

# Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2009

IGCSE

IGCSE English as a Second Language (4357)  
Paper 01 - Reading and Writing

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## General Comments

On this paper the reading and writing sections are drawn from authentic texts with very little adaptation and both sections aim to provide candidates with opportunities to read and write texts, which they could genuinely be called upon to write in their learning lives.

The candidates on the whole performed very competently on this paper. Overall the candidates work was of a high standard and showed clear evidence of preparation and practice prior to taking the examination.

### Section A

For this section candidates were asked to read an internet article called WAYS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING which was giving advice on study skills. Candidates were asked to identify the sections (A - M) containing the information listed in questions 1 to 10 by marking X for the correct answer. It is important that candidates read the questions before starting the task, so that they are aware of the key points they will need to identify in the text, in order to carry out the matching exercise. Candidates should follow the instructions for completing the task carefully as they will not be awarded a mark if their selection is not clearly indicated.

### Section B

In this section candidates were given a magazine article about Professor Ishiguro and his robots. The text was of average length for this question paper and it was divided into paragraphs. Candidates were asked to answer 15 True/False /Not Given questions. As in part 1 candidates need to read the questions very carefully and identify the main points before going back to the text to locate the information, and then to decide whether the information in the question is True or False according to the text. In the Not Given option the candidates have to determine whether the information in the question is given in the text. The not given questions are related to the information in the text and so candidates have to analyse the text quite carefully to determine whether the information they are looking for is there or not.

### Section C

In this part candidates had to read the text '*Life in the deep*', and answer 15 sentence completion questions, based on information taken from the text. As in part 2, the questions will have been paraphrased and reflect information given in the text. It is essential that candidates read the questions carefully and highlight key information, which will lead to locate the relevant information in the text and to find the answers, which will complete the questions. Candidates must keep their answer to the number of words indicated in the instructions to the questions. It is important to train candidates to find their answers in the text. They are not expected to formulate their answers or to transform information given in the text.

Able candidates performed very competently on all three reading sections. Weaker candidates however tended to leave questions unanswered or provided answers that did not occur in the text.

## Section D

In this section, candidates were expected to write an article to be published in their school newspaper. In the article candidates had to choose a charity for the school to support and give reasons why it should be supported. Candidates had to complete the task in 100-150 words. Candidates were also asked to suggest ways that the school could raise money for their charity. Candidates are given 3 bullet points, which they had to use to complete the task. It is essential that candidates address all aspects of the bullet points within the word limit. This task itself requires the candidates to provide their own views on the subject.

Overall the task was performed well. Able candidates wrote sympathetically and with conviction of those in need. The best responses blended empathic content with technical control. Weaker candidates found it hard to provide clear, organised thoughts on the subject and in some cases overlooked one or more bullet points.

Many candidates provided their answers in a variety of formats and some presented the task as a talk and letter. Candidate who considered register and audience were not penalised for the format.

## Section E

In this section candidates were asked to reply to an email from a classmate suggesting a famous person, for a research project, they needed to prepare for a school presentation. This task had several parts, clearly outlined in the task, and all parts must be completed within 100 -150 words. Candidates on the whole found this question the most accessible. They had many things to say about the 'famous person' they wanted to do the project on, and overall they found it easy to structure and organise their response with a good understanding of the conventions of email letter writing. However, because this question was the most accessible, many candidates tended to write more than was necessary and did not complete the task within the word limit and were penalised for this. It is important for candidates to keep their responses focused and relevant to the task and not digress.

## Section F

In this section candidates were asked to read a text and summarise it in 100-150 words. Many candidates answered this question to a very high standard and clearly understood summary techniques. As in previous sessions, candidates who copied large sections from the text were penalised, as were those who included irrelevant information. Candidates need to hone their summary techniques and need more preparation/practice in answering this type of question.

All candidates should be given the skills they need to proofread and check their work at the end of each section. It is essential that they reread what they have written to make sure that they have addressed the task set and to correct any minor errors they find.

## Statistics

### IGCSE English as a Second Language

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Lowest mark for award of subject grade (Paper 01 and 02 only)	88	78	68	59	52	45	39	33
Lowest mark for award of grade for Paper 03, Speaking (optional)	19	17	14	12	10	8	6	4

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