

**International GCSE (9-1) English Language  
A**

**Paper 1: Non-fiction Texts and  
Transactional Writing  
Reading Exemplars**

## SECTION A: READING

Read the following passages carefully and then answer Section A in the Question Paper.

### Text one: *Ice Swimming in Tromsø*

*In the passage, the writer describes an experience he had in Tromsø, north of the Arctic Circle.*

By the time we've found the right beach, the fire is already lit and it's burning beautifully. There's no clubhouse, as it turns out, just a circle of stones on the beach with this glorious blaze in the middle and gathered around it are a small group of hearty Tromsø Ice Swimmers. There were two men and two women, all in late middle age, all in enviably good condition to be honest (is this down to the Ice Swimming?), and all hilarious. 'Welcome!' they shout mirthfully.



I feel like our son Rex looks before he's got an important line in a school assembly: all puffy-faced and grey (he's a pupil not a headmaster). I do quite a lot of laughing rather too loudly. Then, suddenly, all of the things that have stood between me and the Ice Swimming (the morning, the journey here, the walk to the beach, the banter) seem to have disappeared with shocking speed. Gone, all gone, and now the moment is cruelly upon us. The professional Ice Swimmers have all come in their swimwear under their outer clothes (which bear impressive national credentials like 'Norwegian Ice Swimming Team 2012'), so they are all ready in seconds, but I have to change right here on the snowy beach.

'What do I stand on while I'm getting ready?' I ask poignantly (does it really matter? I'm going Ice Swimming, after all). Someone takes pity on me and produces a small square of neoprene<sup>1</sup> that is actually a godsend; there is just room to perch on one foot at a time while I hop out of trousers, thermals, socks, etc. Then I'm ready. If I'm going to do this, then 'twere well it were done quickly.

We move heartily towards the waterline like an infantry regiment gathering below the lip of a trench. Strangely, being almost naked in that temperature (−4°C) already feels like quite a commitment to the world of cold, so what comes next seems to follow on uninhibitedly. The water is −1°C. ('Look, minus one!' shouts one of the swimmers, who's dutifully brought his water thermometer with him.) There's nothing for it but to push on and hope to be home by Christmas. I don't think anyone blows a whistle, but it wouldn't be entirely out of place if they did.

With a final instruction to watch out for sea urchins (!) we walk on into the water, adrenaline dulling the searing pain of the icy hit as the gun-metal-grey sea stretches ahead of us. We keep up a decent pace, so ankles, knees, crotch, waist (each of which used to be a milestone when we were little and easing ourselves into cold rivers, lakes or seas) all fall to the enemy advance in quick succession. The next and final cruelty, the moment when the wildebeest falls to the lions, is the shoulders-under moment. It happens in a blur and is followed by several involuntary spasms of frantic swimming (people watching from the beach worry that perhaps I'm going too far out – such is my mania to swim and keep moving) but I am IN.

Apparently six minutes is the longest time anyone has done, though a stout Russian lady they all know who can do twenty does get a respectful mention in dispatches.

Apparently you just have to get through the initial three minutes of hyperventilation<sup>2</sup> then the body adjusts, but you don't want to adjust too much because if you stop feeling the cold it's definitely time to get out. The danger point is when the blood leaves the extremities to concentrate on the core. I last little over a minute, after which I feel I can make for the bank without having to let myself down.

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It's not uncommon, I'm later told, for people to drown as a result of inhaling water while in the early throes of shock. 'Oh really?' I reply, sipping on hot coffee. This whole 'people dying' thing was rather downplayed in the pre-bathe pep talk.

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'So why do you do this?' seems a reasonable question to put to the group once we are safely gathered around the fire. 'There must be wonderful health benefits.'

'No' says the stouter of the two men, the one with what I now see is an impressively purple nose, 'not really. It's about doing something crazy, because we all need a bit of craziness in our lives.'

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It certainly feels good to be alive, standing on that snow-covered beach wrapped in towels and coats and fleeces. There is something faintly exciting (in a hot-curry, endorphin-rush kind of a way) about the pain I've just put myself through. After maybe two or three seconds of utter bafflement, you start to feel the rough jolting friction of so many urgent messages barrelling along so many neural pathways – there's no way this doesn't have a stimulating effect mentally. The only danger is that in your post-swim euphoria you stand about patting yourself on the back for too long with nothing on your feet and wonder why, two hours later, once the sensation has returned to every other part of you, your toes are still numb. But there's no time to hang around worrying about circulation; we've got to fly further north.

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<sup>1</sup> *neoprene* – protective rubber material

<sup>2</sup> *hyperventilation* – breathing very quickly

## Text two: 127 hours – Between a Rock and a Hard Place

*In the passage, the writer describes his experience of a rock-climbing accident.*

I come to another drop-off. This one is maybe eleven or twelve feet high, a foot higher and of a different geometry than the overhang I descended ten minutes ago. Another refrigerator chockstone is wedged between the walls, ten feet downstream from and at the same height as the ledge. It gives the space below the drop-off the claustrophobic feel of a short tunnel. Instead of the walls widening after the drop-off, or opening into a bowl at the bottom of the canyon, here the slot narrows to a consistent three feet across at the lip of the drop-off and continues at that width for fifty feet down the canyon.

