing and reading about them for so long that I was genuinely keen to see them. So after securing a room in a guesthouse on a back street, I hastened to the front in a sense of some expectation. Well, all I can say is that Blackpool's illuminations are nothing if not splendid, and they are not splendid. There is, of course, always a danger of disappointment when you finally encounter something you have wanted to see for a long time, but in terms of let down it would be hard to exceed Blackpool's light show. I thought there would be lasers sweeping the sky and strobe lights tattooing the clouds. Instead there was just a rumbling procession of old trams dressed as rocket ships or Christmas crackers, and several miles of paltry decorations on lampposts. I suppose if you had never seen electricity in action, it would be pretty breathtaking, but I'm not even sure of that. It all just seemed tacky and inadequate on rather a grand scale, like Blackpool itself. 10 15

What was no less amazing than the feebleness of the illuminations were the crowds of people who had come to witness the spectacle. Traffic along the front was bumper to bumper, with childish faces pressed to the windows of every creeping car, and there were masses of people walking happily along the spacious promenade. At frequent intervals street-traders sold luminous necklaces and bracelets, and were doing a roaring trade. I read somewhere once that half of all visitors to Blackpool have been there at least ten times. Goodness knows what they find in the place. I walked for a mile or so along the prom, and couldn't understand the appeal of it. Perhaps I was just weary, but I couldn't wake up any enthusiasm for it at all. I wandered through brightly lit arcades and peered in bingo halls, but the festive atmosphere that seemed to seize everyone failed to rub off on me. Eventually, feeling very tired and very foreign, I retired to a fish restaurant, where I had a plate of haddock, chips and peas. 20 25

In the morning, I got up early to give Blackpool another chance. I liked it considerably better by daylight. The Promenade had some nice bits of cast-iron and elaborate huts with onion domes selling rock, nougat and other sickly things, which had escaped me in the darkness the night before, and the beach was vast and empty and very agreeable. 30

adapted from *Notes from a Small Island*, Bill Bryson

- 1 (a) From paragraph one, write down **three facts** about Blackpool. [3]
- (b) From paragraph one, state which is Europe's most popular tourist attraction. [1]
- (c) What reason did the writer give for wanting to visit Blackpool? [1]
- (d) Re-read from the beginning of the second paragraph ('It was the illuminations ...') to the end of the passage.

What were the writer's thoughts about Blackpool?

Use your own words as far as possible, and **do not repeat points** made in 1(a), (b) and (c).

[16]

[Total 21 marks]

Turn over for the remainder  
of Section A

**Reading: MEDIA TEXT**

Here is a passage about Blackpool's illuminations and trams, taken from the website [www.blackpool.com](http://www.blackpool.com).

Read the passage carefully, and then **answer Question 2**.

This answer will be marked for reading. Plan your answer and write it carefully.

## Blackpool Illuminations



Blackpool Illuminations – it's the sounds our lights generate that sum up their sheer autumn magic: the gasps of delight from the youngsters gazing at their playtime heroes as they view the giant cliff-top displays for the first time; the whispered laughter of courting couples on a late-night stroll along the Promenade; and the eagerly-shared memories of older visitors reminiscing about that coach trip through the illuminations all those years ago.

Yes, those are the sounds of crowds having fun in Blackpool, a resort still buzzing with life long after the so-called rivals have pulled down their winter shutters. When it comes to shining examples, Blackpool is way out in front. Holidaymakers have tripped the lights fantastic since 1879 when only electric arc lamps bathed the Promenade in what was described as artificial sunshine.

The basic idea remains the same but, it has to be said, the style, scale and sheer professionalism of today's versions have little in keeping with that first electric lighting experiment. Traditional lamps are still used alongside the newest technology such as fibre-optics and low-voltage neon.



Blackpool's most electrifying night is when the lights are switched on and this ceremony, a real razzmatazz showcase, has been performed by all the biggest names. Stars of *Coronation Street*, maestro of musicals Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, even Kermit the Frog, have had the crowds cheering as fireworks hit the sky and the eye-dazzling display gets under way.

Blackpool's end-of-season electrical extravaganza gives you the perfect excuse for a late autumn break by the sea.

# Blackpool Trams

Whilst inland towns and cities may boast of a return of the tram, millions of seafront travellers can tell them what they have been missing. Blackpool had the world's first permanent electric street tramway in 1885, and the more familiar overhead trolley trams were unveiled in 1899. You can see all the seaside sights in style, and visitors often hop on a tram for a trip between piers.

The network is 12 miles long and stretches from Starr Gate to Fleetwood. You will see some finely restored trams from ages past taking their places proudly alongside brand-new streamline models which maintain a regular and speedy service. During the illuminations you can even ride on a range of customised trams, such as the Space Rocket and the Wild West Train, which join the

regular fleet for ever-popular tours of the twinkling autumn spectacular.



2 How does the website set out to make Blackpool's illuminations and trams attractive to visitors?

In your answer, you should write about:

- the way the material is presented on the website
- how the information given about the illuminations and trams makes them attractive to visitors
- how some of the language used about the illuminations and trams makes them attractive to visitors.

[21]

**Turn over for Section B**

**SECTION B**

You are advised to spend **no more than 35 minutes** on Section B.

**Writing to INFORM, EXPLAIN, DESCRIBE**

*This answer will be marked for writing. Plan your answer and write it carefully.*

*Leave enough time to check through what you have written.*

**3 Describe** an event which did not live up to your expectations, and **explain** why. [21]

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