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English Language

8705/2F

(Specification 8705)

**Paper 2: Source Based Reading and
Directed/Associated Writing (Foundation)**

Report on the Examination

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Report on AQA Level 1/2 Certificate in English Language: Paper 2F 8705/2F January 2013

Whilst the entry for this series was not high, it was clear that the candidates were generally engaged by the theme of film and found the questions accessible. Nearly all of candidates completed both sections of the paper, indicating there was adequate time for them to read and respond to the texts and tasks.

In Section A, candidates were usually able to identify key points and make at least straightforward comments on the texts. The key difference between those who scored highly and those who didn't was the ability to explain and develop comment, as opposed to paraphrase.

Section B produced some opinionated writing. One illuminating point to emerge was the number of candidates answering question 6 who highlighted the educational and moral force of films. Centres are reminded of the importance of writing for a specific purpose and audience in this section of the paper.

Section A

Question One

The majority of candidates completed this task successfully, most scoring 3 or 4 marks. Where they did not do so, it was usually because they had identified features of either Hollywood or Bollywood but not compared them.

Question Two

Almost all candidates were able to identify details of the poster and many moved into the 3-6 band with some explanation of the identified details. At the lower end of this band comments were relatively simple. So, for example, it was not uncommon to read, 'The poster says it could be the most terrifying motion picture ever made. This makes it seem scary.' Better responses, however, focused on layout, images and/or use of language, for example: 'The language used in this plants the idea in the viewer's head that the film will be scary. The word 'terrifying' is often used to describe scary things and in this use, it is used to describe the movie. The fact that it is put right at the top of the poster, the first thing you see, sets the tone for the remaining part of the poster left to read.'

Question Three

There was occasional misunderstanding of this question with some candidates focusing on how the review would make the reader want to see the film rather than on how 'the writer shows that he thinks it is a great film'. Centres are reminded of the need to examine a range of questions with students to ensure they identify the key words and the given task.

Weaker responses identified sections of the review which showed the writer's viewpoint and then simply copied them out. Many candidates, however, were able to identify relevant details from the review and explain *how* the language used indicates the writer's enthusiasm for the film, for example: 'The writer also shows that he thinks it is a good film by using powerful words such as: horror, beautiful, brilliant and extraordinary. What makes that stand out as to why he thinks it is a great film is because they are all describing what he feels about the director, actors and the film. The most special thing about him using those describing words is that he had used them all within the same sentence.' Where candidates took this approach they usually scored highly.

Question Four

This question was usually answered well. The majority of candidates were able to identify individual results of piracy (for example, reduced profits) and many were able to link them together into a set of related consequences (for example reduced profits resulting in less money to invest in new films). Again, some candidates merely copied relevant sections from the text. When preparing candidates,

centres should aim to discourage this practice. Candidates who *process* information, using detail to develop relevant comment, will always achieve higher marks.

Question Five

There was some direct copying from the sources and weaker responses tended to see the comments in terms of the individual career problems faced by the women. Additionally, it was noted that there was some confusion over points made, with some candidates failing to understand that Berry was talking about racial discrimination or that Streep was making a wider point about age discrimination against women in general.

The majority of responses, however, demonstrated understanding that the comments were referring to how the women saw the situation for all women across the film industry (and sometimes beyond), thus demonstrating understanding of viewpoint. However, most candidates were not so successful at going beyond identifying these views. The higher marks were awarded where the candidates commented on the differences that existed between the various viewpoints. Some identified shared viewpoints (women are treated unequally by the film industry) and then pointed out some of the nuances in their viewpoints (Halle Berry referring to the improving situation of women of colour; Meryl Streep arguing that inequality for women runs through the workplace but women are fighting back).

Section B

Question Six

This proved a popular question. Whilst a few candidates seemed to think that the newspaper was advocating film piracy, most maintained a clear sense of audience and purpose. Many candidates put up a lively defence of the value of seeing films and it was interesting to see how many had very fond memories of seeing films with family when they were younger, regarding this as a valuable experience. Others pointed out that films gave them the opportunity to explore and reflect on situations/experiences that they hadn't had in their own lives. Whilst the less successful responses tended to jump from point, often simply recycling ideas from the sources, better answers used relevant detail from the sources to help them develop their ideas.

Question Seven

Candidates who kept purpose and audience at the forefront of their thoughts tended to write the most successful reviews, whilst those who simply gave detailed accounts of the plot of their favourite film, with little or no explanation of why they thought it deserved a place in the festival, did less well. The best highlighted the most attractive features of the film, explained why they liked it and why they thought the audience would enjoy it, and used language to engage and persuade. Some were able to explain why their chosen film was important in terms of the themes or issues it explored, demonstrating an understanding of the significance of cinema beyond mere diversion.

Centres should note that the ability to write appropriately for purpose and audience, and to organise ideas and impose a structure on writing, alongside a competency in basic technical skills, were distinguishing features of the better responses to both questions 5 and 6.