

Principal Examiners' Report

May 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

Few learners gained all marks in this section. In particular, many failed to answer Question A correctly, which asked learners to identify the main purpose of the text, either judging the focus of the text to be informative rather than promotional or wrongly interpreting the orientation of the text to be chiefly about persuading the intended reader to purchase a pet.

Question 4

Most learners were able to correctly to identify one of the places where the PSDA gives talks. A mark was awarded for either school, college or community organisations. Incorrect answers tend to offer the 'UK' as the place.

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. However, there were also some who offered 'bullet points', which were not present in this text, or 'paragraphs', which had been named in the question. There were also a number of references to features of punctuation.

Question 6

This question was mostly answered well, allowing learners to identify two out of the free gift, personalised pack or Animal Antics magazine. Those who understood the focus of the question usually gained both marks. Incorrect responses tended to be those who had failed to understand the question or were not able to locate the correct part of the text.

Question 7

The majority of learners gained at least a mark on this question and many gained both marks available. The two reasons could include the love/affection gained from a pet, the sharing of best and worst days, companionship/loyalty, the gaining of responsibility or the promotion of love or respect, so there was much information from which to select. Those who failed to gain both marks often spread a single point over two lines (ie love and affection) or gave speculative answers either insecurely linked to the text or not linked at all (eg 'you can take a dog for a walk' or 'the child might become a vet').

Question 8

Unlike Question 1, this question on the main purpose of Text B caused few problems, with the vast majority of learners successfully giving 'B' as the answer.

Question 9

This question was often poorly answered. The question asked learners to identify two features from a list of six that showed Text B was a web page. The correct answers were (A) hyperlinks and (E) search box. However, many answered appeared to be the result of guesswork and it was noticeable that they were many amendments and deletions, suggesting a number of learners were uncertain how to answer.

Question 10

The majority of learners were able to gain at least one mark here, usually with the identification of 'vet's fees', but a significant number failed to identify the second point. The most popular answer for this second mark was 'damaged property' but learners might also have identified 'kennel fees' or 'holiday cancellations' as things that pet insurance pays for. Only a minority offered these and a number failed to gain marks as a result of generalised answers that stated 'illness' or 'injury': although it is presumably due to these concerns that people seek pet insurance, the question demanded greater precision than this.

Question 11

Again, the majority of learners were able to gain at least one mark here and a reasonably large number gained both. Advice could be found from the 'Choice of Policy' link, from the live chat option or from phoning an adviser/specialist. Those who failed to answer this correctly often failed to focus on the pursuit of advice, with many offering 'Senior Pet Policy' as an answer or simply giving further reasons for seeking an insurance policy.

Question 12

This question was well answered, with the vast majority of learners successfully identifying 'Senior Pet Policy' as the most appropriate policy option in this case.

Question 13

This was another question that rewarded precise answers so those who focused squarely on the need to save money invariably gained both marks. Correct answers were 'paying yearly/in advance', the 'family and friends' offer/joining with others' and 'one-off payment/lifetime policy'. Less successful answers tended to focus their attention generally on reasons for wanting pet insurance, often identifying information appropriate to other questions, especially Question 10.

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 May 2016

Maximum mark	20
Pass mark	14
UMS mark	6

Ofqual



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