

Edexcel International

London Examinations

IGCSE

IGCSE English Language (4355)

**Candidate responses to Additional
Specimen Paper 2H and Paper 3**

Contents

Introduction 1

Paper 2H

Section A 2

Section B 4

Section C 8

Paper 3

Question 1 10

Question 2 14

Introduction

This booklet contains examples of candidates' work in response to the Additional Specimen Papers 2H and 3.

The purpose of the booklet is to provide examples of achievement at different levels. The accompanying commentaries from a senior examiner highlight the qualities of each, and show how the mark scheme is used to arrive at a mark.

The responses to Paper 2H are by a single candidate. The responses to Paper 3 are by several candidates.

Additional Specimen Paper 2H

Section A

Question 1.

Give **four** phrases which the writer uses to emphasise the huge numbers of crabs that take part in this journey. (4)

" a million scarlet crabs" (line 5), "they are so crowded" (line 5), "the vast size of their population" (line 13), "thousands of the marchers" (line 19)

Commentary

The candidate succinctly identifies the relevant words and phrases and so achieves 4 marks, the maximum available. Note that the question does not ask for analysis or explanation at this stage, merely identification. Candidates should be guided towards a close reading of the question to ensure that they respond appropriately.

Question 2.

Look again at lines 12- 29 of *The Trials of Life*. Describe, **in your own words**, the journey the crabs make. (4)

The crabs left the forest and started their trip towards the coast. They marched early in the morning or later in the evening because at this time the hot tropical sun has cooled. If it rains or the sun is hidden in clouds then the crabs are able to move throughout the day. A lot of the crabs were accidentally killed by crushing each other because there were so many of them. When they reached their destination they mated and the males dug burrows for the females. The males then returned leaving the females there to lay the eggs.

Commentary

This question asks for reading retrieval and an understanding of the sequence of events. This candidate is clearly able to select four key elements of the journey and so achieves 4 marks, the maximum available.

Question 3.

How does the writer involve the reader in the events he describes?

In your answer you should write about

- how the writer makes the reader feel sympathy for the crabs
- how the writer builds up to a sense of wonder and excitement

You may include **brief** quotations from the passage to support your answer.

(12)

The writer involves the reader by making him feel sympathy for the crabs. This is achieved by using vivid and dramatic vocabulary. Even the title, "The Trials of Life", gives the sense that the text is going to talk about something difficult to accomplish, which encourages to feel sympathy for the crabs. The writer uses vivid verbs such as, "jammed", "crowded" and "crushed". All of these affect the reader by helping to appreciate the discomfort and danger faced by the crabs. The writer describes the female burden vividly by describing them carrying, "a huge mass of brown eggs amounting up to a hundred thousand eggs". The lengths that these mothers are prepared to go to on behalf of their offspring is truly staggering and makes us feel for them. The fact they do this in the worst possible conditions, "where the sea beats directly onto the face of the cliff" only makes us appreciate their sacrifice even more.

We also feel sympathy for the baby crabs. The way that the writer describes them as, "abandoned", at such a young age, and the way that he uses punctuation to make that word stand out help us to feel sympathy. The way that the mother crabs "wave a salute" to the baby crabs is a touching gesture that tugs at the heart strings and makes us feel for sorry for mother and babies as they all leave the beach alone.

The writer also helps by building up wonder and excitement by starting in an exciting way, "it is midnight on the coast of Christmas Island." The setting is exotic and mysterious and the use of the present tense makes it very real and exciting. The element of wonder is there all along in the huge numbers and the remarkable things that they do.

Commentary

This candidate is clearly able to make perceptive points about the writer's technique and is able to support a number of comments with textual evidence. Better comments are extended or justified. There is some sound analysis and some close textual analysis of language features, such as tense. Although it is not necessary to address each aspect of the question equally it is clear that the section dealing with wonder and excitement is weaker and a very general comment is offered without any textual support or explanation. The mark for this answer is 10 out of 12.

Section B

Question 4.

Remind yourself of the passage from the Anthology, **Impact Alert – Asteroids**, which is printed at the end of this examination paper.

