

**GCSE Chinese (Mandarin) / French /  
German / Italian / Spanish / Urdu**

**Exemplar Controlled Assessment  
Writing Tasks**

Spring 2012



## Introduction

The tasks show how four of the most popular areas can be adapted for use with students of differing abilities. They have been designed to be both challenging and engaging so that they will elicit the type of response which allows students to access the mark bands, as described in the assessment criteria, which they are capable of achieving.

There are two versions of each task, both of which have a common task title. Version 1 is designed for the more able students. Each version has three common bullets although they may not always be the first three consecutive ones. The rationale for this is so that the common bullets will be accessible to all abilities but will differentiate naturally by outcome. Initially this will enable the teacher and the class to work together within a common framework during the teaching and preparation period. The other three bullets will allow students of the different abilities to work towards fulfilling the assessment criteria but doing so through bullets which will enable them to work within their linguistic competencies. Thus, the more able will be set higher challenges which will give them the opportunity to access the higher mark bands. Other students will be working within their comfort zone but with bullets which elicit the type of responses which will give them access to the highest mark bands appropriate to their ability. Therefore, the design of the bullets and the differentiation of them are crucial to give students of all abilities the opportunity to reach their maximum potential.

The design of the exemplar tasks has six bullets, but this is not to say that this is the ideal number as it will depend on the preferences of the teacher. Of the six bullets in the exemplar tasks, three are common to both versions, but again this is a suggested combination for teachers to consider when designing tasks.

Some bullets have been designed to encourage students to do some independent research. This research will enable them to give a more personalised response which, because it is personalised, should be different from those offered by other students in the class. Another way to elicit a personalised response is to invite students to use their imagination or to speculate about an aspect related to the task title.

When designing bullets it is important to have in mind the assessment criteria so that the bullets give students the opportunity to show that they can fulfil the requirements of the criteria. Thus, it is important to ensure that students of all abilities can describe, give opinions with justifications, develop the points made and use verbs. Higher ability students must go beyond this by giving detailed, accurate and organised responses, using a variety of tenses as well as presenting and explaining points of view. The task title must be clear and the suggested content, as given in the bullets, must all be relevant to the title.

Thus, by designing appropriate tasks which elicit relevant responses, students will be able to prove their full linguistic ability to show what they know and can do.

## Context: Leisure – Holidays

### Version 1

#### Task Title: HOLIDAYS AND TOURISM

Your pen friend has asked you to write an article about holidays and tourism in the target language for the school magazine.

You could mention

- **the type of family holiday you prefer and your reasons**  
*(This first bullet is very accessible for all abilities and allows students to give opinions with justifications about their preferred type of holiday. Giving opinions with reasons is very important if students are to access the Limited mark band and beyond it. More able students will also be able focus on the family aspect of the holiday and give reasons why the type of holiday is suitable and enjoyable for the family.)*
- **a description of a recent holiday and your opinions of it**  
*(This enables students to describe a holiday of their choice so they could choose a resort in the UK or abroad. It allows students to personalise their response and to give more opinions with reasons. It is a bullet which will differentiate by outcome in that the descriptions will elicit either simplistic or more complex descriptions and reasons for the choice of holiday.)*
- **how you spend holiday time when you cannot go away on holiday**  
*(This is another instance of a bullet which will differentiate by outcome in that it can be answered simplistically with a series of activities that the student does when not going away. The more able student would give a more sophisticated response which could cover a wide variety of activities and reasons why the student does not go away.)*
- **if you think going away on holiday is important or not and why**  
*(The structure of this bullet elicits a personal response which gives higher ability students the opportunity to present, express and explain ideas and points of view which go beyond simplistic opinions. They may also choose to express their feelings about not going away on holiday e.g. disappointment etc. The ability to do this will enable such students to access the higher mark bands under Content.)*
- **if you think tourism is an advantage or not to a country, region or town and your reasons**  
*(This bullet also invites students to present, express and explain their points of view and thus it is another inbuilt opportunity created by the task for students to prove that they can do this with some sophistication. The bullet also invites students to think and research about a place of their choice and to argue whether tourism is an advantage or not. The place they choose to exemplify could be a place in the UK e.g. Blackpool, London etc. or it could be a place in the target language country or anywhere else. This bullet gives a lot of scope for students to work independently and to explain their ideas while still working within the framework of language that is being taught in class.)*
- **how you think holidays will change in the future and if you think your holiday choices will change or not**  
*(This bullet will appeal to the imagination of students who are being asked to speculate how holidays will change in the future. They are being asked to use future tenses which will satisfy the requirement for the use of a variety of tenses if students are to have access to the higher mark bands for Range of Language.)*

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

## Context: Leisure – Holidays

### Version 2

#### Task Title: HOLIDAYS AND TOURISM

Your pen friend has asked you to write an article about holidays and tourism in the target language for the school magazine.

