Principal Examiners' Report

July 2016

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills English Reading Level 1 (E102)

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Functional Skills English Reading Level 1: E102

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This paper was successful with a significant number of learners demonstrating functionality at this level.

The following points are intended to help centres in their preparation for future series.

The main points arising from this paper are:

1. Learners must read questions very carefully in order to find the focus of the question.
2. Learners must read the options in multiple-choice questions carefully to select the correct answer.
3. Learners should use the evidence in the text, rather than making assumptions based on own knowledge or experience. Answers must be rooted in the text.
4. Learners need to be explicitly taught what different types of questions are asking them to do, for instance questions asking for the identification of presentational features or the main purpose of a text.
5. Although learners are advised 'You do not need to write in full sentences', one (or sometimes two) word answers are not usually sufficient to gain a mark. Some questions may require a verb or some indication of an action.
6. Learners should aim to give precise answers rather than make vague statements or generalisations.

Questions 1-3

Most learners found questions 1 and 3 straightforward with the majority answering correctly. However, the need to infer from information in the text in order to identify the correct answer for Question 2 proved more challenging with the majority of learners failing to identify C as the correct answer.

Question 4

A number of possible answers were available and most learners were able to correctly to identify one reason why we buy food we do not need.

Question 5

Although many learners gained both marks for this question, there were many who failed to gain both marks and a substantial minority who failed to gain any. Most common correct answers were 'picture', 'heading' or 'bold' text. Those who failed to gain full marks either usually appeared not to know what was required and gave content-based answers.

Question 6

This question was mostly answered well, with most candidates able to identify two methods used by supermarkets to influence what we buy. A number of learners did give superfluous information however, often giving an unnecessary critique of supermarkets and this sometimes led to a lack of secure focus on the question.

Question 7

The majority of learners gained at least a mark on this question and there were many possible answers available. Those who did not gain any marks generally lacked a secure focus on the question, with many speculating on what a 'clever shopper' might do, evidently from their own experience, rather than focusing on the content of the text.

Question 8

Although a number of learners correctly identified 'C' as the correct answer, many emphasised the text's persuasive content and opted incorrectly for 'A'.

Question 9

This question was generally well-answered, with most learners able to identify the information in the text and gain two marks.

Question 10

The majority of learners were able to identify two of the three possible reasons and thus gained both marks. Again, loss of focus on the question was the main reason for failing to secure the marks. This generally happened when learners answered from their own experience of having/using credit cards.

Question 11

There were a number of possible answers and the majority of learners were able to identify at least one, with a large number identifying two for full marks. Where they did not it was largely due to an insecure focus on material from the text.

Question 12

This question was well answered, with the vast majority of learners successfully identifying 'chocolate bar' as the correct answer.

Question 13

The questions asked for ways of stopping impulse buying, but many learners drew again on material used to answer other questions and thus did not answer with the correct focus, many recasting material from Question 11.

Despite this, the range of possible answers available ensured that a number of learners gained both marks.

Examiner tips for the Level 1 Reading paper:

- Centres should explicitly teach learners what is meant by 'features' which help to present information.
- Centres are encouraged to remind learners to read each question very carefully, taking note of key words which may be emboldened. Learners should look for the focus of the question and should pay attention to an initial sentence when present.
- Centres should remind learners to refer to the text and avoid making assumptions based on their own knowledge.
- Centres must encourage learners to give precise information when answering questions.
- Centres should remind learners that they *can* use a dictionary.

Pass mark for E102 in July 2016

Maximum mark	20
Pass mark	15
UMS mark	6

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