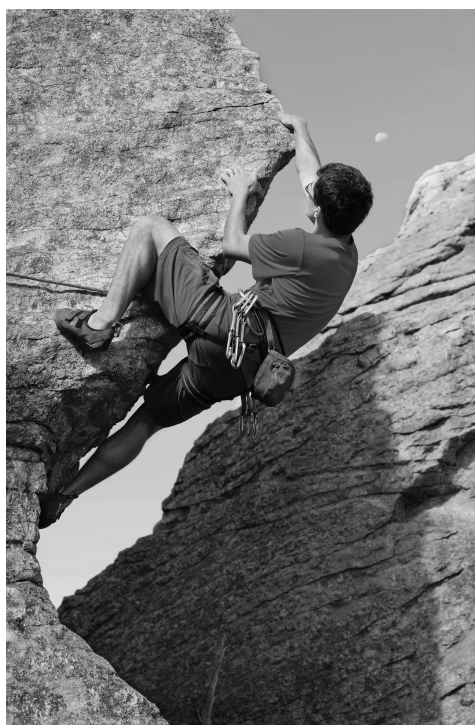
Sometimes in narrow passages like this one, it's possible for me to stem my body across the slot, with my feet and back pushing out in opposite directions against the walls. Controlling this counterpressure by switching my hands and feet on the opposing walls, I can move up or down the shoulderwidth crevice fairly easily as long as the friction contact stays solid between the walls and my hands, feet, and back. This technique is known as stemming or chimneying; you can imagine using it to climb up the inside of a chimney.

Just below the ledge where I'm standing is a chockstone the size of a large bus tire, stuck fast in the channel between the walls, a few feet out from the lip. If I can step onto it, then I'll have a ninefoot height to descend, less than that of the first overhang. I'll dangle off the chockstone, then take a short fall onto the rounded rocks piled on the canyon floor.

Stemming across the canyon at the lip of the drop-off, with one foot and one hand on each of the walls, I traverse out to the chockstone. I press my back against the south wall and lock my left knee, which pushes my foot tight against the north wall. With my right foot, I kick at the boulder to test how stuck it is. It's jammed tightly enough to hold my weight. I lower myself from the chimneying position and step onto the chockstone. It supports me but teeters slightly. After confirming that I don't want to chimney down from the chockstone's height, I squat and grip the rear of the lodged boulder, turning to face back upcanyon. Sliding my belly over the front edge, I can lower myself and hang from my fully extended arms, akin to climbing down from the roof of a house.

As I dangle, I feel the stone respond to my adjusting grip with a scraping quake as my body's weight applies enough torque to disturb it from its position. Instantly, I know this is trouble, and instinctively, I let go of the rotating boulder to land on the round rocks below. When I look up, the backlit chockstone falling toward my head consumes the sky. Fear shoots my hands over my head. I can't move backward or I'll fall over a small ledge. My only hope is to push off the falling rock and get my head out of its way.

The next three seconds play out at a tenth of their normal speed. Time dilates, as if I'm dreaming, and my reactions decelerate. In slow motion: The rock smashes my left hand against the south wall; my eyes register the collision, and I yank my left arm back as the rock ricochets; the boulder then crushes my right hand and ensnares my right arm at the



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wrist, palm in, thumb up, fingers extended; the rock slides another foot down the wall with my arm in tow, tearing the skin off the lateral side of my forearm. Then silence.

My disbelief paralyzes me temporarily as I stare at the sight of my arm vanishing into an implausibly small gap between the fallen boulder and the canyon wall. Within moments, my nervous system's pain response overcomes the initial shock. Good God, my hand. The flaring agony throws me into a panic. I grimace and growl... My mind commands my body, "Get your hand out of there!" I yank my arm three times in a naive attempt to pull it out. But I'm stuck.

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Anxiety has my brain tweaking; searing-hot pain shoots from my wrist up my arm. I'm frantic, and I cry out... My desperate brain conjures up a probably apocryphal story in which an adrenaline-stoked mom lifts an overturned car to free her baby. I'd give it even odds that it's made up, but I do know for certain that right now, while my body's chemicals are raging at full flood, is the best chance I'll have to free myself with brute force. I shove against the large boulder, heaving against it, pushing with my left hand, lifting with my knees pressed under the rock. I get good leverage with the aid of a twelve-inch shelf in front of my feet. Standing on that, I brace my thighs under the boulder and thrust upward repeatedly, grunting, "Come on... move!" Nothing.

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#### Source information:

Text one adapted from *Ice Swimming in Tromsø*, Alexander Armstrong.

Text two adapted from *127 hours – Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, Aron Ralston.

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## Question 1

### SECTION A - Reading

You should answer ALL questions in Section A.  
You should spend about 1 hour 30 minutes on this section.

The following questions are based on Text One and Text Two in the Extracts Booklet.

#### Text One: *Ice Swimming in Tromsø*

- 1 From lines 1-5, select two words or phrases that describe the Tromsø Ice Swimmers.

(2)

- (i) "Good condition" Describes the swimmers as fit and healthy. ~~for~~ also sports as they are ice swimmers.
- (ii) "Hearty Tromsø ice swimmers" This shows that they are very nice individuals and have a positive attitude.

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[AO1 2] (Total for Question 1 = 2 marks)

#### Mark and commentary

2 marks

2 correct phrases are chosen but the explanations are unnecessary and earn no marks

1 From lines 1-5, select two words or phrases that describe the Tromso Ice Swimmers.

(2)

- (i) "Small group of hearty Tromso Ice ~~Swimmers~~  
Swimmers"
- (ii) "glorious blaze"

### Mark and commentary

2 marks

2 correct phrases in the first answer space so, although 'glorious blaze' is incorrect  
2 marks are awarded

1 From lines 1-5, select two words or phrases that describe the Tromso Ice Swimmers.

(2)

- (i) Hearty.
- (ii) Glorious.

[AO1 2] (Total for Question 1 = 2 marks)

### Mark and commentary

2 marks

2 correct words selected

### Text One: *Ice Swimming in Tromsø*

- 1 From lines 1-5, select **two** words or phrases that describe the Tromsø Ice Swimmers.

