

Edexcel International
London Examinations
GCE Ordinary Level

Mark Scheme with Examiners' Report

**London Examinations Ordinary Level GCE in
English Language (7161)**

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, MARK SCHEME

SECTION A

Mark questions (a) – (l) according to the following mark scheme and put the mark for each answer in the right-hand margin.

Text One

- (1) **How does the writer account for the success of Ethiopian runners?**

live/train/born/run at (high) altitudes or thin mountain air, or mountains
have bigger lungs
have more blood cells
have great amount of haemoglobin in their blood/ carry oxygen more efficiently
their blood cells make better use of glucose/ oxygen/glucose burned faster
they have improved circulation
great aerobic efficiency

(6)

- (2) **Runners from other areas have tried training in the mountains. Explain in your own words the difficulties they have experienced.**

Sickness, nausea, throw up, puke
Dizziness, light-headed, feel faint, losing consciousness
Ill = 0, not well = 0
direct copying of key words is not credited

(2)

- (3) **Why, according to the writer, does the Asela region of Ethiopia in particular produce so many long-distance athletes?**

its altitude
the tough/hard lifestyle/children don't have sedentary life (unlike many other children)
they run in the Asela region because they enjoy it
they run in the Asela region because they have no choice/transport
direct quote from lines 38-45 = 0, but can adapt and validate
they had no cars = 0

(4)

Text Two

- (4) **How does the writer describe and explain Haile Gebrselassie's peculiar running style?**

he runs with one arm raised higher and the other free/loose/afloat – must mention both arms for point
he ran to school like this
clutching his textbooks – both arms = 0
crooked = 0

(3)

- (5) As a child, Haile Gebrselassie says he ran to school, but also for many other reasons. Give three of these reasons. Mark first three**

1. to fetch water (– water for animals = 0)
2. with the animals, any one, separate points count as attempts
3. to avoid punishment from father or teachers (– to run away = 0)
4. at school (races)
5. (Addis Ababa) marathon
no car = 0
to see the city = 0

(3)

- (6) Why does HG want to change and improve things for Ethiopia? How does he think he might achieve this? Use your own words as far as possible. Do not write more than 75 words.**

1. wants to give something back to those who helped/supported him, change things in future
2. sees all Ethiopians as his family/ strong feeling of responsibility to all Ethiopians
3. wants to encourage people to work together
4. wants to encourage people to improve things for themselves/self-help
5. wants to improve conditions – water and electricity supplies/needs
6. will accomplish this by going into public life (politics/sports minister)

first person = 0; quotation = 0

Score **up to 4** marks for content plus **0/1/2** for use of own words. Must be a clear link with question for own words.

(6)

(7) If you were preparing a collection of pieces of writing on 'The Challenge of Sport', which one of these two passages would you use and why?

You can choose either passage, but you must explain your choice carefully, with some comments on style and points which would interest readers.

Include reasons why the other piece is less suitable.

Use your own words as far as possible, but you may include brief quotations to support your opinion.

The following table gives some possible comments, but candidates may make other valid points.

Passage One (Welcome) - positive	Passage Two (Sporting) - negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of information re: runners • physiology • lifestyle • Use of bold and dash – 'barefoot' evokes interest • Illustrations helpful/interesting • Quotation/rhetoric • Direct voice in final paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives information about only one figure • Much information not on sport itself
Passage Two (Sporting) – positive	Passage One (Welcome) - negative
<p>Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physique of HG • history/background • struggles • ambitions/ideals • sense of responsibility • Comment on illustrations • Accessible style – short paragraphs, simpler lexis • Quotations brief but give personality, positive approach, sense of humour • Information on film/stardom but also atypical character of star 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts 40 plus years ago • Names but no details/personalities of runners • Information technical therefore harder to absorb • No real enthusiasm for sport or indication of benefits • Negative reference to ill-effects of training

Application of marks

Tick appropriate comments

Check whether both texts have been considered

Is there apt comment on style/language/layout?

Mark range	
6-5	Clear contrast and choice with supporting examples, showing good understanding and some analysis. Some reference to style, language features, interest for potential readers
4-3	Refers to both texts, showing understanding. Some judgement of suitability for purpose
2-1	A few relevant observations. Answer may refer to only one text. Limited understanding of passages or purpose shown.

SECTION B

8. **HG, the world famous athlete from Ethiopia, is coming to your school or college to present prizes to young sportsmen and women. You have been chosen to introduce him to the audience. Using information and ideas from both passages, write the text of your speech, which should include**

- **Background information about Ethiopia**
- **Facts about HG**
- **A description of his character and personality**
- **An outline of his plans for the future**
- **Why he is such a good role model for young people, whether they are interested in sport or not**

Word limit

Count to 220 and cross out from the end of that sentence.

