

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

GCSE English Language (5EN3A)
Spoken Language

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5EN3A Report to Centres

5EN3A comprises:

Two pieces of writing, both set by Edexcel, which are internally assessed and externally moderated (48 marks total available):

One Spoken Language Study: (24 marks available) a commentary on two examples of spontaneous spoken language which the candidates have chosen and studied in advance. Centres may use their own sources or those provided by Edexcel but must choose to respond to one of two topics set by Edexcel.

The candidates have two hours to produce a piece of writing of up to 1000 words.

Candidates should exemplify and demonstrate their understanding of:

- The way spoken language works
- How language changes according to context
- The ways in which the use of language may influence other speakers and listeners.

One Writing for the Spoken Voice task: (16 marks available for A04 i and ii and 8 marks available for A04 iii technical accuracy). The candidates have two hours to produce a piece of writing of up to 1000 words.

Candidates must respond to one out of three tasks which are set by Edexcel. Candidates should:

- Express ideas that are relevant
- Have a clear sense of purpose and audience
- Select vocabulary for effect
- Organise their writing appropriately.
- Candidates should also use accurate spelling and punctuation and demonstrate a range of sentence structures.

Spoken Language Study Task.

Candidates engaged well with the new tasks set by Edexcel for May 2015 entry:

EITHER:

Using two examples of spontaneous spoken language, comment on how the language is used by two different age groups.

OR:

Using two examples of spontaneous spoken language, comment on the speech of the area where you live and the speech of another area.

The Spoken Language Study tasks were accessible for all levels of candidature and provided for differentiation, as was borne out by the spread of marks moderated by the panel. Many centres used the resources produced by Edexcel which allowed full exploration of the assessment criteria. An increasing number of centres provided their own well-chosen resources which also allowed students similar scope. A range of transcripts were provided for moderator use by centres; ever popular were responses to "TOWIE", 'The Apprentice' or 'Young Apprentice', teacher-pupil interactions and spoken interactions between young people.

Most students performed well against the assessment criteria; the first Spoken Language Study task option (age groups) was the most popular. Some centres attempting the second task option (the speech of where you live and another area) chose to illustrate the first example by using a source taken from their home area, while others used transcripts of their own speech; both approaches to the task were valid and credited. Many candidates understood how language changed according to context and explained clearly how language worked.

Unfortunately, some candidates made comparison of the sources their focus rather than providing an analysis of how language was adapted in each source separately. Some centres still ask candidates to compare transcripts, implicit within their task title or through their summative comments rewarding quality of comparison- which does not appear in the assessment criteria for 5EN3A. Moderators commented that this comparative approach hindered a number of candidates who concentrated on comparison at the expense of analysis of spoken language.

Within lower bands, there was evidence that weaker candidates engaged with the tasks this session and had an understanding of spoken language and were able to give some analysis, even if limited. In many instances, there was a clear focus on the ways spoken language changes according to context and why these occur, and on the ways in which language use may influence other speakers and listeners and why this occurs. Candidates were clearly being taught with the descriptors in mind, some responses even being divided into sub-sections in order to address the task parameters fully. Terminology was used consistently well from Band 3 upwards, with Band 5 responses containing a wide range of linguistic terms which were well-embedded. There was a very good focus on the spoken interactions. Lower bands produced responses which made appropriate comments related to spoken language, and in many cases candidates had clearly tried to respond in an analytical manner, incorporating aspects of what had been taught. Moderators commented that it was pleasing to see this happening, revealing that weaker candidates had grasped the idea of analysis of spoken language, and were not simply describing what was being said, or what was going on in the spoken language extract.

Writing for the Spoken Voice

Candidates engaged well with the new tasks set by Edexcel for May 2015:

Write a script (30 seconds-2minutes of spoken language) for:
A film trailer

OR

A TV soap

OR

A radio advertisement

OR

Write the text for a podcast (up to 1,000 words) on a topic that interests you.

OR

Write a narrative (up to 1,000 words) in which direct speech is a key feature.

The Writing for the Spoken Voice tasks were also accessible at all levels of candidature while providing for differentiation, as demonstrated by the spread of marks moderated. The range of Edexcel Writing for the Spoken Voice tasks allowed centres to select appropriately for their candidature. All tasks were responded to and students produced some very interesting writing. In the May 2015 session, the Podcast option was the most popular and often most effective choice as candidates were able to research and write about their own interests and to adopt registers appropriate for their intended audiences. Moderators commented that candidates in centres where free choice of topic had been allowed, fared well.

Moderators commented on the variety of podcast topics presented this session which ranged from sport, technology, animal experiment and politics to "how-to" tutorials. Interview-style podcasts were as popular as monologue podcasts. Sometimes celebrities- often footballers- appeared in the texts produced and often the podcast took the form of a radio show; all possible variations of the podcast genre and format are credited by moderators. Candidates are now able to make their writing emulate spoken language convincingly; one moderator commented that some podcasts were, "amusing; they employed information and anecdote successfully and were sometimes thought-provoking".

The narrative option was also popular among candidates this session. A variety of genres was evident, with murder and thriller proving the most popular. Carefully crafted twists in the narrative endings for effect were more common this session and the dialogue did indeed prove a key feature in most responses. Punctuation of speech was slightly more accurate this

session- moderators always comment that this is a requirement if candidates are to prepare for and choose this option for the Writing for the Spoken Voice task.

Some centres chose the script option and provided developed responses which usually built upon existing TV soap operas. Those choosing the radio advertisement, in a few cases, provided undeveloped short responses hardly worthy of two hours work and a word allowance of up to 1,000 words- in this case, the moderator suggested, an advertisement campaign/series would have deepened and developed the responses and indeed the achievements of the candidates against the assessment criteria.

Administrative issues

Centres are reminded to use the new Edexcel 5EN3A Candidate Controlled Assessment Forms. There is no need to send speaking and listening forms to the 5EN3A moderator.

Centres are asked to send the work of the highest and lowest candidates to the moderator in addition to the selected sample.

Moderators greatly appreciate summative comments and annotations on the controlled assessment responses; please note that comments should be addressed to the moderator and not the candidate.

Clear evidence of internal assessment aids the moderation process. Moderators appreciate work which is fastened with treasury tags. In the May 2015 session there were some centres with administrative issues that needed resolving, which included missing assignments, wrong marks inserted online, lack of signatures, lack of annotation on candidate responses, incomplete samples, and lack of information regarding substituted folders.

Conclusion

A team leader commented, after moderation:

"Centres have worked extremely hard over the years and now have a clear understanding of the assessment objectives. Students have been well prepared and have clearly enjoyed the writing requirements. Responses to the Language Study have often been fluent and thorough....responses to Writing for the Spoken Voice have been wide and varied and engaging. The students have understood the demands of different genre and have written appropriately."

Advice for future sessions

Spoken Language Study

There is no requirement to compare the two sources.

Chosen sources should comprise spontaneous speech situations.

Writing for the Spoken Voice

Ask candidates to indicate audience and purpose and to demonstrate this within the response.

Encourage candidates to proof read their responses before submission.
Check that candidates can punctuate speech accurately and consistently-
important for the narrative task option.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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