(2)

- (i) The fire is already lit and it's  
burning beautifully
- (ii) Just a circle of stones on the  
beach with this glorious blaze in the  
middle

### Mark and commentary

0 marks

The chosen textual references come from the correct part of the text but do not relate to the swimmers.

## Question 2

2 Look again at lines 6-17.

In your own words, explain what the writer's thoughts and feelings are before the swim.

(4)

His thoughts and feelings before the swim is not good. This is because he has to get changed whilst standing on the snow. The lines: "What do I stand on while I'm getting ready? I ask poignantly" This indicates that he is not happy about getting changed in the cold. We know this because he uses the words: "poignantly" this refers to something unpleasant. Another thought



and feeling is which when he sees his son Rex. ~~This~~<sup>He</sup> is presented as joyful and has a good sense of humor. This is shown in the line: "I do quite a lot of laughing rather too loudly." His thoughts and feelings here shows us that he was happy and glad. The words: "laughing" gives us the impression that he is overjoyed.

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[AO1 4] (Total for Question 2 = 4 marks)

### Mark and commentary

1 mark

Whilst this is quite a developed response, the candidate has misunderstood both the reference to the author's son and his laughter which is the result of nerves, not happiness. A mark is awarded for 'not happy about getting changed in the cold' which is a reasonable interpretation of the writer's feelings.

2 Look again at lines 6-17.

In your own words, explain what the writer's thoughts and feelings are before the swim.

(4)

The writer feels like his son Rex looks before he's got an important line in a school. The writer does not know what to do to show in the quote "what do I do while in getting ready?"

The writer feels scared because he was told stories about people dying. He's terrified because he knows how people have died and that it can happen to him.

### Mark and commentary

2 marks

The candidate has referred to the writer feeling like his son at school but has not explained exactly what that feeling is (apprehension). Marks are awarded for 'the writer does not know what to do' (inexperienced) and for the explanation of why he might be scared.

2 Look again at lines 6-17.

In your own words, explain what the writer's thoughts and feelings are before the swim.

(4)

The writers thoughts are that he feels nervous like his son. "Rex looks before he's got an important line in a school assembly", also "the moment is cruelly upon us", means that swimming is somewhat cruel in the writers opinion. However, once the writer is ready a sudden confidence appeared because he is "ready" and his thoughts were that if he is going to do it he would rather get it over and done with quickly.

### Mark and commentary

3 marks

Here the candidate explains the analogy the writer makes to his son's feelings and marks are also given for the fact that he has 'a sudden confidence' which is a reasonable interpretation and that he is ready/wanting to get the swim over with.

2 Look again at lines 6-17.

In your own words, explain what the writer's thoughts and feelings are before the swim.

(4)

before the swim the writer talks about how he suddenly senses a change in his feelings as he went from enjoyin the journey, making jokes, walking along the beach to ~~feeling~~ "feeling all puffed face and grey", what he means by this is that he now feels really nervous and scared about swimming. When the ~~other~~ <sup>other</sup> swimmers drive ~~they~~ the writer describes them as "Professional" this shows us that he now feels worried as he knows that they are very good at the sport, it also shows that they have come prepared and ready to win.

As the writer prepares himself for the swim he thinks to himself "if im going to do this, then twere well it were done quickly." when he says "if im going to do this", it shows that he is still unsure because he's questioning himself, also when he says "then twere well it were done quickly", shows that he just wants to get it over and done with, without wasting anymore time.

[AO1 4] (Total for Question 2 = 4 marks)

### Mark and commentary

4 marks

This response clearly and thoroughly explains the writer's thoughts and feelings. Textual references (not a requirement for this question) have been used to further explain a range of points.



### Question 3

3 From lines 24-40, describe the dangers and difficulties of the swim.  
You may support your points with brief quotations.

(5)

There are many dangers and difficulties of the swim. In the text it quotes "watch out for sea urchins!" This is an obvious sign that they are dangerous and can cause some difficulties during there swim.

The swimmers also have the danger of losing the blood flow to some parts of the body. "The danger point is when the blood leaves the extremities to concentrate on the core." This is a quotation ~~to~~ tells us that the core needs a higher blood flow than the rest of the body.

**Mark and commentary**

2 marks

This response has 2 clear points supported by quotations.

3 From lines 24-40, describe the dangers and difficulties of the swim.  
You may support your points with brief quotations.

(5)

The author had to go through a lot of dangers and difficulties during the swim. First of all he had to watch out for hyperventilation, a quote to show this is "Apparently you just have to get through the critical three minutes of hyperventilation like the body adjusts", this shows that the swim is so cold you have to go through hyperventilation, which means the author could die, if does not adjust to the coldness.

Another danger during the swim is that your blood blood level levels go down due to the coldness a quote to show this is "The danger point is when the blood leaves the extremities to concentrate on the core". This shows that your blood levels could drop, and you would not even notice it.

Another danger would be that you could drown  
as quick to show this is "for people to drown as a result of entering water while  
in the early stages of shock", this means the author would have  
drowned, which means, he would've died, by an engineering  
too much water, because he would have been in shock by  
how cold the water was. [AO1 5] (Total for Question 3 = 5 marks)

### Mark and commentary

3 marks

3 points are made with supporting quotations but there is an element of repetition.

3 From lines 24-40, describe the dangers and difficulties of the swim.  
You may support your points with brief quotations.

(5)

He explains what dangers there will be while swimming. He mentions how there will be sea urchins nearby nearby.

I know this. It says "watch out for sea urchins".

He explains also what difficulties there were. He said one of them was the pain from how cold and icy it was. I know this because he it says "the searing pain of the icy hit".

He also explains another danger that he was told about. He says people could drown while in the early throes of shock. I know this because it says "people to drown as a result of inhaling water while in the early throes of shock".

