

Examiners' Report
November 2015

GCSE English Language 5EN2F 01

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Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments for a selection of questions. The exemplification will come from questions which were the most popular choices for candidates.

The entry was very small for this series.

On this tier candidates were required to identify three specific language features from an extract and then analyse the language more widely, following a series of bullet points. They also had to select another extract for detailed analysis. Also, for the writing task, there was an emphasis on transactional writing, again requiring candidates to follow a series of bullet points.

The responses of candidates had many positive features.

Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that the candidates had understood the content and ideas in the chosen texts
- the ability of many candidates to select suitable examples of the writer's language and to offer relevant comment that related these examples to the writer's ideas
- writing on the chosen topic that showed an appropriate form, a suitable register and the ability to engage with the intended readership with clear ideas.

Less successful responses:

- showed an insecure grasp of language (for example, confusion over terms) or of ideas and failed to support their points by appropriate textual evidence
- had limited points or relied too heavily on narration of events
- wrote reasonably clearly about a topic, but without a secure control of language or ideas.

In the Reading section (Section A) the overwhelming majority of candidates chose to respond to Question 5, 'Of Mice and Men'.

Section A (Reading)

All comments made by examiners relate to Question 5 as there were very few responses to other texts. The majority of candidates were able to respond to the text and relate their comments to the text with better responses having a clear focus on the language and sound understanding of the text.

Section B (Writing)

The majority of candidates offered, at their level, a good attempt to communicate their ideas in both tasks. The stronger answers were differentiated from the weaker both technically (at the top end, meaning was communicated clearly, with sound spelling) and in terms of the capacity to sustain a clear sense of audience and purpose.

Question 1

Touching the Void

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 2

Anita and Me

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 3

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 4

Heroes

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 5

Of Mice and Men

The majority of responses were to this question.

- (a) (i) This short starter question requires candidates to focus on specific language features, either grammatical features such as parts of speech or devices such as imagery or sound effects. The majority of candidates were awarded three marks for this question. Where candidates did not get the full three marks on this question, this tended to be due to candidates incorrectly identifying an example for the feature given. Examiners commented that a number of candidates incorrectly identified rhetorical questions and candidates should be reminded that not all questions are rhetorical. A few candidates still gave the example given in the question and a few chose examples that were not in the given extract. Candidates' performance on this question did not necessarily correlate at all closely with their responses elsewhere on the paper.
- (a) (ii) On the whole, candidates seemed to be well prepared for the question. Better candidates had a secure focus on language and the intended effects. Most responses selected relevant references from the extract and better candidates were able to make a range of points about Curley. Some candidates used ai) as a step into the question but this only really worked if the techniques had been correctly identified in ai). There seemed to be more candidates this series who clearly spent too long on aii) and were able to produce a sound response but then only very briefly responded to part b). Weaker responses tended to be brief and made limited comments but sometimes these were still supported by clear reference to the text. A small number of candidates selected overly long quotations. Candidates were able to comment on Curley's manner of talking and looking at the new men and its effect on George and Lennie, how he used his position to intimidate and the meaning of the boots. Relevant points were made about 'high-heeled boots', 'his eyes passed over the new men', 'his arms gradually bent...', 'Curley lashed his body round' and identifying these quotations enabled candidates to make sound points. Some successful responses commented on 'calculating and pugnacious'. There were a few rather narrow responses which just focused on Curley. However, more successful responses tended to consider other characters e.g. 'George was tense and motionless' and 'Lennie was looking helplessly'. Better candidates also explored Candy's attitude after Curley had left e.g. 'the old man looked cautiously'. Some candidates misinterpreted 'handy' to mean how useful Curley was around the ranch. Some candidates focused too much on exploring the relationship between George and Lennie.
- (b) The most successful extract was the fight scene. There were many reasonably sound responses which engaged fully with the ideas of the chosen extract and offered personal comments on language and what it showed.

Stronger responses were able to explore the implicit meaning of the individual words and develop points made by adding further references from across the chosen part of the text to support their points.