How does the writer make the subject of an asteroid impact appealing to the reader?

In your answer you should write about

- content
- layout
- use of language

You may include **brief** quotations from the passage to support your answer.

(10 marks for Reading)

The content of the passage is very dramatic and very factual. The title of the passage, "Impact alert - asteroid" is a dramatic opening and draws the reader in by making the subject matter very clear and by making it sound very immediate.

The writer uses bullet points to present the facts in an orderly and easily accessible manner. The text is also divided by sub-headings which are bold in order to stand out and which divide the text into easily digestible sections, so helping to make the subject interesting to the reader. Some of the texts under the subheadings are divided into paragraphs to make the text even easier to access. There is a quick pace in the way that information is presented with the bullet points and the use of short paragraphs.

The language of the text is also very suitable. The writer uses dramatic and descriptive vocabulary such as, "stripped", "smashed" and "wrecked". This helps the reader to appreciate what it may be really like when the asteroid hits. The writer also uses statistics and numbers to make the information seem more direct and factual, such as, "measuring between 10m and 100km across". This helps to get the reader interested because numbers can be very persuasive. Another technique that the writer uses to help interest the reader is his use of comparatives such as, "less than the moon". By comparing things to those that the reader already has an existing knowledge of is a simple way to hook their interest. The writer also uses a number of modifiers such as, "dinosaur-killing impact" to make his writing more descriptive and dramatic and so interest his reader. The writer uses rhetorical questions, "How much ..?" in fact the

passage even finishes with a question. This is a technique to engage the reader by addressing him directly and making him think about the issues. This use of questions sometimes appears as frequently asked questions type of structure in which questions are posed by the passage and are then answered.

I think that this writer has successfully used a number of ways to make his subject matter appealing to all readers.

Comments

This candidate shows a sound understanding of the writer's techniques and is able to identify and comment upon a wide range of them. There is extensive use of supporting text, though not all comments are so supported. There is some successful analysis of language, such as the reference to noun modifiers and the use of rhetorical questions. The candidate has made good use of the bullet points in structuring her answer to ensure that a range of aspects is covered. There is a close focus upon the question, which is frequently returned to by the candidate. This answer scores 8 marks out of a possible 10.

Section B continued

Question 5.

Imagine you have witnessed a natural disaster, such as a flood or an earthquake.
Write a report for your local radio station describing what you saw.

(10 marks for Writing)

Punctuation used with precision and for effect.
Spelling is accurate throughout.

Engaging opening.
Assured control of register quickly establishes familiar genre for the reader.

DJ: You're listening to radio 904.3 and following the unexpected earthquake of yesterday we have invited one of the witnesses to talk about it. Over to you Katerina.

K: Thank you. Well, you're definitely right about the unexpected part!

The day had started just like any other day would. The only strange thing was that there was no wind blowing and everything was silent. I came home from school about 2.30pm and it just happened that I was home alone. As I sat down and turned the TV on I heard a strange noise like a sort of low buzzing sound. Everything happened so quickly that, to be honest, I hardly had time to panic. The floor started shaking beneath me and I almost lost my balance! Then, the next thing I knew was that the TV fell off its stand and its glass screen shattered into small pieces. Then all the glass bottles and vases started falling off their shelves, making a loud crashing noise and sending tiny shards of glass flying into my bare feet! I have to admit that I was shocked. That only lasted a second. I've witnessed earthquakes before and I realised what was happening. I knew that I had to get out of the house as quickly as possible so I just ran towards the door.

Uses cohesive textual devices, such as repetition. A variety of sentence structures skilfully used to control the passage of time. Paragraphing is used to clarify speakers and to indicate structure.

Short sentences deliberately used for emphasis and developing vocabulary used to refine meaning.

Paragraph
openers link time
and action.
Complex sentence
structures handled
with assurance.

The earthquake was strong that I really had to struggle not to fall.

As soon as I reached the exit, I swung open the door and ran as fast as I could, not feeling the ground beneath my feet.