He explains how difficult it was to get yourself under the water. I know this because it says "the moment when the wildebeest falls to the lions, is the shoulders-under moment".

### Mark and commentary

4 marks

Whilst there is little development of ideas, 4 points are made effectively and supported with appropriate quotations.



3 From lines 24-40, describe the dangers and difficulties of the swim.

You may support your points with brief quotations.

(5)

In the text there are several ways that explain the dangers of the swim. "The writer says "adrenaline dulling the searing pain of the icy hit" This quote represents that the water is dangerously cold, we are told it is  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  which can in some cases lead to hyperventilation. Another example of this is "to drown as a result of inhaling water while in the early throes of shock" This quote shows how dangerous ice swimming can be as it can lead to death in some occasions. Additionally, the writer was not told about this before the swim, this could have ended in him dying. We are told that "apparently six minutes is the longest time anyone has done", ~~before~~ as firstly you need to get through the initial three minutes of hyperventilation. This quote

shows us that as the ~~swim~~ ice swim is very dangerous, we can only be in the water for a limited amount of time. The people would know when to exit the water when they stop feeling the cold.

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[AO1 5] (Total for Question 3 = 5 marks)

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**Mark and commentary**

5 marks

A good range of interlinked points made and the candidate demonstrates a very secure understanding.

## Question 4

Question 4 is on Text Two from the Extracts Booklet.

### 4 Remind yourself of the passage from *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

How does the writer use language and structure to create suspense and tension?

You should support your answer with close reference to the passage, including **brief** quotations.

(12)

The writer used<sup>s</sup> descriptive language to describe his descent. In the text the writer talks about the techniques that he is using and the obstacles in his way. He has structured the text so that every paragraph is a different obstacle and the way he describes each obstacle is what creates the suspense.

On line 31 the writer talks about his collision and the descriptive language he used is what really gripped the audience because they all wanted to know what happened next. And he structured this in a way that the reader has to carry on to know what happens next.

### Mark and commentary

3 marks

In this response general references to structure are made in the first paragraph and linked to suspense. In the second paragraph there is mention of descriptive language and how it 'gripped the audience' and reference to how the reader 'has to carry on to know what happens next' but there are no quotations to support points. As there is some focus on the question, the response just moves into level 2.

4 Remind yourself of the passage from *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

How does the writer use language and structure to create suspense and tension?

You should support your answer with close reference to the passage, including brief quotations.

The writer uses suspense by the type <sup>(12)</sup> of language that he uses when he says: "I hang off the crack stone." This creates suspense because he doesn't just say I hang from the rock, he explains it further which draws the reader in as it creates a lot of suspense. Another way the writer creates suspense is in the way that he acts when he says "my only way is to push ~~the~~ of the falling rock and get my hat out of its way"; This creates suspense and tension because it shows us that his life is in danger and he needs to find a way to



1  
save himself or he could be  
seriously injured. another way  
that the writer creates tension  
in his writing is when he  
says "I yank my arm 3 times in a  
naïve attempt to pull it out. But I'm  
stuck!"

this shows that he is in trouble  
now and is ~~framing~~ facing difficulties  
and maybe he can't move on.  
when he says "come on move"  
he is talking to the rock which shows  
that he is getting really frustrated  
and he knows it will be hard for  
him to get out of the difficulty  
so he gets angry and talks to ~~him~~  
the rock even though he knows  
it won't hear him.

## **Mark and commentary**

5 marks

There is some clear understanding of language in this response that lifts it into level 3. For a more secure mark, points could be further developed e.g. there is comment on how 'dangle' gives more information than if 'hang' were used and creates 'a lot of suspense' but there is no explanation of exactly how e.g. creates a sense of precariousness/helplessness etc. A number of valid points are made and some key points have been picked out from the passage but there should also be consideration of structural devices.

4 Remind yourself of the passage from *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

How does the writer use language and structure to create suspense and tension?

You should support your answer with close reference to the passage, including **brief** quotations.

(12)

~~The writer~~ At the beginning in the first paragraphs the writer uses <sup>complex</sup> long sentences ~~used~~ to get the reader to keep reading and <sup>understand the setting and</sup> get the description of the situation. He does this ~~by~~ by adding commas to connect his sentences. The writer uses many figures like "twelve feet high" or imagery like ~~"imagine"~~ "large bus tire" so that the reader can imagine the claustrophobic environment he is in. It builds up the tension. The comparison to a "large bus tire" creates a sense of size and the reader can imagine how ~~he~~ the author is very small in scale with the objects around him. Creating a very intimidating surrounding.

I also noticed how the writer uses time markers to build tension. In the first paragraph he mentions that

he had "descended ten minutes ago" which puts in perspective how fast he is progressing. However time speeds up in the 5 paragraph "he" "instantly" is in "trouble". The tension builds up as the sentences get shorter, because the reader has to read quicker and the powerful, simple, declarative sentences present what's happening - "Fear shoots my hands over my head". The reader's heart beat goes up as he wants to read more and get to the end of the paragraph.

The writer uses structure and as the following paragraph ~~goes~~ has a ~~totally~~ different tone and <sup>faster</sup> time perception. ~~The sentences are~~ The time is still speeding "Three seconds play out at a tenth of their normal speed" - which emphasises <sup>the suspense</sup> ~~that state~~. However straight after the writer says that "Time dilates, as if I'm dreaming", which finally releases the tension.

Following paragraph show his pain and agony.

## **Mark and commentary**

7 marks

Whilst the first point on complex sentences is not developed, appropriate phrases are then selected that explain the 'claustrophobic environment' and how this builds up tension. The comment on time markers is related well to the question and clear understanding is shown throughout. Level 3 criteria are fully met; it appears that time management was an issue here, unfortunately.