Weaker responses tended to be brief and undeveloped or narrative. Some candidates appeared to have problems with timing and their response for part b) was rather brief with perhaps only a couple of basic points made about the chosen other part. Better responses used the fight scene and this allowed candidates to comment on a range of ideas, including Curley's rage, Lennie's helplessness, Slim's reaction to Curley's initial accusation and then to Curley fighting Lennie, George's involvement and then the change of perception of Curley after he is beaten in the fight and silenced. Candidates made good use of the text to support their points. The scene where Curley reacts to the discovery of his wife's body was also a popular choice but did not offer so much scope although good reference to the text was made by many. Unfortunately 'cried' was often misunderstood and so Curley was seen as being upset at losing his wife. One examiner commented that some of the candidates who

selected the aftermath of Curley's wife's death were not able to identify points as successfully. The candidates who opted for shorter sections of Curley's visits to the bunk house had less material to work with and so lacked the opportunity for full responses. Some candidates did slip into narrative a little, often towards the end of their responses.

This is the whole of a response to Question 5 (a) (ii).

In this extract it gives us the opinion that Curley wants to be like his dad he wants to be in charge. The writer uses adjectives to show this when describing Curley when he says "like the boss, he wore high heeled boots". Steinbeck uses adjectives to describe Curley to make him sound like an old cowboy from a Western. This makes him seem more feared.

In this extract it shows Curley as a powerful character. The evidence to support this is "Curley lashed his body around". The writer used the verb to show that Curley thinks he's powerful and that he owns the place.

In the text it gives us the idea that Curley has a reputation for being a hard man - We know this because in the text ~~it~~ ~~so~~ the Swamper mentions "Curley's pretty handy" the Steinbeck uses repetition when saying "Curley's pretty handy" This gives us the impression that Curley has a reputation for being a hard man and that he is feared by people on the ranch.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

There is generally sound understanding of the text with mostly clear reference to the extract to support points made. Mark 10 out of 13, Band 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Closer focus on the writer's use of language by selecting and commenting on a wider range of individual words and their effects would have been needed to achieve Band 5.

This is the whole of a response to Question 5 (a) (ii).

a)ii) The language influences my view of Curley as it shows he judges people quite quickly. 'Glanced coldly', the adverb 'coldly' describes how Curley has already taken a disliking to both Lennie and George; he thinks that because they are both new, Curley needs to show them who is in charge. The verb 'glanced' shows that Curley does not need a long time to study George and Lennie because he has already judged both the men. Curley is described to be wearing 'high-heeled boots', this ~~is a~~ ^{noun} would give ~~him~~ ^{Curley} a better ~~the~~ height advantage and allow Curley to think that he is bigger than everyone else; he is still smaller than the majority of workers so this would not allow him to be intimidating. This influences my view of Curley and his effect on the other men because it shows he has quite an ~~big~~ big-headed personality as he believes that he is better than everyone.

The verb 'lashed' shows that Curley is an aggressive person; along with the glove he wears on his left hand, Curley comes across as if he is looking for a fight. The reaction he receives from ~~from~~ George shows that his intimidation is not entirely working. The verb 'tense' shows that George is being affected by Curley's action but not in the way that it is intended. Instead of being scared it appears that George is more angry; that what Curley is referring to is not necessary. The adverb 'gradually' shows that Curley knows what he is doing and knows what position to get in so that he is ready for a fight. It describes Curley's intentions as though Curley does not want to talk ~~but~~ but fight. The adverb used shows that he is not willing to rush. The adverb 'calculating' describes ~~what~~ what Curley's intentions really are; he is studying both men, planning his moves and how to move.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The response shows sound understanding of ideas in the text with clear reference to the extract to support the comments made and a word level focus on language.
Mark: 13 out of 13, Band 5.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate has made a range of points and clearly explained the effects of individual words.

This is a response to Question 5 (b).

In this extract Curley is presented as a ferocious which is a small dog which can be really loud and annoying. The evidence to support this is "Curley stepped over to Lennie. 'Time a lesson'". This shows Curley as a loud annoying character who is really strong because he picked a fight with someone who ~~he~~ wouldn't stand up for themselves. Curley jumps to the chance to start a fight with Lennie because he thinks Lennie is a defenceless big guy so if he'd have won the fight it would have made him look like a big guy.

