



2013 English

Intermediate 2 Close Reading

Finalised Marking Instructions

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Part One: General Marking Principles for English Intermediate 2 – Close Reading

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this Paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the specific Marking Instructions for each question.

- (a)** Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific Marking Instructions for the relevant question. If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed Marking Instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your Team Leader/Principal Assessor.
- (b)** Marking should always be positive ie, marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.

GENERAL MARKING ADVICE: English Intermediate 2 – Close Reading

The marking schemes are written to assist in determining the “minimal acceptable answer” rather than listing every possible correct and incorrect answer. The following notes are offered to support Markers in making judgements on candidates’ evidence.

Part Two: Marking Instructions for each Question

WHY REALITY TV WORKS

In this passage, the writer explores some of the reasons for the popularity of reality TV shows such as "The X Factor".

- It is a Saturday night in the northernmost fringes of London. Outside an anonymous building with blanked-out windows, a discarded plastic bag swirls in the breeze. At first glance it seems a miserable place. But in fact this is where dreams are made and broken. Because this is where, every weekend, *The X Factor* goes live.
- 5 *The X Factor*, brainchild of Simon Cowell, is the most popular programme on Saturday night. Each week, hundreds make the pilgrimage to be part of the live audience, and millions of us tune in at home to watch.
- As a result, many of us will spend more time in the virtual company of the contestants than we do with our real-life friends and family. In a modern world in which local
- 10 communities have become increasingly fractured, where relatives live further apart from each other than ever before and where one in five of us will never speak to our neighbours, Cowell's creation seems to be filling the void.
- And yet despite the fact that more of us seem to be tuning in than ever before, relatively little is known about who watches and why. All we know is that *The X Factor*—whether
- 15 it signifies the reinvigoration of weekend family viewing or the disintegration of civilised society—is a reality-television phenomenon.
- So why, after a decade of phone-in rows, vote-rigging accusations and celebrity-hungry wannabes with bloated egos, does the British public remain so in love with reality television?
- 20 By now most of us know that the version of reality on offer is one shaped by a multimillion-pound business with slick production values, and yet we willingly suspend our disbelief week after week, month after month, in the name of entertainment. Is there something lacking in our daily lives that draws us so inexorably into Cowell's web? We do get swept up in it, wanting to be behind somebody, wanting them to do well.
- 25 That's why producers will make the hard-luck story—those little snippets of someone struggling in a dead-end job—because that enables us to feel we have a sort of connection.
- And perhaps, in a world increasingly dominated by Facebook and Twitter, where friendships are made and broken at the click of the computer mouse, we feel more comfortable engaging with someone on the other side of the screen rather than chatting
- 30 to them over the garden fence, as our grandparents might once have done. If we are already sharing the details of our private lives in Tweets and status updates, are we also becoming more accustomed to the notion of putting our intimate selves on display for the entertainment of others?
- It's no coincidence that our love affair with *The X Factor* is so potent right now, more
- 35 than ever before, as Britain endures a period of relative austerity. In a time of economic hardship, we are seeking out the simple and cheap—family entertainment that makes us feel part of something bigger. But the popularity of such shows may be traced back even further—to the emergence of 19th-century periodicals which relied on reader contributions. Reality TV is merely a manifestation of a very, very old craving. We
- 40 love sentimental stories, such as Dickens' Little Nell; we love a tear jerker, and shows like *The X Factor* are no more crass or exploitative than cheap sensational 19th-century fiction.
- Yet it seems that 21st-century viewers are looking for more than just simple entertainment.
- Part of the attraction is the sense of control *The X Factor* gives us: the sense that we

- 45** can put right wider social wrongs by voting for our favourite contestants and that although our lives are being shaped by forces beyond our control—such as government cutbacks, widespread job losses or social deprivation—the ability to have a say in what happens to others in reality TV shows gives us back a much-needed sense of power. The most popular contestants almost always have a backstory of personal triumph over
- 50** adversity which enables us to feel that we are helping them succeed, that we are giving them a break even if no one else will. And perhaps this is why Susan Boyle, who grew up in a council house and was bullied as a child for her learning difficulties, has proved such an enduring figure.
- Of course there are less noble motivations for watching, too: for every Susan Boyle there
- 55** is a caterwauling teenager who cannot hold a tune and yet remains convinced he or she is destined for stardom. A part of us just loves it when people are awful and embarrass themselves—but human nature is contradictory like that, and reality television allows us to have it both ways.
- In fact, most of us know we are being manipulated and that our emotional buttons
- 60** are being shamelessly pressed every time there is a lingering close-up of a tear-stained contestant's face recounting the traumatic time their grandmother's budgerigar died. But because we have become so accustomed to such televisual shorthand, we are increasingly willing participants in the charade. We become, along with the contestants, part of the performance.
- 65** Do we care that reality television is not actually real? That question misses the point. Reality television is a completely constructed premise. None of the people would be in it if we were just showing their normal lives. But what it does do is take human flesh and blood and challenges it in situations that bring out a person's true personality. That's why shows work, because the public is after authenticity . . . They want to support
- 70** people with talent and for them to win, but they punish pretension and two-facedness. On the whole, the public are positive, but they are judgemental. Perhaps this, in the end, is the key to Cowell's success: he acknowledges that we crave the appearance of reality, but that we also want the reassurance of a happy ending for those who deserve it and retribution for those who do not.
- 75** Either that or we just want to laugh at the man with the comb-over singing an out-of-tune Mariah Carey song.