4 Remind yourself of the passage from *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

How does the writer use language and structure to create suspense and tension?

You should support your answer with close reference to the passage, including brief quotations.

(12)

One way the writer uses language to describe tension is how he referred to the feeling as "claustrophobic". This then creates tension because the reader can then imagine/feel how it is like and this combined with very detailed description can make the reader almost be in the situation. Another way the writer created suspense is when he ~~wrote~~ wrote "I'll dangle off the chockstone." This making the reader be in suspense and worry how the outcome will be, not only that but chockstone is explained to be a

stone that is wedged between rocks which suggests that it may not be safe, which then creates tension.

An additional way the writer created tension is when he described movement, however he did this in

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a way that makes the reader ~~worried~~ worried. He does this when on line 26 he wrote "It supports me but teeters slightly." By the writer describing the rock as 'teetering' when on it makes the reader panic and question if he will be able to



proceed sadly. However not only that but the ~~reader~~ writer put that in a very small, quick and short sentence. Thus ~~making~~ giving description to the reader very quickly and intensifying the moment. Another example of when the writer uses quick and short sentences to create suspense and tension is on lines 42-43 when he wrote "tearing the skin off the lateral side of my forearm. Then silence." This creates large amounts of suspense and tension because the whole paragraph was full of action and at a very fast speed, and by ending it with "Then silence" creates vast amount of suspense and tension because the reader ~~was~~ was in the heat of the moment and it is



all brought to a halt suddenly. This leaving the reader on a intense cliff hanger and urges them to read on.

In the last two paragraphs he writer combines language and structure to form very tense moments for the reader. He did this by using a variety of sentence structures and language devices. He used a semantic field of & long and short sentences to create quick and adrenalin-full moments, filling the reader with shock. With sentence structures he could control how much information was being given and at what time. He used long sentences to describe scenes of gore and creating suspense by

incentivating the reader to picture.

Finally, by far the most  
Suspense and tension the writer created  
was at the very end. He doesn't

finish, he doesn't explain what happens  
next nor ~~the~~ foreshadow what might happen. By  
simply ending the piece with 'Nothing' he created enormous  
Suspense

[AO2 12] (Total for Question 4 = 12 marks)

## Mark and commentary

9 marks

There is good focus on the question throughout this sustained response and effective language comments although at times these could be expanded e.g. in the first paragraph the comment on 'claustrophobic' is that the reader can 'imagine/feel how it is like' but this is not explored. The explanation of a short sentence 'giving description to the reader very quickly and intensifying the moment' shows a thorough understanding. The penultimate paragraph touches on some interesting points about language and structure but there are no specific examples to support the comments and the reference to a 'semantic field of language' is vague. The final point about the conclusion of Text Two is well-made and secures this response within level 4.

## Question 5

Question 5 is based on both Text One and Text Two from the Extracts Booklet.

- 5 Compare how the writers present their ideas and perspectives about their experiences.

Support your answer with detailed examples from both texts.

(22)

In text one the reader describes his ~~former~~ experience as exciting when he says "There is something faintly exciting about the pain I've just put myself through" This shows that he believes that even though there was lots of pain involved he enjoyed it.

where as in text two he describes his experience as being fairly bad as he gets his arm trapped we know this because he says "I'm frantic and I cry out" This

Shows that he is not happy or enjoying his experience.

Also in text one the reader represents his experience as being bad at the start and good toward the end we know this because he says "The moment is cruelly upon us" at the start and "It certainly feels good to be alive" The first quote shows how he

did not want ~~or~~ to do it as  
he said its cruelty upon us  
but at the end he said the  
second quote which ~~also~~  
shows he loved the experience.

whereas in text two he has  
a good time at the start of  
his experience but towards the  
end it got ~~up~~ bad so is completely  
opposite from text one we know  
this because he says "I come  
to another drop-off at the start



and "The boulder then crushes my right hand" The first quote shows that he is enjoying what he is doing as he's doing it again because he says I came to another drop off which shows he's doing it again so he must be enjoying it but the second quote says that he is stuck with his right arm being crushed under a boulder and so not anymore enjoying his experience

So in conclusion text one's experience went from bad to good and text two's experience went from good to bad.

## **Mark and commentary**

8 marks

Some clear and straightforward comparisons are drawn between the two texts e.g. the idea of bad and good experiences. There is some repetition of comments e.g. that the writer of Text One is 'enjoying' what he is doing. This response fully meets the level 2 criteria but would need a greater range of comparative points with some development of ideas to move into level 3.

5 Compare how the writers present their ideas and perspectives about their experiences.

Support your answer with detailed examples from both texts.

(22)

In texts one and two both writers describe their experience in a very dramatic, but however factual way. Both writers also included painful recants of their experience but ~~however~~ however in a different way. In text one the writer briefly covered pain on the other hand text two's writer went on very much detail about his moment of pain using very strong and partially aggressive ~~describi~~ descriptive words, for example the writer used "anxiety" and "frantic". The two texts also differ from one another due to the fact in text one the writer seems to



make it an enjoyable experience by

describing a very beautiful scenery.  
For example, he introduced his piece  
with "By the time we've found the  
right beach, the fire is already  
lit and it's burning beautifully." which  
then paints ~~the~~ the reader picture  
an ~~enjoyable~~ enjoyable place. On contrary,  
in part-two the writer introduced  
his text ~~with~~<sup>in</sup> a very rapid

manner. He goes straight into action  
by ~~saying~~<sup>writing</sup> "I come to another drop-off.  
This is maybe eleven or twelve feet  
high, a foot higher and of a different  
geometry than the overhang I descended ten  
minutes ago." By introducing his feet  
in this way the ~~for~~ writer  
~~puts~~ the reader in an uncertain  
position of what's going to happen  
next, this being the complete  
opposite of text one.