In his part of the novel
 Curley has been put in his
 place and the evidence to
 support his is "Lennie watched
 in terror the flapping little man"
 This shows us that Lennie Curley
 has been has been stopped
 because he had a chip on
 his shoulder and wanted to fight
 all his men he's now been
 stood up to. The reason he
 picked a fight with Lennie was
 because they other men on
 the ranch were calling him
 "yella" when Lennie reproaches it
 says "Curley was white and shrunken"
 This shows us that Curley trying
 to bully Lennie's has left
 him worse off.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The response shows generally sound understanding of the chosen extract with relevant reference to the extract to support comments. Mark: 18 out of 24, Band 4.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

A wider range of points and more developed comments on language would have moved this response into Band 5.

Curley is again presented as short tempered and aggressive. It says "Curley's rage exploded". Rage is an extreme version of anger and ~~that~~ the fact it's ~~is~~ said to have "Exploded" means it burst out in a short time, this shows his aggression and short temper.

It also presents that some of the men fear him, especially Lennie. This is shown when it says "he was too frightened to defend himself" when describing Lennie. If Lennie's 'frightened' in the situation it ~~is~~ shows the fear Curley brings and that he scares the other men.

It also presents Curley as a man who is disliked. This is shown when Slim ~~says~~^{cries} "The dirty little rat". If Slim's calling him dirty and a rat it shows Slim dislikes Curley as these words could be seen offensive in the context they were used.

Even though he comes across as strong in this extract Curley is presented as physically weak. It says "Curley was flopping like a fish on a line" and "Curley was white and shrunken". Both these descriptions show weakness as "shrunken" describes him as getting smaller and smaller is usually weaker. Also fishes flopping at the end of a line are usually helpless and weak which is how he's being presented.

Curley is also referred to as a "Terrier". These are small, ~~yapping~~ loud dogs that always pick fights with bigger dogs. This presents Curley as loud, annoying and sometimes over confident as is shown with what happens with Lennie.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

There is sound understanding in a clear response. There is a range of sound points supported by clear references to the chosen text. There is some word level focus on language. Mark 24 out of 24, Band 5.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate has selected appropriate quotations and clearly explained the effects of individual words and phrases.

Question 6

Rani and Sukh

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 7

Riding the Black Cockatoo

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 8

To Kill a Mockingbird

This text was offered by too few candidates to permit any general comment.

Question 9

What makes your school or college so good?

The majority of the candidates chose this question.

A04 (i) and (ii) Content and ideas:

The topic was accessible and candidates responded positively to the task. Some were truly worth including in promotional material as they really enthused about their school or college. Stronger responses were able to promote their school or college successfully and enthusiastically. The more successful responses adopted an engaging tone, through the choice of vocabulary, sentence variety and carefully selected ideas for the audience. The majority of candidates had a range of relevant ideas including the inclusive nature of the school, the friendly staff, the boarding facilities and even the colour of the school buildings! Many candidates clearly identified with the audience, through using direct address, for example. Some candidates addressed both parents and students. Weaker responses did not have a strong or consistent sense of audience and purpose and sometimes weak language controls. Weaker responses tended to be brief, often lacking paragraphs and clear development of ideas. A few candidates simply listed the facilities with no real attempt to persuade.

A04(iii) (Spelling, punctuation and grammar):

Better candidates were able to use a range of sentence types (for effect) and were also able to use a range of punctuation appropriately. Spelling was generally accurate in the better responses. There were some responses in which it was clear that candidates had been taught about using a range of punctuation but were not always able to use it accurately. Comma splicing was commented on by examiners. Weaker candidates had problems with spelling, sentence structure and demarcation and some inconsistent use of capital letters.

This is the whole of a response to Question 9.

Why join Cloud College?