The earthquake might have only lasted for 40 seconds but to me it felt like an eternity! Outside, all of my neighbours were standing and talking about the disaster and some children were crying. It was absolutely horrible! As you know the earthquake measured 6 on the Richter scale and a lot of damage occurred to houses and buildings. I think that was one of the worst experiences of my life!

Commentary

The candidate communicates in a highly effective manner and shows clear control. She successfully establishes a relationship between reader and writer by use of a range of familiar genre features of a radio broadcast. There are elements of sophistication in expression through control of sentence structure, paragraphing and apt choice of vocabulary. The writing is on the borderline between Bands 4 and 5. It fulfils all of the features of Band 4 and some of Band 5, and so is awarded 9 marks out of 10.

Section C

Question 6.

Imagine that your class has raised a large sum of money to be donated to a charity or good cause. Your teacher has asked for suggestions about how the money should be used.

Explain which charity or good cause you would give the money to and why.

Total for Section C: 20 marks

People give money to different charities every day. Some of them do this because they really care and others do it to enhance their social 'image'. The same goes for the charities. Some of them actually get the money and spend it on people with need, while others think of it as an easy way to make a million. As our class has raised this large sum of money, I choose to give it to the poor souls in need.

I personally donate my money to the mentally challenged children living happily under different roofs together, away from the cruel world. The reason why I give to them and not to any other organisation is very simple: these children have been born like this. It isn't their fault. They did not choose to be born like this and neither did their parents. Unlike so many other people in this big, chaotic world, they didn't have a choice.

Most of the people that I work with say, "Why don't you donate your money to the starving children of parts of Africa?" My answer? I personally believe that some of those children suffer because of their parents. If it wasn't for the bad decisions that the parents have made in life then those children wouldn't be living as they are. However, the parents of mentally challenged children didn't make any wrong decisions. Their children just came out that way. I know that it is a debatable matter but I am prepared to fight for what I believe to be right.

I believe that these children deserve more. I believe that these poor, innocent souls should be accepted by society as equals and not seen as a minority.

It makes me sad to think about the whole situation and it makes me realize how lucky I am. How fortunate I am that my life is as it is. And so I have chosen to donate some of my life's advantages to give to these small children a chance in life. Surely everyone deserves a chance?

Commentary

This candidate writes in a compellingly direct manner that communicates persuasively and highly effectively. The candidate controls punctuation for emphasis, such as the use of the colon in the second paragraph and vocabulary to create sympathy, such as *poor souls* in the first paragraph. There is skilful use of repetition, *I believe*, in paragraph four. A wide variety of sentences is used, including extensive use of short sentences for effect such as, *It isn't their fault*, and the use of rhetorical questions throughout. Structurally, the piece builds from a very reasonable opening that appears to deal with the subject at a distance, "*People give money*," and seems very balanced "*Some of them ...others do it ...*". ending with an impassioned final paragraph that defiantly throws the final rhetorical question back in the face of the reader.

The writing is sustained and crafted and clearly justifies a mark in Band 5. The final mark for this piece is 20 out of a possible 20.

Paper 3

Question 1

Remind yourself of the poem in the Anthology, *Electricity Comes to Cocoa Bottom*, which is printed at the end of this examination paper.

How does the writer bring to life people's feelings about, and reactions to, the events described in the poem?

In your answer you should write about

- *Grannie Patterson and Mr. Samuel*
- *the children*
- *the importance of the 'voice' in the wind*
- *the vivid and dramatic use of language.*

You may use **brief** quotations from the passage to support your answer.