Content

Selection is likely to be from the points indicated below, but other relevant points or inferences may be rewarded. Tick any points deserving note, up to 14.

Information re. Ethiopia

- Geography/mountains (or detail)/ physiology
- Poverty

- Information re. HG

- Lifestyle based on running
Allow **two** examples from: school, water, animals, to avoid punishment
- Hard childhood
Allow **two** examples from: large family, mother/sister died, dad tough, basic living conditions
- Allow **two**: records/ sport achievements
- Allow **one**: reference to film

- Personality

- (but) happy
- positive
- sense of humour
- resourceful
- philosophical
- not proud/ humble

- plans

- political future
- sports minister role
- aim to help country/people
- practical (improve conditions)
- emotional (to repay for help he's received)

- Role model points could link to any of above, but must be clearly linked to that aspect of question to score extra.

Style and audience

- Look for a balance between the bullet points in the question. Awareness of purpose, in that balance, in tone, register, style and audience, should also be identified and indicated/rewarded, **up to 6 marks**.

The mark out of 20 should represent mainly content, **maximum 14**, with an indication of how well the other elements have been achieved, **maximum 6**.

This sub-total should be added to the mark for Expression and Accuracy (see grid below) and total for the question transferred to the margin. Use single and double underlining for errors.)

Section B: Mark grid for assessing expression and accuracy (AO4)	
Mark range	Candidates should be able to:
15 – 13	Write using the standard grammatical forms and idioms of English Show confident use of a range of sentence structures Show considerable skill in organising ideas Write very accurately with regard to spelling and punctuation Use an impressive range of vocabulary Express ideas with lucidity and precision Describe vividly using own words and phrases Show control in sustaining theme and tone with clarity of expression
12 – 10	Write clear standard English Write with a variety of sentence structures Demonstrate skill in organising material Use mostly accurate spelling and punctuation Use apt and varied vocabulary, using few words and phrases from the text Show ability to sustain theme and tone
9 – 7	Write standard English reasonably clearly Write with some variety of sentence structures Use some skill in organising material Use mainly accurate spelling and punctuation Write with appropriate vocabulary and mostly own words
6 – 4	Write understandable English Use at least two types of sentence structure Show some organisation of ideas Show some accuracy in spelling and punctuation Write with appropriate vocabulary, but some may be copied from text
3 – 1	Write at a level of basic coherence in English, but will demonstrate only minimal original expression Write simple sentences Show a basic understanding of the conventions of spelling and punctuation

SECTION C

Write between 350 and 400 words on ONE of the following:

1. What is your ultimate ambition? Explain your choice, what inspired it, and how you hope to achieve it.
2. Write about someone you really admire. This might be a person from history, someone alive today, a member of your family or a friend. Do not base your answer on someone in the texts.
3. "Sport brings people together, but it divides them too." Do you agree?

Section C	
Mark range	Candidate should be able to:
35 – 30	Write a lively, relevant and engaging essay, clearly constructed, fluently and accurately presented.
29 – 24	Communicate with some originality ideas related to the topic Write confidently in a form appropriate for selected title Use some rhetorical devices in an appropriate way Offer a wide variety of sentence structures Use some sophisticated grammatical structures Punctuate with accuracy Spell with accuracy Use a range of vocabulary Use Standard English with accuracy
23 – 18	Communicate ideas clearly and successfully Write in a form appropriate for topic chosen Show successful organisation in writing Show control of paragraphing and punctuation which enhances meaning Use an appropriate variety of sentence structures Spell some complex words correctly Has a wide vocabulary
17 – 12	Communicate ideas with success Structure ideas with some clarity Show control in a generally organised and accurate piece of writing Use correct punctuation and paragraphing to enhance meaning Use some variety of sentence structures and links Spell mainly accurately
11 – 6	Communicate ideas with some success Show some use of paragraphs Show some accuracy and control of agreement, punctuation and sentence construction Employ a limited range of sentence forms Spell with some accuracy
5 – 0	Communicate ideas with limited success Show limited control in organising written language Write simple sentences Show limited accuracy in punctuation, sentence construction and agreement Spell some commonly used words accurately

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General Comments

Many candidates showed understanding of the theme, the success of athletes from Ethiopia and reasons for this. The majority tackled the questions in the order set, so were able to build on ideas from the passages in their essays, without direct copying. There were a significant minority, however, who showed over-zealous preparation of inappropriate phrases and whole essays, with examples of identical essays and errors (see below). Those who came to the examination prepared to respond personally tended to perform better and could gain credit for originality of ideas and expression.

