

London Examinations

GCE Ordinary Level

Mark Scheme and Examiners' Report
for English Language 7161

January 2001

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161

Mark Scheme

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, MARK SCHEME

Section A : Comprehension

Mark questions (a) – (l) according to the following mark scheme and put the mark for each answer in the right-hand margin. **Ring the total for the whole of Section A in the right-hand margin at the end of the section.**

***STARRED QUESTIONS SHOULD BE IN THE CANDIDATE'S OWN WORDS**

Passage One

- (a) The bucket is heavy when full of water
Her mother is old
=(Her mother should not be carrying heavy buckets) **(2 marks)**
- *(b) **Any 2 of the following:**
She looked her best in the early part of the day
and was glowing, healthy-looking
because she had enjoyed doing what she wanted to do **(2 marks)**
- *(c) **Any 2 of the following:**
She enjoyed doing
what she had been told not to do
by those who knew what was good for her **(2 marks)**
- (d) "was to keep that love of combat"
"found her undaunted, if not always undamaged" **(2 marks)**
- *(e) To be discovered, found out
in the act of committing a crime, something forbidden **(2 marks)**
- (f) 1. drawing buckets of water from the well
2. carrying heavy buckets full of water
3. climbing garden steps/ or training the vine
4. chopping/ or sawing wood
5. using a pruning knife
6. rescuing the cat from the roof **(6 marks)**

(g) "so youthful and mischievous"
"rejuvenated by an indescribable expression of guilty enjoyment"
(2 marks)

* (h) dizzy: giddy, dazed, unsteady, tottering
undaunted: unafraid, not afraid, courageous, fearless, not deterred by difficulties
respites: intervals, let-ups, temporary relief from pain, periods of partial recovery
vital: full of life, lively **(4 marks)**

Passage Two

(i) lawyer contracted to pay her 2, 500 francs monthly for life, or as an annuity in exchange for owning her flat on her death **(2 marks)**

(j) they haven't any proof **(1 mark)**

(k) an unusual genetic make-up
a diet that suits them
the will to live **(3 marks)**

(l) fanatic: great enthusiast, obsessional about
dismantled: taken down, pulled apart, demolished **(2 marks)**

Total 30 marks

Section B: Summary and Directed Writing

Marks for this question are divided between content (20 marks) and expression and accuracy (15 marks).

Content

Count to 200 words. One mark for each of the following (or equivalent) points up to a maximum of 18 marks.

What would you say are the pleasures and advantages of living to a great age?

1. I want to live as long as possible – it is gratifying.
2. I'm still interested in what is going on in the world.
3. I can still enjoy a drink of port.
4. I can still enjoy smoking.
5. I can enjoy eating sweet things.
6. I have no money worries because of my annuity.
7. I've lived to see some people I knew become famous.
8. I have so many memories of historic events (or details of),
9. and am the only living witness to some events in French history.
10. I have seen so many scientific/technological advances (or details of).
11. I'm famous in France (or a national asset).
12. The government sees that I'm well looked after.
13. I hold the record for the world's longest lived person.

What are the disadvantages?

14. I can't see very well.
15. I can't hear very well.
16. I'm no longer mobile.
17. I've outlived members of my family (or details).
18. Fame can be a nuisance: too many journalists.

+2 marks for 1st person and appropriate layout

Expression and Accuracy

- (a) These are to be assessed as '**Good**', '**Satisfactory**' or '**Poor**' according to the criteria at the end of the mark scheme.
- (b) Initially select the central mark in the appropriate band. This mark may then be fine-tuned, by 1 or 2 marks up or down, **within this band**.

BAND	MARK RANGE
Good	15, 14, 13, 12, 11,
Satisfactory	10, 9, 8, 7, 6,
Poor	5, 4, 3, 2, 1

(c) **Assessment:**

- (i) The mark for Content is decided without reference to Expression or Accuracy.
- (ii) The mark for Expression and Accuracy is not affected by the mark for Content but reflects the quality (or lack of it) of such aspects as:

Sentence structure
Range of vocabulary
Control of grammar
Spelling
Punctuation

- (iii) Errors in the work should be marked by:

double underlining for gross errors;
single underlining for 'secretarial errors'.

These marks are a guide to the examiner – they should **not** be totted up.

- (iv) Count each answer to ensure that the word limit is right. Cross through extra words.

At the foot of the answer indicate the marks for Content and Expression and Accuracy as follows:

C + E/A

10 8 = 18

Put the ringed total for the Section in the right-hand margin.

NOTE: Gross errors include:

Faulty sentence structure.
Faulty sentence division.
Mistakes of agreement.
Consistent misuse of word.

'Secretarial' errors include:

Misspelling.
Minor punctuation errors.
Incorrect use, or omission, of inverted commas.
Misuse of capital letters.
Misuse of apostrophe.

Total 35 marks

Section C: The Essay

The whole answer is to be marked on impression. Ignore length: if the answer is clearly very short, it will penalise itself in the final impression. As with Section B, use double underlining to indicate gross errors, and single underlining to denote 'secretarial' errors. It may be helpful to use a tick to acknowledge merit.

Follow this procedure:

- (a) At the foot of the composition, list merits and weaknesses, along the following lines:

+	-
sentence structure	inaccuracy
paragraphs	number of gross errors
argument	some obscurity

Please ensure your comments are clear and legible.

- (b) In the light of your assessment of the work as a whole, taking into account:

Content and Organisation
Expression
Accuracy

Place it in one of the following three bands:

Good
Satisfactory
Poor

according to the criteria below and then into the upper or lower category within the band.

- (c) Then, working from the circled mark, fine tune within the given range, going up by a maximum of 3 and down by a maximum of 2.