You could mention

- **the type of family holiday you prefer and your reasons**
  - when you go
  - type of holiday
  - reasons for your preference
  
- **what you do to prepare for your holidays**
  - how you book the holiday
  - what you do to save up
  - what you buy for the holiday
  - what you put in your case
  - any documentation you need
  
- **a description of a recent holiday and your opinions of it**
  - where the destination was
  - what it was like
  - reasons why you liked/disliked it
  
- **how you spend holiday time when you cannot go away on holiday**
  - the times you cannot go away: Christmas, half-term etc.
  - daytime activities
  - evening activities
  - who you spend time with
  
- **if you think going abroad on holiday is better than staying in the UK and your reasons**
  - why you think going abroad is good
  - why you think holidays in UK are good
  - which you prefer
  
- **plans for a different type of holiday in the future and your reasons**

*(Students who are aiming for the C grade are not required to write using a variety of tenses to attain the grade. This bullet can be answered by using only the present tense, but depending on the linguistic confidence of the student it can be answered using immediate future etc. This will depend on their preparation in class.)*

  - where you want to go and why
  - who you want to go with and why
  - different activities you want to try

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

## Context: Lifestyle – Health

### Version 1

#### Task Title: PROBLEM OF OBESITY

You are writing a blog in the target language for your partner school's website about the problem of obesity in the UK and lifestyle.

You could mention

- **a description of the problem of obesity in the UK – facts and figures**  
*(This will give students the opportunity to do some research and to put it into their own words in the target language.)*
- **reasons why people are obese**  
*(This bullet will allow students to think about why people are obese and to justify their thoughts.)*
- **the consequences of being obese**  
*(Students will use the results of their research for the first bullet to explain the consequences and to use technical terms to describe any medical conditions which occur because of obesity. It is also an opportunity to write about the personal consequences of being obese like not being able to buy fashionable clothes or being bullied because of size etc.)*
- **your opinions about organisations and TV programmes which target people with weight problems**  
*(This bullet will enable students to think about if it is ethical, fair or helpful for organisations like fast food restaurants, weight loss organisations and TV programmes to target people with weight problems. It is an opportunity for them to give sophisticated opinions and reasons for their points of view.)*
- **if you think obesity has become the biggest challenge or not to people's health and lifestyle in the UK and your reasons**  
*(Students will be able to present and explain their ideas and opinions about whether they feel there are any other more important challenges to healthy lifestyle. They will conclude which issue, if any, is the most challenging. They have the opportunity to use past tenses to explain that obesity has not always been an issue and they may choose to explain why it was not an issue in the past.)*
- **how you think the government, local authorities or schools will help people to improve their lifestyle for a more healthy future**  
*(Students are invited to use future/conditional tense to imagine how people will be able to improve their lifestyle and how public institutions will help them to do this.)*

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

## Context: Lifestyle – Health

### Version 2

#### Task Title: PROBLEM OF OBESITY

You are writing a blog in the target language for your partner school's website about the problem of obesity in the UK and lifestyle.

You could mention

- **a description of the problem of obesity in the UK – facts and figures**
  - one in four people are now obese in the UK
  - it is becoming normal for children to be overweight
  - doctors say it is now a very serious issue
  
- **reasons why people are obese**
  - unhealthy diet – fast food, junk food, snacks, fizzy drinks etc. popular and easy
  - mums who work do not have time to shop for and prepare healthy meals
  - people eat too much and have very big portions
  - people do not exercise or play sport
  
- **the consequences of being obese**
  - health problems e.g. heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure
  - other problems e.g. fat people can be less confident, can be bullied, cannot buy fashionable clothes, cannot join in many activities
  - the cost to the national health – the need for special facilities e.g. special beds, ambulances, medical treatment is very expensive e.g. £50,000 to fit a gastric band per patient
  
- **your opinions about TV programmes about people with weight problems**
  - if you watch TV programmes like *The Biggest Loser* and *Supersize v Superskinny*
  - if you think these programmes are entertaining and why
  - if you think these programmes help to educate people with weight problems and why
  
- **another health problem or lifestyle issue which worries you**
  - smoking cigarettes, drinking too much alcohol, drugs etc.
  - if the problem worries you more than obesity and your reasons
  
- **if you think your lifestyle is healthy or not and why**
  - things you do that are healthy – walk to school, avoid cigarettes etc.
  - things you do that are not healthy – avoid exercise, play too many computer games, drink too much cola, eat too many crisps and junk food etc.
  - how you need to change your lifestyle if necessary

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

## Context: Home and Environment

### Version 1

#### Task Title: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

You are contributing to an online series of articles about the environment which you have seen on a target language website.