Another way in which the writer's  
ideas are differently presented is that  
in text one there are some lines  
where speech is included whereas



In text two speech is only used twice, firstly in an exclamatory way where the writer wrote "Get your hand out of there!" and secondly when he is also exclaiming "Come on... move!" The reason the speech is used differently in the texts is because in text one it is between two people whereas in text two it is in moments of agony and despair.

The two texts also present their climate in different ways. In text two the writer describes the climate ~~as a~~ as very cold, this is discovered when he wrote that the temperature was "(-4°C)" This shows he describes

that the climate is cold  
because once temperatures drop below  
0°C it is very cold. However, in  
text ~~the~~ two the climate is  
described as "claustrophobic" which

insinuates that it is very  
warm and not very comfortable.

Finally, both texts ~~to~~ have  
similar language devices. In  
text one the writer uses a  
simile to describe how he feels.



This was on line 6 when  
he wrote "I feel like our son  
Rex looks before he's got an  
important line in a School  
assembly: all puffy-faced and grey." which  
gives the reader a something to  
imagine. This is also used on  
line 7 & 8 when the writer  
used a simile to describe  
the climbing technique like using it  
to climb a chimney, in lines 14-  
15. This also putting the  
reader in a position where  
they can picture the situation ~~of~~  
and/or feeling.

## **Mark and commentary**

11 marks

The response starts with a clear and focused comparative point and continues with a range of points linking the two passages. Relevant quotations have been selected but these are sometimes overlong. Some points could be further developed and explored e.g. the use of direct speech in Text One 'is between two people whereas in Text Two it is in moments of agony and despair' could be expanded to consider tone and the idea of companionship versus isolation. The comments on language towards the end such as 'gives the reader something to imagine' are too generalised. Overall, this is a secure level 3 response.

5 Compare how the writers present their ideas and perspectives about their experiences.

Support your answer with detailed examples from both texts.

(22)

In both texts the writers present an element of fear, however does so in very different ways. In text one the writer tells you directly that he is scared, as he ~~feels~~<sup>feels</sup> like like his son "Rex looks before he's got an important line in a school assembly". The writer here is directly telling the reader about how nervous he is. However, in text two the writer uses ~~emotive~~ emotive language to persuade the reader to share his fear as he says he feels "the claustrophobic feel of a short tunnel". This indicates to the reader that he is scared.

In addition to this, both texts are describing a journey that not many people

would take . for example ~~for~~ text one is

"adapted from ice swimming in Tromsø".

This is a very unique thing to try, which is why the ~~reader~~<sup>writer</sup> is sharing his experiences with the reader. Similarly, in text two

the writer is describing his experience of "Between a rock and a hard place". This text is about drop-offs and canyons; something which not many people would like to visit personally, therefore the writer is again sharing his experiences with the reader.

furthermore, both of these texts are written in first person to make the



experiences they are describing personal to the writer. We know this because in the introduction of text one we are told that "the writer describes an experience he had" showing that the extract is personal to the writer. Also, this is similar to text two, as in text two the first sentence saying "I come to a drop-off" tells the reader that as this is written in first person the writer makes it personal to himself.

However, both extracts are different because the writers opt to using different language devices to intrigue the reader. For

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example in text one the author uses

sibilance to describe time disappearing "with shocking speed". This makes the extract more interesting to read as it build excitement. However, in text two while describing time the writer uses a completely different approach as "time dilates" instead of speeding up. This makes the story in the mind of the reader also go in slow motion for that period of time as the reader understands the story.

Additionally, both writers describe a claustrophobic feeling, however chose to do so in different manners. In text one, while emerging with the icy water the body has "several involuntary spasms of frantic swimming" which is a form of reaction when one feels claustrophobic. However, the writer in text two doesn't explain what happens due to his claustrophobia, he just directly ~~the~~

describes that "the claustrophobic feel of a short tunnel" is overtaking him.

Both texts also chose ~~different~~ different approaches as to ending the extracts. Text two leaves off at a cliffhanger as

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his last sentence is of a simple structure "Then silence." However, text one ends on a positive note as "we've got to fly further north" ready for another challenge.

Additionally, towards the end of each extract, the tone of the writer also varies. In text one the ~~and~~ writer is grateful

to still be alive as "it certainly feels good to be alive". Despite the fact that in text two the writer is then struck with difficulty as the falling rock is "tearing the skin off the lateral side" of his forearm. In comparison to the end of text one, this text is more negative.

In addition to this, the beginning of each extract takes a different approach of styles. The writer in text one starts off using alliteration such as "burning beautifully" in order to lighten the mood of the reader so that when the fear starts to envelope the reader, it would come as a shock to the reader. However, in text two the writer starts off straight

away with describing his experience with the simple introduction of "I come to another drop-off". This doesn't prepare the reader to face the horrors of the writer's experience and ~~even~~ doesn't come as a shock to the reader.

### Mark and commentary

17 marks

This is a well-balanced and assured response that considers a wide range of comparisons between the passages. Not only are points of language and structure considered, there are also pertinent comments on the shared authorial purpose of informing the reader about unusual experiences and a consideration of how certain techniques used affect the reader e.g. 'Text One starts off using alliteration such as 'burning beautifully' in order to lighten the mood for the reader so that when the fear starts to envelop the reader, it would come as a shock'. Thoughtful references to mood and tone are made and this response lies securely within level 4.

5 Compare how the writers present their ideas and perspectives about their experiences.

Support your answer with detailed examples from both texts.

(22)

Both of the writers ~~ex~~ use language and structure to present a sense of danger in the writing, however they do this in different ways.

