

# Principal Examiners' Report

May 2016

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills  
English Reading Level 2 (E202)

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## Centre report Functional Skills Reading Level Two

This paper focused on the topic of how people engage with digital technologies in the modern world. It was a relevant topic, which clearly engaged learners and provided a good platform on which they could test their reading skills at level 2. Several questions were effective discriminators but more able learners were still able to gain full marks on these questions.

### Question 1:

This multiple choice question proved to be quite straightforward, with the vast majority of learners correctly identifying Option C.

### Question 2:

This question required learners to explain two quotations from Text A. The majority of learners were able to gain at least one of the available two marks for this question. The first phrase ***glued to them*** seemed to be more accessible for learners, with the majority able to convey the sense of people being people constantly on their smartphone devices. More able learners were also able to gain a mark for the phrase ***digitally aware***, although the proportion of learners gaining a mark for this phrase was lower than for the first. There was a tendency for less able learners to simply paraphrase the phrase rather than explaining it.

### Question 3:

The vast majority of learners were able to accurately identify the purpose of Text A and gain the available mark. Answers in most cases showed a sound understanding of the purpose of the text in relation to use of digital technology and also used a clear phrase to demonstrate why it had been written. However, some learners lost the mark by giving generic answers such as "to inform", whilst some lost marks by simply stating what the text was about rather than its intended purpose.

### Question 4:

The majority of learners answered this question well and were able to secure the mark by giving a valid reason as to why Text B was the most relevant for someone looking for information on how people use technology to enhance their social lives. However, a significant number of learners failed to gain the mark because they did not analyse the text in relation to audience need by stating why the text would be useful. These incorrect responses tended to simply make a comment on what the text was about rather than identifying a reason as to why the text would be useful.

### Question 5:

This question proved to be quite accessible with the majority of learners able to correctly interpret the text and correctly identify Option B from this multiple choice response.

### Question 6:

Many learners were able to gain a mark for this question by correctly identifying option D, **rule of three**, as a language device used in the phrase "Competitiveness, envy and inappropriate comments". However, many learners incorrectly opted for either option B or C. Centres are advised to devote some teaching time to a range of language approaches and to develop learners' skills in identifying these within a range of texts. Guidance on the range of language features that would be useful to teach is available on the Functional Skills section of the website in the Reading Level Two document.

### Question 7:

This question proved challenging for all but the most able learners. Very few learners scored the maximum four marks and a significant proportion of learners failed to gain any marks on this question. These learners tended to just give statements from the text without reference to the methods used by the writer. More able learners were able to identify at least one way that the writer presented his ideas and also give a relevant example. These learners were able to gain at least two of the available marks. The most common correct responses tended to be **use of rhetorical question** and **use of block capitals**. However, learners also made reference to examples of **emotive language**. Relatively few of the other methods cited on the mark scheme were encountered.

Centres should ensure students are able to understand what this question requires in terms of identifying writers' methods.

### Question 8:

This question produced some very strong and detailed responses. Many learners used the two texts effectively to produce some detailed responses outlining the negatives of using technology all of the time. Many learners were able to score four, or the maximum five marks, by giving a good level of relevant detail and including key points taken from both Text B and Text C. In some cases, responses for this question were very long and provided more information than was necessary to gain the maximum five marks.

### **Question 9:**

The majority of learners found this question fairly accessible and consequently scored the maximum two marks. Where learners did lose marks on this question it tended to be because they gave responses that focused on how technology, such as phones, can keep people safe and connected when they are out rather than actions they would need to take stay safe whilst using the technology.

### **Question 10:**

Although this question did not prove as accessible for learners as a question 8, it still enabled learners to produce some detailed responses which scored 3-4 marks. Responses scoring five marks were less common but still encountered. The most able learners used relevant examples skilfully to show how Text A and B had similar ideas about the benefits of using technology. Less well developed responses, scoring 1-2 marks, tended to rely mainly on one text or gave quite general points unsupported by relevant examples from the texts. Some responses lost marks by failing to link the ideas from both texts. These responses, though often quite detailed and lengthy, simply gave ideas taken from each text without any attempt to show how the ideas were similar.

Centres should encourage learners to use the two texts carefully and to give specific examples from each text, which demonstrate similar ideas. To gain marks in the higher band it is important to demonstrate how the ideas presented in both texts are similar.

### **Question 11:**

Whilst many learners were able to successfully tackle this question and identify Text A, a small proportion incorrectly opted for Text B or C, which meant they were unable to gain any of the available three marks. Most learners who correctly opted for Text A were able to go on and provide a relevant reason and supporting example to identify why the text would be the most useful in preparing a report about how different age groups use technology, which enabled them to gain the maximum available marks for the question. However, a small number were not able to provide a valid reason for part two of the question, which also meant they could not gain the mark for the third part of the response.

Centres should encourage learners look for a valid reason, which meets the purpose as outlined in the question and shows why the selected text is the most suitable. Learners also need to understand the difference between giving a reason and providing an example.

### **Question 12:**

This question proved very accessible for learners with the majority able to gain at least two of the three available marks, with many scoring the full three marks. Where learners did drop a mark it was most frequently in relation to finding evidence from Text B, many learners referred to young

people's tendency to multi-task when using technology, which does not in itself show how they are more skilled in using it than older people.

**Question 13:**

This multiple choice question proved challenging for many learners, who incorrectly selected option A or C.

Pass mark for E202 in May 2016

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Maximum mark	<b>30</b>
Pass mark	<b>19</b>
UMS mark	<b>6</b>

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