You could mention

- **what you do at home to protect the environment**  
*(This is an accessible first bullet which will enable students to write about a number of ways they protect the environment at home.)*
- **why you think your actions help to protect the environment**  
*(This invites students to explain by justifying why they think their actions protect the environment. Being able to explain is a skill which can be either quite simplistic or can enable students to use more sophisticated language to support their explanation. Responses will depend on the level of thinking used to justify the actions and the students' ability to communicate the thinking.)*
- **the disadvantages of being environmentally friendly**  
*(Normally the emphasis is on the advantages of protecting the environment. This bullet invites students to present their ideas about the disadvantages, for example buying green products can be expensive, electric cars are much more expensive to buy and difficult to run etc. There are numerous reasons to research and to discuss which enables the students to personalise the response.)*
- **what you think is the most serious global environmental problem and your reasons**  
*(This bullet allows students to personalise their response, to research an issue of their choice and to explain the reasons.)*
- **why protecting the environment was not an issue in the past**  
*(This bullet enables students to think about reasons why protecting the environment has become such an issue for the modern world. They can use past and present tenses to present and explain their ideas which will satisfy the requirement for higher achieving students to be able to use a variety of tenses. At the same time by presenting and explaining their ideas, and depending on the level of the response, they can access the higher mark bands for Content. The explanation will also give opportunities to use more technical language relevant to the environment.)*
- **what you think will happen in the future if people do not protect the environment now**  
*(Students are asked to speculate about the future. This is another chance for them to explain their ideas which will be based on their research and class discussion about the possible consequences to the environment. The bullet is couched in future terms which will give students an added opportunity to show that they can use different tenses, in this case the future and the present. As with the previous bullet this will enable students to show their knowledge of more technical vocabulary related to the environment.)*

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

## **Context: Home and Environment**

### **Version 2**

#### **Task Title: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

You are contributing to an online series of articles about the environment which you have seen on a target language website.

You could mention

- **what you do at home to protect the environment**
  - how you save water, energy, paper
  - what you do to recycle and separate rubbish
  - if you use 'green' products
  
- **why you think your actions help to protect the environment**

why you think any of your actions protect the environment e.g.

  - recycling, saving energy and water
  - separating rubbish and composting organic products
  - buying local products or organic products
  - only using the car when necessary or car share
  - using public transport
  - reusing things
  
- **the disadvantages of being environmentally friendly**
  - cost of 'green' products
  - inconvenience of recycling and separating rubbish
  - unreliable/inconvenient public transport
  
- **the environmental problems in your home town**
  - litter, dirt and animal dirt
  - air and noise pollution
  - traffic
  - vandalism and graffiti
  - any other problem
  
- **how these environmental problems affect your home town**
  - health problems caused by pollution and dirt
  - problems caused by traffic
  - unpleasant appearance of the town
  
- **what you think the town council can do to solve these problems**
  - control the traffic
  - improve public transport
  - more litter bins, street cleaners
  - more cameras to catch vandals, litter louts etc

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.



**Context: Work and Education**

**Version 1**

**Task Title: WORK EXPERIENCE**

You are nearly at the end of work experience and you are writing an online account about it for your pen friend who is about to do a work placement in the target language country.

You could mention

- **details of your work placement**  
*(This is a very open-ended first bullet which can be answered in a very straightforward way giving details about the company, location etc. It could also be expanded with details about how and why the student chose the placement and who organised it etc. It gives the student an early opportunity within the task to use present and past tenses.)*
- **a description of a typical day at the placement**  
*(This is quite an accessible bullet which will elicit a number of activities. It gives the opportunity for the higher student to use a variety of markers to sequence the activities and to develop the response by giving opinions about them.)*
- **your line manager, your opinion of him/her and your reasons**  
*(This bullet will differentiate by outcome in that students with good linguistic ability will be able to develop the description of the line manager and the relationship with him/her. It also offers the opportunity for the student to describe feelings and reactions to the relationship with the line manager.)*
- **a high point and a low point during the placement and how you overcame the low point**  
*(The student will use a variety of past tenses to describe the high and low points which will lead to a sophisticated and personalised response. Students can develop the response by expressing their feelings about the high and low points which will lead to more sophisticated expressions of their points of view.)*
- **if the placement has influenced your choice of career in the future or not and why**  
*(The bullet elicits a conclusion about work experience set against the personal aspirations of the student.)*
- **if you think work experience is worthwhile or not and your reasons**  
*(Students are invited to present and explain their points of view about the value of work experience in general. If done well it will give students access to the higher mark bands for Content.)*

Remember, in order to score the highest marks you must answer the task fully, developing your response where it is appropriate to do so.