Total for question 1: 15 marks

Candidate A

The writer brings to life the people's feelings and reactions by firstly introducing the main characters to us which are Mr Samuel, Grannie Paterson and the Children of Cocoa Bottom. We can understand that Mr Samuel is a priveleged man and is possibly the master of "the children of Cocoa Bottom". He had the advantage of getting electricity in his home, something that represents the new civilisation and modern technology. It is obvious that he is very happy and pleased " Mr Samuel smiling on the verandah -" (line 19). Looking at the line about Grannie Patterson we can get a clear image of her feelings. She's old and therefore belongs to the old generation and the old civilisation. She doesn't seem to approve of the electricity and treats it with suspision, not wanting to go outside Mr Samuel's house like everyone else. But even though she in a way doubts this new event, this sort of miracle, she still very curious "peeped through the crack in her porch door" (line 8). The children of Cocoa Bottom belong to the new generation and are poor but are also very curious to see what the whole fuss is about which is why "they camped on the grass bank outside his house" (line 3). We can understand their anticipation to see this light because they were "watching the sky turn yellow orange" (line 6). At the end though, they were left a bit disappointed because they were expecting an explosion or a loud noise but in the end "no one (...) ever heard a sound" (line 33,34). The fact that they were on the way to their "dark journey home" (line 36), we can see that after getting a taste of this new civilization, modern technology they didn't feel any better because they realised that they can't have it or touch it, they had to go back to their dark homes with no electricity inside them.

The language that the writer uses to describe the nature also gives away some of the people's feelings. Particularly in lines 10-17 we can see how the nature is

imitating the people's feelings. The fireflies switched off their lanterns in order not to disturb the electrical light, the birds kept quiet and even the breeze "held its breathe" (line 14) in order to stop the bamboo's swaying. The night also came very softly and quietly. They wanted everything to be quiet and were anticipating for that great moment. After the lights were switched on we can see a stir of excitement, as the birds started singing and fluttering their wings, the bamboo started swaying and the wind started blowing again, making the grass bend forward as if it were praising it the way people would praise their king. The "voice in the wind" is important because it suggests that the coming of electricity is a sort of a miracle or a historical event that should be recorded. Since it asked "Is there one among us to record this moment? (line3), we think that it's referring to the children of Cocoa Bottom and they couldn't record it probably because they simply didn't know how to write. The author also uses language to show us some contrasts such as the earth colours "grass" (line 3), "sunset" (line 5), "yellow, orange" (line 6) with the bright colour of the light. There is also a contrast between the word "light", which is repeated throughout the poem, and "dark " (line 36) and "shadows" (line 10).

In conclusion, I think this poem is very successful in building a picture in our mind and indirectly telling us about the characters and feelings and reactions.

Commentary

This is a well sustained and developed piece of analysis, which makes focused comments on all the bullet points. A detailed interpretation is developed in a thoughtful way, using quotations aptly and deftly. All the features of Band 4 attainment are fulfilled, so it is appropriate to look at Band 5. The grasp of language and how it is used "indirectly" to bring to life people's feelings and reactions shows sensitivity. Overall, too, a perceptive range of points is made and the understanding of the text is both astute and assured. Hence a mark in Band 5 is justified.

Mark: 13 out of 15. Grades are decided at Awarding Meetings, but this answer shows grade A characteristics.

Note that although there are some errors in expression made under the stress of examination conditions, these have no bearing when marking a reading question, unless the meaning is seriously impeded.

Candidate B (Question 1.)

The writer conveniently divides the poem into three parts. In the first part (lines 1-17) we follow the events as he describes the setting and nature in the background. Dramatic language, specifically phrases such as "penal line across the sun" (line 9) transmits the image to the reader, as we visualize the cable standing out against the red and orange colours of the sunrise.

Throughout the first part, nature and events go parallel, as he tries to show that even the surroundings are waiting in anticipation, together with the children; "sea held its breath" and we feel being prepared for the climax - "fireflies waited in the shadows" - ready for something to happen.

Mr Samuel represents the middle generation. In line 19 he is "smiling on the verandah".

He belongs to the privileged people category, as he has "the light", the electricity which is civilisation. Grannie Patterson represents the old generation. In line 8 we can see curiosity "peeped through the crack", which shows that she would want to see new things, but is however too scared to try, as she was brought up in a completely different time, and is not ready to accept new changes. The children represent the new generation. Their background is poor and civilization low; they are underprivileged. The writer brings out the contrast between these three generations: we can clearly see the difference between the children, whose lamps are "filled with oil" (line 4), and Mr Samuel who possesses the miracle, the "marvellous light" (line 25).