BAND	FINE TUNING	MARK RANGE
GOOD	Very good	35 34 33 32 31 30
	Good (with some minor Qualifications)	29 28 27 26 25 24
SATISFACTORY	Competent	23 22 21 20 19 18
	Just Adequate	17 16 15 14 13 12
POOR	Weak	11 10 9 8 7 6
	Very Weak	5 4 3 2 1 0

EXAMPLE: The first impression puts the answer into the SATISFACTORY band, but in view of the weakness in expression it is 'just adequate' rather than 'competent'. Starting with a mark of 14, the number of errors and deficiencies in vocabulary suggest a mark closer to POOR. The final mark is 13.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING CONTINUOUS WRITING

GOOD	Answers will be confident in sentence structure and choice and range of vocabulary; generally they will be free of error; above all, they will demonstrate skill in communicating. In Section C they will be relevant (bearing in mind that this section is intended to give the candidate the opportunity of developing outwards the theme(s) of the passages in Section A).
SATISFACTORY	Answers will demonstrate competence in the use of language to communicate. There will be errors, including perhaps an occasional gross error, but not so many mistakes as to affect the reader's comprehension, or as to introduce incoherence. The answers may, however, be pedestrian and undistinguished. In Section C they will deal relevantly with the subject.
POOR	Answers will contain passages that indicate a significant inability to communicate immediately with the reader: some of this writing will be difficult to follow. There will be many errors, a number of them 'gross errors'. In Section C the more successful writing will be able to develop a general argument – in other words, communicate – even though there may be obscurity so that immediate understanding is impeded.

Total 35 marks

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General comments

The theme of this paper, the character and experience of people in old age, was well received by candidates. Most wrote with involvement and a surprising degree of empathy, presumably because of older family members.

There were the usual number of questions requiring candidates to write in their own words in the Comprehension section and one or two with figurative expressions. The Comprehension answers were sometimes disappointing; some centres were extremely weak in this section. They should encourage candidates to read as much as they can and be alert to the use of English beyond the merely functional. Then their reading comprehension will improve and so will their essay writing.

The Summary/Directed Writing question was well done by many. As well as scoring points for content, candidates writing Mme. Calment's answers entered into the role convincingly and so scored well for Expression.

All the essay topics proved quite attractive and there was a wide range of modes of discourse and styles of writing. The best essays, on all topics, showed imaginative involvement and an assured style.

Section A: Comprehension

Many candidates understood the passages in a general sense and could answer questions of literal comprehension (a), (f), (g), (i), (j) and (k). Some did not make the answer to (f) really clear, listing nouns and noun phrases from the passage such as 'buckets full of water', 'garden steps', instead of stating which activity was involved. Among figurative expressions, to be 'caught ... red-handed' was best known. Good answers are precise e.g. (i) 'It was the regular payment of money in exchange for the eventual ownership of her flat that enabled Mme. Calment to live fairly free from financial worries.' 'A lawyer paid her a lot of money for her flat', though generally true, failed to score full marks. The vocabulary items 'dizzy', 'vital', 'fanatic' and 'dismantled' were more often known than 'undaunted' and 'respites', though both of these could be worked out from the passage.

Section B: Summary and Directed Writing

The task this time, to imagine an interview in which Mme. Calment gives answers to questions about the advantages and disadvantages of living to a great age, seems to have been enjoyed by many candidates. They often wrote discourse of a lively kind, reflecting ruefully on the aches and pains of age but also giving some positive memories. The role play was sometimes vividly entertaining e.g. 'I'm wearing down the wheels of my chair running away from all you journalists', or touching: 'There's nothing I can do to change the scars that life has traced on my face', and 'Ah well! The good lord has forgotten to call for me, it seems.'

Every candidate made a few relevant content points; some copied very extensively and lost marks which they could have gained if the work had been more cogent. There was less wholly verbatim copying this year, probably because the rubric required a change of tense and mode of presentation.

Section C: The Essay

All the topics were frequently chosen. Topics (a) and (b) gave an opportunity for confessional writing, often showing considerable maturity as writers reflected on their younger, less responsible selves. The phrase 'strong character' was sometimes taken to mean 'tough' or 'aggressive', and that was accepted. However, it could lead to rather stock 'thriller' writing. Candidates were well informed about contemporary developments in medicine and technology in (c) and were able to write with the correct subject-specific vocabulary about genome maps and cloning. For others, essays on this topic became just a list of ideas or were more about the social function of medicine and technology generally than as an aid to increasing life span.

Ballooning (d)(i) appealed to quite a few who wrote as if they had actually experienced it. Relaxing (d)(ii), though, produced many irrelevant essays about anything whatever which included a sentence somewhere, 'so I stretched on the bench and relaxed'. It was rather a sad commentary on the pressures facing modern youth that some wrote with envy of an experience rare to them: 'If only I could,' wrote one candidate. 'When I am not studying it is violin practice, gym club, computer club, and as soon as I sit down at home I'm taken off straight to an art gallery.'

Although there were fewer complete prepared essays, blocks of identical writing appeared in the work of candidates from some centres. This rarely leads to good marks because the writers are determined to get this material in somewhere and so write stilted prose, instead of entering into the topic personally or imaginatively and writing freely.

Generally most candidates took care to spell and punctuate accurately but there were the usual basic errors of grammar in the work of some candidates: errors in tenses, tense-switching, mis-use of prepositions, wrong idiom. For some, the correct use of the definite and indefinite article remains a problem. Some candidates use the same phrase or phrases very repetitively, often as a means of structuring the work, e.g. 'One way of relaxing is...', 'A way to relax is...' 'Another way to relax is....' This is orderly but it is stilted writing.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	56	45	35	30	22

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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