Cloud College, located in Central Barnard Castle has got easy access for you! College transportations are free if you live over a mile away. Or if you do live within 1 mile but may be difficulties getting to etc Cloud College then cheap transport may be provided. All funded by our Cloud College.

- Lockers

- 6 small office rooms

- Hall with pool table, T.V. ...

These facilities help provide personal belonging space, e.g. the lockers, this is so that the students don't have to carry along with their belongings. The 6 office rooms are available to any students who want to take out any free periods working in silence or want to be alone whilst doing homework, catching up on work, revision or extra work to help them. We have provided ~~that~~ a games hall with sofas, chairs and tables, computers, pool table, and a T.V. in so that students are occupied during free periods.

The lessons that we hold are constructive and achievable. We do provide 1 to 1 time if needed help on a lesson.

We hold activities and often hold meetings to discuss the activities to make sure all students are happy when at Cloud College. The

Do you want to join Cloud College?



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

There is a generally sound grasp of audience and purpose with generally appropriate ideas. Mark: 11 out of 16, Band 4. The writing is generally accurate but there are errors. Mark: 6 out of 8, Band 2.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Think about how to develop ideas and think about how to demonstrate a secure sense of audience and purpose by using a range of writing techniques.

This is part of a successful response to Question 9.

As a student at Cannery Row College myself, enrolling was the best decision of my life. I chose to do Childcare and my teachers and fellow students couldn't be nicer. My course is based into three sections - one, I attend two days a week at a placement of work to help me get experience in working life, two, our class is split up into different groups each day, to help work in different teams to gain different types of knowledge, and three, written assignments. These are all put into a folder to help you qualify. All the different knowledge you get, helps you to answer questions in your assignments.

As part of your course throughout the year, College provide daytrips and outings to places related to your course. Early this year, the Childcare and Health and Social classes, joined together and went to Disneyland Paris, as a 'well done' as 92% of students in both classes, qualified.

The College has acres of land to walk around, and cafes and restaurants with cold and hot food and drinks, a shop for snacks. Situated around the College are 'chill out zones' and these are for students who have free lessons to chill! There's a tv, sofas, pool table and computers for you to use free of charge. Many students come from all over Southern England to Cannery Row College as the reputation of successful qualifies is known. There's living facilities for people who come from afar to save on money and travel.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A clear, appropriate and sustained response. There is a clear sense of audience and purpose. Mark 16 out of 16, Band 5. The sentences are clearly structured and there is sound control of expression and meaning. Punctuation and spelling are mostly accurate. Mark 8 out of 8, Band 3.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Notice the range of ideas and the clear register the candidate has used.

Question 10

Should the voting age be lowered to 16?

AO4 (i) and (ii) Content and ideas:

Better responses were well organised with clear ideas, often presented in a lively response. Some candidates did not seem to have as many ideas for this task as for Question 9 but most were able to develop appropriate ideas, often adopting a strong voice. Responses tended to follow the bullet points which helped, particularly with this question, to support students with generating ideas. Stronger responses clearly identified if they were for or against at the start of their response and had a clear focus throughout. There was quite an even split for and against decreasing the voting age. Points made included that 16 year olds were too busy with school, social life and exams to be interested. However, others insisted that modern communication methods meant that 16 year olds could have a good understanding of current affairs and needed to make their voice heard on issues such as tuition fees and apprenticeships which would affect them. Many candidates discussed the use of social media in making 16 year olds aware of current affairs. One examiner commented that it was surprising how many political terms candidates used such as 'democracy' and even 'dictatorship' and how aware candidates were of politics overall and how it affects them. Weaker responses did not have sufficient relevant ideas and were not able to develop their response.

AO4(iii): Spelling, punctuation and grammar:

Similar points were made by examiners to those on Question 9.

This is the whole of a response to Question 10.