The "voice in the wind" is perhaps the author himself, wondering if anybody recorded the moment, then realizing he is alone, the climax has passed and the children are gone. He brings to life the description of how the moment is gone, using language - "wind whispered" (line 30) and "the moment has passed" - (line 38). You can see the wind throughout the poem. In line 14 it is preparing and waiting for something to happen, in line 27 we can see its excitement, as it is "swelling and swelling". The writer uses repetition of words, such as "swaying, swaying" (line 24) to build up an image. He uses dramatic vocabulary, and from the description we notice the colour of nature, the earth colours - "sky turn yellow, orange", to give us the feeling of the situation.

Commentary

The confusion over the gender of the poet is minor. This is a briefer answer, but it is carefully developed, and some perceptive points are made. The paragraph on the people is sound, though more comment on the children would be helpful. On the other hand the comments on the "voice in the wind" and on language are more focused on the question, show insight and are well supported by quotation. Overall a thoughtful interpretation of the poem is presented; ideas are developed analytically and a range of well focused points is made. The understanding is good enough to merit a mark just inside Band 4: 10 marks out of 15 (notional B/C borderline).

Candidate C (Question 1.)

Grannie Patterson represents the old generation. "Grannie Patterson across the road peeped through the crack in her porch", shows us although she was curious to see how light would come and how it would be, she didn't come out of her house to see close up, as though she was scared. Mr Samuel represents the middle generation. Mr Samuel felt proud "Mr Samuel smiling on the verandah", because he was the first to bring light to Cocoa Bottom and felt happy because he satisfied the anticipation of the children. The children are the new generation. In the first stanza they cannot wait for the light to come "they camped on the grass bank", their feelings are anticipation and aggravation because they are waiting. The second stanza is the children's amazement "there arising such a gasp". In the third stanza the children are disappointed because "no one (except for a few warm rocks hidden among mongoose ferns) even heard a sound,' (line 33-34) they were waiting for a bang or any sound of some sort.

The importance of the 'voice in the wind', is that although technology had reached Cocoa Bottom no-one there had recorded this "miracle". It's as though the weather was telling them, "why don't you record this moment?, it's important for people to know". I also think that the "voice in the wind" (line 30) is the author's conscience telling her that it's her duty to write about the event. The wind can also be found throughout the poem as the representative of everyone's feelings. "The breeze coming home from sea held it's breath" (line 4).

Vivid and dramatic language can be found throughout the entire poem. Mostly describing the people's feelings. "Such a fluttering of wings". "Evening came as soft as chiffon curtains", is a vivid explanation of how the sunset can be so beautiful.

In my opinion this poem at first does not give a good impression but as soon as you go into it and try to understand it's beautiful and colourful about the whole event.

Commentary

This is a relatively brief answer, but appropriate points are made on each bullet point. It begins rather assertively and descriptively, but there is implicit reference to the question. When the candidate starts commenting on the children, the answer seems to come to life. The second paragraph develops an interesting and well referenced personal interpretation. The paragraph on language is brief, but shows some sensitivity. The candidate also attempts to evaluate the poem at the end and comes to a reasonable conclusion. Overall, the analysis is perceptive as far as it goes, but it needs to be developed. However, a range of valid points is made. Band 3, 9 marks (notional grade C).

Question 2(a)

A friend wants to have a special celebration for his or her birthday and has asked you for advice. Give your ideas on what would make a perfect celebration.

15 marks

Candidate D

I believe the perfect party would be one that has some sort of theme. A celebration needs to be special and outstanding so that the guests remember it in the future. Before organising a party, one should agree on a budget after all you don't want to regret having the party the next time you get bills to pay. If you want to have something really special it is best to have a high budget though.

As my friend is a fan of classic movies, I would probably have that as my theme. I would tell everyone that they had to dress up as someone famous, but not tell anyone who they were supposed to be, so as to make the evening more enjoyable. I would probably rent out the village hall as there is a bar, where we could serve drinks, and a stage, where a band could play on, there. Once the location is arranged, I would then start planning the entertainment.

As my uncle has a band, I'm sure he would play at the party, which would solve my problems about finding a band for the appropriate price. We could also hire a karaoke machine, and give prizes to the best and worst singers for fun. We could also hire a projector and have silent movies playing in the background. We could also organise a few games for the children to play, and perhaps for the 'adults' too.