Firstly, ~~the~~ in Text 1 the tone is a lot lighter it starts off with the writer "laughing" and getting ready to swim. However similarly to text 2 the mood changes as the writer says that the "moment is cruelly upon us". In text 2 the tone is ~~less~~ relatively tense from the start the way the author uses measurements like "twelve feet high" create a dangerous environment from the start.

Secondly, both of the writers show ~~down~~ the dangers of their ~~be~~ activity, both of them ~~put~~ do it regardless however in text 2 the ~~o~~ writer actually

get's hurt. In text 1 ~~you~~ the audience learn the dangers like the "sea urchins" or "hyperventilation".

They make the activity appear risky and unsafe.  
~~He However~~ <sup>However in</sup> ~~in comparison~~ to text 2 the audience actually live the dangers along with the writer like when he says ~~is~~ "In slow motion" which sets the mood and then ~~so~~ "leaving the skin off". The feelings are much more intense and the reader is ~~living~~ living ~~there~~ them. ~~It doesn't like~~  
~~the~~ It discourages the ~~author~~ audience from trying this themselves, whereas in text 2 the audience, ~~many~~ for example ~~act~~ people who like "adrenaline", are dared ~~in a way to~~ and ~~an~~ slightly more interested in the sport.

~~the writer~~ In both texts the writers intend on ~~of~~ informing their readers about their activity or ~~re~~ retelling an event. As a reader, ~~the text~~ I think that text 1 shows pride in their activity, ~~to~~ This is because the swimmers were wearing outwear with "impressive national credentials". It ~~no~~ creates the feeling that this sport is something ~~to~~ to aspire to. ~~§~~ You gain respect and can idolise those people who do it, because they are professionals in it though it is so dangerous. On the other hand text 2, seems like a bad idea and even though the writer is presented as strong as he withstands

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~~to the~~ ~~down~~ ~~from~~ the difficult situation - no one else would want to be in his position. He is almost portrayed as ~~as~~ ~~as~~ negatively for putting



himself in that position. He says "my body's weight applies enough torque to disturb it from its position". This implies that he caused the accident and he is to blame, therefore it is not shown in the same tone as the first text.

Moreover in text 1 ~~the~~ the writer ends on a positive reward feeling. He is wrapped in "coats and fleeces", which changes the atmosphere from "an icy hit" to a friendly, cozy, warm feeling. He talks about the "endorphins-rush" which tells the reader that he gets satisfaction and happiness from what he is doing. This warms up the readers and ~~in the next 2~~ the author connects them more to the author. He leaves readers wanting to read more as he says "we've got to fly no further north". In text 2 the reader is left wanting to know more too, but for different reasons - they are worried for the survival and fate of the writer. ~~The~~ The last paragraph keeps describing the tense ~~at~~ & dangerous situation and the

and fait of the writer. ~~He~~ The last paragraph keeps describing the tense ~~at~~ ~~is~~ dangerous situation and the writer's dispare as they ~~have~~ are "frantic," and "cry out". ~~It leave~~ The closing sentence ~~cuts the story~~ "Nothing" cuts the story, for the reader to

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question what happened next and how did he get out? ~~is the text?~~ Overall both of the texts are successful at ~~leaving~~ interesting the reader to continue reading their story.

## **Mark and commentary**

19 marks

A perceptive and comprehensive range of comparisons are made between the texts. There is consideration of the authors' intentions and some insightful development of the effect of the descriptions on the reader: Text One 'discourages the audience from trying this themselves' whereas in Text Two 'people who like adrenaline are dared'. There is a strong sense of personal engagement with the texts, e.g. 'As a reader, I think that Text One shows pride in their activity'. The textual references used throughout have been aptly chosen, fully support the points made and are skilfully embedded. This is a strong response that merits a mark within level 5.

## SECTION A: Reading

Question number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives	Mark
<b>1</b>	<p>Accept any of the following, up to a maximum of <b>two</b> marks, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small group (1)</li> <li>• hearty (1)</li> <li>• two men (1)</li> <li>• two women (1)</li> <li>• in late middle age (1)</li> <li>• in (enviably) good condition (1)</li> <li>• hilarious/mirthfully (1)</li> </ul>	<b>(2)</b>

Question number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives	Mark
<b>2</b>	<p>Accept any reasonable interpretation of the writer's thoughts and feelings before he embarks on the swim, in own words, up to a maximum of <b>four</b> marks, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nervous</li> <li>• apprehensive (feels like his young son does before speaking at assembly)</li> <li>• unprepared</li> <li>• feels it is all happening very quickly</li> <li>• intimidated/impressed by professionalism of other swimmers</li> <li>• inexperienced</li> <li>• wants to get it over with (Macbeth reference)</li> <li>• determined</li> </ul>	<b>(4)</b>

Question number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives	Mark
<b>3</b>	<p>Accept any reasonable description of the dangers and difficulties of the swim, up to a maximum of <b>five</b> marks, for example:</p> <p>Dangers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'sea urchins'</li> <li>• swimming away from the shore/'going too far out'</li> <li>• breathing too quickly/'hyperventilation'</li> <li>• the shock to the system of extreme temperatures</li> <li>• drowning through inhaling water due to shock</li> </ul> <p>Difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pain/agony/'searing pain of the icy hit'</li> <li>• dealing with extreme cold water</li> <li>• struggling to get whole body into the water</li> <li>• loss of physical control/'several involuntary spasms'</li> <li>• the problem of staying in the water long enough</li> <li>• adjusting to temperature but not too much</li> </ul>	<b>(5)</b>