Hello I'm here to speak about "The Voting age should be lowered to sixteen" I would like to put my points across that it should be lowered to sixteen as teenagers have different ways of looking at it and different ideas. I think that there is alot of teenagers now a days that are angry to vote that they can't vote at their age, but then there are some that are the word that are not ready to vote and say that it should be lowered to 16. This may be because they feel they are not ready and maybe don't have any ideas about voting. But what about those 16 year olds that do want to vote? Don't you think its unfair? Anyway moving on I think personally they will make a hell of a difference as they do have good

imaginations and different ideas' that maybe 'a adult wouldn't think of why not give ~~these people~~ these teenagers a choice? What if you were the person to vote and you 16 year old child had a good idea and wanted to vote, wouldn't you want to support them? And let them vote and relay off good information.

There may be a question people will ask which is 'do they know enough about current affairs...'. If the teenager wants to vote they must have a good understanding 'right' otherwise they wouldn't want to vote at a young age. Why not let them? What's the harm in letting them put their views across? There isn't... Don't you think it's unfair? Even if the vote and it's all wrong at least they have tried and it's all up to them if they want to vote again or not, at the end of the day at least they have tried ~~and they~~ and they are not the 16 year old that wants to vote but can't? Think about the information and ideas, have wrote about and think about them 16 year olds with good ideas that can't YET.. Vote. Don't you think it's unfair? maybe a little?

Yours Sincerely



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The ideas are generally appropriate with quite a strong sense of audience and purpose. There are persuasive elements e.g. rhetorical questions. The response lacks paragraphs. Mark 10 out of 16, Band 4. The writing is sometimes accurate but there are errors. Mark 5 out of 8, Band 2.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should remember to paragraph their response to demonstrate clear organisation of their ideas.

This is the first part of a successful response to Question 10.

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to you today to ask you one simple question. Why shouldn't I be allowed to vote at sixteen years old?

My name is Jack Jones and I'm currently a student studying full time and wish to discuss with you my views on why ~~we~~ people at 16 years of age should be allowed to vote. Whilst I accept that some may argue that

at sixteen years old people are too young to understand politics or that they don't understand the long term effects that ~~there~~ their decision(s) can have on this country; well today I'm sorry to inform you but in these modern times that is no longer the case!

The educational system in this country is far more advanced than what is used to be and as a result children from younger and younger ages are becoming aware of the issues facing them and their country. For instance I read an article online recently about a young girl (22) who had just passed completed university with a degree.

in politics and law, she stated in the article that the reason she wanted to do this over any other subject whether it be art or computer design (subjects she was predicted to pass in half the time) was because she felt that something needed to be done to 'save this country' and that 'the nations youth don't simply don't care anymore!' and that she discovered this and based her entire life around politics and laws at the age of 15.

That small section from the article I've just spoke about truly spoke to me (must admit ~~it~~ ~~is~~ shocked me) and inspired me to write to you today. This amazing girl is aiming to 'save this country' because 'no one else will' and personally I believe that to be a shame but raises a good point she became well aware of all of this issues all of those years ago so imagine students of today...



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

A clear, appropriate and sustained response. Quite lively. Mark 16 out of 16, Band 5. There is sound control of expression and meaning and a reasonable selection of sentence structures are used. Punctuation and spelling are mostly accurate. Mark 8 out of 8, Band 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note the strong focus on audience and purpose.

Paper Summary

Candidates engaged well with the ideas and themes of the texts studied. They were prepared for the tasks and made some comments on the writer's language and techniques, although not always successfully.

On the writing tasks, the enthusiasm with which some candidates wrote was evident, although some candidates did not develop their ideas sufficiently. The better responses were accurate but weaker responses had spelling and punctuation errors.

Section A (Reading)

Based on their performance in this section, candidates are advised to:

- make sure they clearly underline the chosen word/phrase and correctly identify the language features for part (a)(i)
- keep focusing on the writer's language and techniques and try to comment on how effective the language is in influencing their views of the writer's ideas
- carefully choose a single second extract for part (b) and make sure it is not too long
- keep focus on the task for part (b) – do not slip into narration.

Section B (Writing)

Based on their performance in this section, candidates are advised to:

- carefully choose the task so they have sufficient ideas
- write with a clear sense of audience and purpose
- try to develop their ideas so their responses are not simply a list of points
- focus on accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- give themselves time to check through their writing for errors.

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