Once the entertainment has been booked, we could then start on the decoration and the food. We could hire tables and chairs from a company that my aunt knows of, so that wouldn't be a problem. The tables could have cream and gold tablecloths on them, and little night-lights every so often along them to make the place cosy and warm. There could be helium balloons, on the ceiling, of every colour, and chandeliers hanging to add that touch of class. We could get my friend's favourite food, as well as other international delights. We could have prawns, lobsters, curries, mexican food, green food and of course traditional roast beef and yorkshire puddings. We could get some food in the shape of props that you find on film sets, and the rest could be layed out in similar shapes. We would obviously get a large birthday-cake and various other deserts.

I do hope one day I can organise such a birthday party for a friend and perhaps make it even better than I had hoped, after all you only have a birthday party once a year.

Commentary

This is quite a lively answer, with some inventive ideas. The triplet verb for this writing question is “advise”. The advice the candidate gives is very clear and it is also presented in an engaging manner. Looking more closely at the marking grid for writing, the communication is clear and fluent in expression. Words are aptly chosen but sentence structures could be more varied. The whole piece is structured securely, with helpful and well sequenced paragraphing. The spelling, punctuation and grammar pose some problems (e.g. missing full stops and the misspelling of ‘chandelier’, but note that this is quite an ambitious word). However, only occasionally is the sense impeded by the mistakes, so the command could be said to be secure. The piece reflects aspects of both Bands 3 and 4, but there is an effectiveness about the expression (the candidate writes in a way that sustains the reader’s interest) which justifies a mark just within Band 4. Band 4: 10 marks out of 15 (notional B/C borderline).

Question 2(c)

“The moment had passed.”

Write a story, ending with these words.

15 marks

Candidate E

Last winter the night before Christmas Eve my friends and I decided to visit an old deserted church about fifty kilometres away from town in order to do some black magic, from a book Mary (my best friend) bought. That was a night none of us would ever forget.

At first we were extremely excited, everybody was waiting impatiently for the moment to come. At nine in the evening we all gathered in the little mysterious park near my house got in the car and set off. During the half an hour trip we were laughing, joking around, listening to music and discussing the approaching night.

When we got to the small valley near the lake we parked the car and decided to walk to the church which was only five minutes away. Everything looked so scary and dark. It took me a while to get used to the darkness in order to see my friends. At that moment I had second thoughts about the whole idea but was afraid to sound weak and kept it inside.

The wind was blowing us off our feet and the lake was loudly crashing on to the hanging down it trees making very spine-chilling noises. The whole nature around us sounded as if it were crying filling the atmosphere with uncontrollable to me fear.

Finally we lit our candles and entered the church. The door was unlocked, but squeaked terrible while opening with a visible difficulty. From the first second that I entered I realised that nobody has entered it in years, since the moment it was claimed cursed. The spider-webs swallowed the walls and the ceiling, dust replaced the air and the very few icons that were still left here were rusted and looked more evil than holy. The atmosphere was perfect.

We sat around in a circle in the middle of the church surrounded by candles and red flash lights. Mike (being the oldest out of all of us) opened the book and started reading the spells. Then suddenly everything lit up, the whole place went loud, I closed my eyes and saw the whole place turn around in front of me, bats were flying above my head, I let out a scream, jumped up ran out the moment was over.

Commentary

There is a clear sense of purpose here, but, whilst the detail is good and the atmosphere is built up well, there are frequent errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The final sentence is a typical example, where commas are used in place of full stops. The expression is quite ambitious in places, but the command falters, so that the intended meaning is only generally clear. Overall the command is unsure. However, there is a clear structure, and it builds up to an appropriate, if somewhat abrupt, conclusion. Overall, the level of attainment is uneven. Despite some “well chosen vocabulary” (Band 3) often correctly spelt, e.g. “spine-chilling”, “a visible difficulty”, some sections are confusing in sense (e.g. paragraph 4, first sentence), so that the communication can only at times be said to be “broadly appropriate” (Band 2). A “best fit” mark would place this in Band 3, 7 marks (notional grade D).