Section A

The questions on Passage One were generally answered competently. Some candidates wrote too much, showing lack of attention to the focus of each question, or guesswork. This was penalised in questions 1 and 3. Some candidates confused the information required for questions 1 and 3, repeating information in their answers. It may be helpful to skim all the questions relating to a Passage before starting to write, in order to clarify what is needed for each answer. Few managed to find synonyms for “vomiting” and “giddiness” in question 2, but those who showed clear understanding of the difficulties referred to, with phrases such as “being sick”, “throwing up”, “feeling dizzy” or “light-headedness”, were rewarded.

Question 3 differentiated between those who really understood the question and looked carefully at paragraphs 4 and 5 for explicit and implicit information, and those who generalised or quoted without showing a focus on the question.

The answers on Passage Two showed a mixture of understanding. The running style, question 4, is related to lines 19 to 21, not 6 to 8. This should be apparent from careful reading of the question, which asks for description and explanation; there is no explanation of his fluent movement in the earlier paragraph. Some candidates confused the two pronunciations and meanings of “crooked”. In question 5 some students paid insufficient attention to the question, repeating running to school (identified in the question) as a reason, listed sheep, cattle and goats as three separate reasons for running, or linked animals with water, thus scoring neither point. The races, at school or the Addis Ababa marathon, were identified more rarely.

Question 6 was generally answered well, with most adhering to the word limit – there to indicate an appropriate length for the number of marks available for this question. There were six possible content points and many scored the maximum of four, plus one or two for own words. Some showed a misunderstanding of the focus of the co-operation, identifying it as working with Gebrselassie rather than each other.

Responses to question 7 were very varied, with some referring to only one passage or giving no preference. Examiners commented that strong students chose either passage, finding something of value regarding the challenge of sport in each of them. However, many wrote only on content or narrative, with no or limited focus on challenge. Some students had come to the exam with prepared phrases and comments of dubious relevance or use, such as “would require skim reading rather than intensive reading”; “visual impact”; “mesmerizing captions”; and “headings highlighted”. The lack of illustrative examples emphasises the inappropriateness of such terms. Maybe students could be advised to use them only if evidenced in a passage and if clear examples can be identified in an answer.

Once again, to achieve a mark in the top band (5 or 6 this time) candidates must give clear reasons for choice, with reference to the passage not chosen, with a focus on how the chosen extract suits the given purpose, and some informed mention of stylistic features. This does not have to use sophisticated literary terms but must show understanding of how an effect is achieved to support the choice.

An answer with a clear focus on the purpose of the choice follows:

“Passage Two is more suitable for a collection of pieces called ‘The Challenge of Sport’ to pass to the readers the importance of sport which is to face our weaknesses and what is actually challenging is to go beyond our limits.

In my opinion passage one is less suitable because it does not give you the feeling that it appeals to you personally, unless you are an athlete. It gives some facts about Ethiopia’s climate which could benefit athletes but does not actually make you think that sport is challenging. Passage two however would be more interesting to read even for people who are not very interested in sports.

I chose passage two instead of passage one because I believe that passage two can make people believe in the challenge of sport whereas passage one would be less effective, because it is less vivid.

Words in passage two such as “rhythmically”, “endlessly”, “flesh and blood”, or phrases like “his bare feet were his transport” are what make it more interesting for the readers. Passage one is mostly facts without such interesting words and phrases which make readers become more involved with what they are reading.”

A more detailed justification of “interesting to read” is needed, but this answer is in the top band. It is also of a reasonable length. Candidates do not need to write more than a page for 6 or 8 marks for a question such as this – the quality and relevance of the response are being judged, not the ability to re-present the content in detail.

Section B

The task, introducing Haile Gebrselassie to an audience, seemed to appeal to most candidates. Examiners commented that there were many effective “speeches” which would have been a pleasure to listen to. These had a clear awareness of target audience, maintained throughout by anaphoric references. Some also used phatic touches such as indications of applause. Others, however, limited themselves to a perfunctory reference to the purpose of the talk at the beginning, the rest of the writing being a factual account or narrative.

Most used the bullet points of the question to structure their response. Those who misjudged the organisation of their material, producing an imbalance, or over-running and therefore not covering all aspects within the word limit, could not gain good marks for Style and Audience.