Adapted from an article by
Elizabeth Day, in *The Observer*

Question	Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
1	<p>Explain why any one example of the writer’s word choice from paragraph 1 (lines 1–2) helps to give the impression that the place she describes is “miserable”.</p> <p>“fringes” suggests peripheral / marginalised quality</p> <p>“anonymous building” suggests lack of distinction</p> <p>“blanked-out windows” suggests (eg) fortress-like quality / anonymity / figurative facelessness / desolation</p> <p>“discarded plastic bag” suggests ugliness / neglect / lack of concern for environment</p> <p>“swirls in the breeze” suggests windiness / cheerlessness / neglect</p> <p>Any one. Mark is for comment, not selection, and must use an expression other than “miserable” or “misery”.</p>	1U/A	NB one mark only for this question
2	<p>Explain how effective you find the expression “pilgrimage” (line 6) as an image or metaphor.</p> <p>Just as a pilgrimage... So attendance at The X Factor...</p> <p>involves travel (1) involves going away (1);</p> <p>is / can be carried out by many (1) involves / can involve numbers (1);</p> <p>is done for devotional reasons (1) is done by devotees (1);</p> <p>gives pleasure (1) gives happiness (1)</p> <p>Accept also appropriate adverse comment, (eg) that the use of this religious image (1) is sacrilegious / overstated (1).</p>	2E	

Question		Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
3	a	<p>Show how another expression in the immediate context helps us understand the meaning of “virtual” (line 8).</p> <p>Retrieval of “real-life” (1) means the exact opposite (ie not actual / simulated / giving the appearance of) (1)</p> <p>OR “tune in at home” (1) suggests technology-generated (1)</p>	2U	
3	b	<p>Explain in your own words one of the reasons why there is a “void” which “Cowell’s creation seems to be filling” (line 12).</p> <p>Gloss of</p> <p>“local communities have become increasingly fractured” eg neighbourhoods / districts (1) are (ever more) split / separated / disjointed (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>“where relatives live further apart from each other than ever before” eg members of families (1) are (physically) distant / far away from one another (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>“one in five of us will never speak to our neighbours” eg 20%/one fifth / a (significant) number of us (1) have no communication with people next door / in vicinity (1)</p>	2U	
4		<p>Explain fully why any two components of the expression “celebrity-hungry wannabes with bloated egos” (lines 17–18) convey a tone of disapproval.</p> <p>“celebrity-hungry” suggests superficiality OR indulgence / excessive ambition</p> <p>“wannabes” suggests inadequacy OR is derogatory</p> <p>“bloated” suggests excess</p> <p>“egos” suggests self-fixation / arrogance</p> <p>Any two N.B. marks are for comments, not retrieval</p>	2A	<p>Watch for (and do not reward) mere repetition of “disapproval”.</p> <p>Note that there may be answers dealing with “bloated egos” conflated. As long as the different connotations of each component are covered, this is perfectly acceptable.</p>

Question		Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
5		<p>Look at lines 20–23, and then explain what is suggested by the writer’s word choice of either “slick” or “web”.</p> <p>slick: efficient / polished or deceptive web: predation / entrapment / sinister quality / all-embracing quality</p>	1U	One or the other! Marking of this question will probably be quick – if both words are attempted, reward only one answer
6		<p>Explain fully the function of the words in dashes (the parenthesis) in lines 25–26.</p> <p>They are an example (1) of what could be a “hard-luck story” (1)</p>	2A	
7	a	<p>Look at lines 27–33, and then explain in your own words what is meant by “engaging with someone on the other side of the screen”;</p> <p>glosses of “engaging” and “screen”, eg having a (perceived / imagined) relationship / connecting / chatting (1) with people who appear on TV/by means of a computer link / over the Internet (1); watch for condensed answer worth (2), eg “virtual/cyber connection”</p>	2U	
7	b	<p>explain in your own words why people do this;</p> <p>Gloss of “more comfortable”, eg they prefer communicating this way / feel at ease / relaxed/secure OR reference to a “world increasingly dominated by Facebook and Twitter” or “at the click of the computer mouse” – eg this is a computer-focused / dependent age.</p>	1U	