Question number	Indicative content
4	<p>Reward responses that explain how the writer uses language and structure to create suspense and tension.</p> <p>Responses may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the passage starts with the suggestion of security that he has done this before: 'another drop-off'</li> <li>the use of measurement creates tension as it shows the expanse the writer is climbing in: 'eleven or twelve feet high, a foot higher and of a different geometry than the overhang I descended ten minutes ago'</li> <li>the use of the adjective 'claustrophobic' creates a feeling of pressure and anxiety</li> <li>large space and small space are contrasted, which creates a feeling of being closed in, for example 'here the slot narrows', 'narrow passages like this one'</li> <li>the phrase 'It supports me but teeters slightly' foreshadows that something ominous is going to happen</li> <li>references to time show the speed of events and create suspense: 'The next three seconds play out at a tenth of their normal speed'</li> <li>use of emotive language conveys the writer's feelings and physical pain: 'the rock slides another foot down the wall with my arm in tow, tearing the skin off the lateral side of my forearm', 'I'm frantic, and I cry out ... my desperate brain... '</li> <li>religious language is used to express extreme emotion: 'Good God, my hand'</li> <li>use of punctuation shows tension as time slows down his reactions: 'In slow motion: the rock smashes... My disbelief paralyses me temporarily as I stare at the sight of my arm vanishing into an implausibly small gap'</li> <li>the extract starts with confidence that Ralston knows what he is doing (the second paragraph shows words like 'controlling', 'solid'), but in the fifth paragraph he ends with a sentence beginning with 'My only hope', showing the building of suspense</li> <li>the use of short sentences emphasises the stressful situation and the physical pain: 'Then silence', 'Nothing.'</li> <li>lists are used to show how much action is happening: 'the rock smashes my left hand against the south wall; my eyes register the collision, and I yank my left arm back as the rock ricochets;... at the wrist, palm in, thumb up, fingers extended'</li> <li>the use of the analogy where the 'adrenaline-stoked mom lifts an overturned car to free her baby' shows the link to his desperate situation</li> <li>alliteration creates emphasis on tension and reaction, for example 'grimace and growl', 'full flood'</li> <li>there is an uncertain conclusion to the passage, leaving the reader wondering what will happen next: "'Come on...move!" Nothing.'</li> </ul>

Level	Mark	<b>A02</b> Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects
	0	No rewardable material.
<b>Level 1</b>	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic identification and little understanding of the language and/or structure used by writers to achieve effects.</li> <li>• The use of references is limited.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some understanding of and comment on language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary.</li> <li>• The selection of references is valid, but not developed.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	5–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary and sentence structure.</li> <li>• The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	8–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough understanding and exploration of language and structure and how these are used to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structures and other language features.</li> <li>• The selection of references is detailed, appropriate and fully supports the points being made.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 5</b>	11–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptive understanding and analysis of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features.</li> <li>• The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made.</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content
5	<p>Reward responses that compare how the writers present their ideas about their experiences.</p> <p>Responses may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• both texts describe a dangerous experience but Text Two describes things going wrong whereas all goes well in Text One</li> <li>• both texts are written in the first person but Text One includes the different perspective of the ice swimmers</li> <li>• both texts are written by someone who has chosen to venture into a potentially dangerous situation</li> <li>• Text One is written by someone who is a novice whereas Text Two is written by someone with experience</li> <li>• both texts use some emotive language but this is more developed and extensive in Text Two with its focus on pain and fear</li> <li>• Text One uses a lexicon of military language to describe the experience and there is a brief reference to <i>Macbeth</i>: 'twere well it were done quickly'. Text Two uses a recurrent metaphor of fire to describe the pain</li> <li>• Text One includes some instances of humour and has a light-hearted tone whereas Text Two is much more serious</li> <li>• Text One has some positive elements but Text Two does not</li> <li>• in Text Two there is a sense of isolation whereas in Text One the writer is not alone; Text One uses first and second person pronouns whereas Text Two uses first person</li> <li>• Text Two begins <i>in media res</i> but Text One gradually introduces the situation</li> <li>• Text One reaches a safe conclusion whereas Text Two leaves the reader unsure as to what may happen</li> <li>• Text One has a calmer tone; Text Two has a calm tone in the opening but builds up a sense of panic</li> <li>• both texts use punctuation for effect</li> <li>• Text One gives some explanation of why people choose to place themselves in a potentially dangerous situation</li> <li>• both texts give some description of the landscape</li> <li>• in Text One the writer says he is not as prepared as the more experienced ice swimmers, whereas the writer in Text Two is more prepared: Ralston checks the route before starting down</li> <li>• both focus on time: Text One 'happens in a blur' and talks about the safe time to be in the water and Ralston talks of how time seems to change as the accident happens: 'Time dilates, as if I'm dreaming'</li> <li>• both texts have some element of measurement to emphasise danger - Text One in the temperature and Text Two in the distance and expanse of space.</li> </ul>



Level	Mark	<b>A03</b> Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed
	0	No rewardable material.
<b>Level 1</b>	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response does not compare the texts.</li> <li>• Description of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure.</li> <li>• The use of references is limited.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response considers obvious comparisons between the texts.</li> <li>• Comment on writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure.</li> <li>• The selection of references is valid, but not developed.</li> </ul> <p><b>NB: candidates who have considered only ONE text may still achieve a mark up to the top of Level 2</b></p>
<b>Level 3</b>	9–13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response considers a range of comparisons between the texts.</li> <li>• Explanation of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure.</li> <li>• The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	14–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response considers a wide range of comparisons between the texts.</li> <li>• Exploration of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts.</li> <li>• References are balanced across both texts and fully support the points being made.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 5</b>	19–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response considers a varied and comprehensive range of comparisons between the texts.</li> <li>• Analysis of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts.</li> <li>• References are balanced across both texts; they are discriminating and fully support the points being made.</li> </ul>