One candidate, who organised his ideas in a spider diagram, including identifying the target audience, opened thus:

“Can you imagine yourself living in the Ethiopian mountains, at height of 400 to 4000 metres? No, well not a lot of people can. Most people have a stereotype of Ethiopia: poor, lacking water and electricity...” This is a writer who is clearly prepared to adapt material in terms of tone, register and style, and a credit to his teachers and his self-confidence.

Some writers found so many content points that their speeches became list-like, often adhering very closely to the wording of the texts. The role model points often differentiated, as they were mainly implicit and needed clear linking with other aspects of behaviour or personality. For better candidates they provided an upbeat ending to their talk, inspiring the audience and linking back to the guest of honour.

Teachers are reminded that the word limit is vital in this section: all summaries are counted and excess words crossed through. Points made after the word limit are discounted. This can affect the marks for both Content and Style.

Section C

Question 9 (b) was the most popular choice, with mother the person most universally admired, followed by other family members, historical, religious, entertainment and sporting heroes and heroines, often glowingly described. This question often stimulated a sensitive portrait of an altruistic person, but too often the writing became side-tracked into a narrative in which the 'hero' was forgotten at times. The best candidates could justify their choice from a personal rather than an "accepted" or theoretical viewpoint. There was some evidence of prepared essays, some adapted from other subjects such as history or politics, but with individual touches and apparently genuine admiration.

More worrying were candidates who wrote nearly identical answers, changing maybe an occasional phrase and the name of the central character who had overcome horrific disadvantages and emerged an admirable person. The appearance of identical errors and non-fluencies reinforced the examiners' opinions that these essays had been learned by rote. Candidates tend to perform far better if time spent in preparation is used in teaching them to respond from personal experience, supported by knowledge of lexis, syntax and grammar. Even basic verb forms/endings were missing in the work of some candidates, with a marked contrast between the quality of the expression and accuracy in the summary and the apparently learned essays.

Question 9 (a), on ultimate ambition, was also popular, with many claiming altruistic motives, compassion and social awareness. While these on their own could not gain marks, they often had a warmth and personal voice. The term 'poors' is not used in formal English to refer to the poor, or poor people, or those living in poverty.

There were also a few more worldly materialists, preferring fashion designing or celebrity status to medical, teaching or social work careers. Their eyes were firmly fixed on pent-house suites or a top of the range car/yacht/helicopter. One candidate combined home and vehicle, wanting to live in "the porche district of Dubai"! Some linked their ambition to the inspiration of family members, so could have written effectively on either topic.

Question 9 (c), on the discursive topic of sport, was less popular and generally less well presented. Some answers were thoughtfully discussed, maybe showing evidence of previous consideration or debate of a similar topic. Many essays, however, were rather abstract and vague, with few examples or anecdotes to bring vitality to points rather laboriously and repetitively made. There was also some misunderstanding of the title.

Some essays were short, about 200 words, but most were 350 words or more. Two candidates who wrote 1000 and 2000 words, from one centre, were ill-advised to write at such length. The exam papers were unbalanced, with insufficient time to check the other sections and the essays themselves.

Common errors, identified by examiners, from various centres, are mentioned here to provide a focus for teaching. Some are evidently because of lack of careful checking; some from lack of understanding; others may reflect first language constructions.

Some candidates referred to "giving" and "appearing" in examinations rather than "taking" or "sitting" them. "Before two years" was used instead of "two years ago". "Advices" was misused for "advice". There was confusion between "passing" and "spending" time or holidays; "live" and "stay"; "tell", "say" and "ask"; "make" and "do". Some students had difficulty in distinguishing between time adverbs and prepositions, such as "before", "ago", "until", "during", "after", "then", "now", so sequential events became confused.

Some essays showed very limited vocabulary, with constant use of “very”, “really”, “nice”, “good”, “things” and much repetition of phrases and constructions, often reiterating the title. The best candidates, who often achieved 65 marks plus and an A grade overall, used ambitious vocabulary, even if not always spelled correctly, showed a confident range of expression and sentence structures and linking, and had some originality in organising and presenting ideas. They also gave convincing detail which significantly raised the level of response and effectively engaged the reader, creating a personal voice. Most candidates made an effort, with varying success, to shape the whole into a coherent piece of writing.

Concluding Remarks

Most students showed evidence of preparation, attempting all sections of the paper. Some gave inappropriately short answers in Section A, apparently not adjusting the time/length for each answer to the number of marks indicated. Most showed an appreciation of what was required in Section B and C, even if their ability to express their ideas was limited. The essays were often interesting to read, sometimes revealing aspects of culture or opinion which informed the examiners. Some papers were memorable; the general improvement in standard is very pleasing and reflects the hard work of teachers and students.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 7161, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	66	56	46	41	34

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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