Question		Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
7	c	<p>explain how well the content of the sentence beginning “If we are” reinforces the writer’s argument;</p> <p>It (clearly / validly / appropriately) makes a connection between (the increasing prominence of) “sharing the details of our private lives” (on-line social networking) (1) and “putting our intimate selves on display” (reality TV) (1) OR gives the examples of Tweets or status updates (1) to show how we are sharing ourselves publicly (1)</p>	2E	Note that the idea of connectivity may be implicit in an answer
7	d	<p>identify an aspect of the structure of this sentence which helps the writer get the content across.</p> <p>(Rhetorical) question or balance</p>	1A	

Question	Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
8	<p>Look at lines 34–42, and then explain in your own words two reasons the writer gives in this paragraph for “our love affair with <i>The X Factor</i>”.</p> <p>Glosses of</p> <p>(because of) “austerity”, “economic hardship” eg we are hard up (1)</p> <p>(“we are seeking”) [the] “simple” eg we want uncomplicated / undemanding / straightforward material (1)</p> <p>(“we are seeking”) “cheap” eg we want material which does not cost much / is inexpensive / low-cost (1)</p> <p>(“we are seeking”) “family entertainment” eg can be watched by everyone (1)</p> <p>“craving” for “sentimental stories” and “tear jerker” eg we like (over -) emotional / slushy / maudlin entertainment (1)</p> <p>“part of something bigger” eg gives feeling of involvement (1)</p> <p>“(manifestation of) a very, very old craving” or “19th – century fiction” eg this is just another form of a basic or long-standing human characteristic (1)</p> <p>Any two</p>	2U	

Question	Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
9	<p>Explain fully why the sentence “Yet it seems that 21st-century viewers are looking for more than just simple entertainment” (line 43) works well as a link at this point in the passage.</p> <p>“simple entertainment” looks back (to previous paragraph’s content) (1) “(looking for) more (than)” looks forward (to additional points raised about control in the remainder of the paragraph) (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>“simple entertainment” (1) looks back to previous paragraph’s content (specified, e.g. “simple” or “cheap ... 19th-century fiction”) (1) “(looking for) more (than)” (1) looks forward to additional points raised about control / having a say / sense of power in the remainder of the paragraph (1)</p> <p>Answer dealing just with “Yet” suggesting a contradiction = 1</p>	2A	
10	<p>Re-read lines 43–53, and then explain in your own words why the writer chooses Susan Boyle as an example to support her argument.</p> <p>She represents / epitomises / the reader can relate to (1) triumph over injustice (gloss of “social wrongs”) or hardship (gloss of “social deprivation”) (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The example of her success (1) shows that the voter can redress injustice (gloss of “we can put right wider social wrongs”) (1)</p>	2A	

Question	Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
11	<p>Look at lines 54–58, and then explain how the writer achieves a wry or humorous tone in these lines.</p> <p>Answers may address the writer’s selection of content indicating incompetence (1) and delusion (1); eg someone who is “caterwauling” or “cannot hold a tune” (cannot sing) (1) being convinced that he is “destined for stardom” (fame is beckoning) (1) OR reference to “caterwauling (1) + extrapolation (eg the suggestion that this (hyperbolically) illustrates the poor quality of the voice (1)</p> <p>Reference to use of irony without exemplification = 1</p> <p>OR</p> <p>address the writer’s selection of “a part of us just loves it when people are awful and embarrass themselves” eg we relish (1) other people’s disasters (1)</p> <p>Watch for condensed answer of (idea of) Schadenfreude</p>	2A	Quotation(s) alone can get no more than 1
12	<p>The word “charade” (line 63) usually refers to a pretence, something that is false or fake. Explain how an expression used by the writer earlier in this paragraph prepares us for the word “charade”.</p> <p>“manipulated” or “our emotional buttons are being shamelessly pressed” or “lingering close-up of a tear stained contestant’s face” (1) suggests control by others / exploitation (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>“the traumatic time their grandmother’s budgerigar died” (1) suggests excessive / maudlin reaction (to less significant event) (1)</p> <p>Quotation (1), comment (1)</p>	2U/A	

Question	Expected Answer/s	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
13	<p>Look at the last two paragraphs (lines 72–76), and then explain how they help to provide an effective conclusion to the passage. You may wish to consider such aspects as word choice, ideas, structure and/or tone.</p> <p>eg</p> <p>“in the end” (1) provides a signal of conclusion (1)</p> <p>“crave” (1) repeats of word / idea used earlier (1)</p> <p>“the key to Cowell’s success” (1) recapitulates a focus of the passage (1)</p> <p>“the appearance of reality” (1) recapitulates a central concern of the passage (1)</p> <p>“happy ending for those who deserve it and retribution for those who do not” (1)</p> <p>“laugh at the man with the comb-over singing... out-of-tune” (1) repeats idea of technical incompetence or delusion OR repeats ideas of “less noble motivation” OR repeats wry / sardonic tone used elsewhere OR provides deliberate anti-climax (1)</p> <p>Contrasting structures / tones of longer and shorter paragraphs (1) provides impact (1)</p> <p>Selection of a relevant element from the final paragraphs (1); relation of that to a corresponding part of the passage (1)</p>	2A/E	

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]