



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English Language (Modular / 4WEA1)
Paper 01R

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The examination paper covered in this report is the modular version of Paper 1R of the International GCSE English Language A. It is advisable to read the report for the linear version in conjunction with this report.

Paper 1 Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing is assessed through an examination lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes with a total of 90 marks. The paper is organised into two sections each worth 45 marks.

Section A: Non-fiction

This section is worth a total of 45 marks, tests reading skills and is based on an unseen passage (Qs1-3) and a text from the International GCSE English Anthology (Q4) with a total word count of approximately 2000 words. Q5 asks candidates to compare the two texts. In this, the first series of the modular specification, the unseen extract was adapted from *Crocodylus* by Rosita Boland in which she describes the time she spent at Crocodylus in Australia when she was 23. The Anthology text was the extract from *Beyond the Sky and the Earth: A Journey into Bhutan* by Jamie Zeppa in which she writes about her early days in Bhutan where she had moved to be a teacher.

Candidates are advised to spend about 1 hour and 30 minutes on this section.

Section B: Transactional Writing

This section, also worth a total of 45 marks, offers candidates a choice of two transactional writing tasks. A particular form will always be specified and for this series the two tasks were to write a magazine article with the title 'The place that means the most to me.' (Q6) or to write the text for a speech giving views on the statement 'Some people may want expensive possessions, but the best things in life are free'. (Q7). Both questions were equally popular with candidates with responses divided very evenly between the two.

The Assessment Objectives for this paper are:

AO1: Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives (Q1, Q2, Q3)

AO2: Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects (Q4)

AO3: Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed (Q5)

Section B: Writing

AO4: Communicate effectively and imaginatively. Adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences (Q6 or Q7)

AO5: Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation (Q6 or Q7)

This is an untiered specification and the choice of texts and questions set are such that all candidates are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing. The majority of candidates sitting the paper in this series responded positively to all questions. The two texts worked very well together and offered plenty of points of comparison.

SECTION A

Question 1

This question, which tests the skills of selection and retrieval, is intended to serve as a straightforward way into the paper and build confidence on the part of the candidates, almost all of whom were able to gain the two marks available. The question directed candidates to lines 5-7 and asked them to select two words or phrases that describe where the plane landed.

The important advice for this question is to look at the line references given and to select single words or phrases from the passage, not to attempt to use own words and not to spend time giving comment or explanation which cannot be rewarded here.

On the few occasions where both marks were not achieved, this tended to be because candidates had selected material from outside the line references.

Question 2

This question moves on from Q1 by directing candidates towards a larger section of the text. For this examination the question asked candidates to look at lines 13-22 and describe what the writer tells us about Crocodylus. It was noted that the majority of candidates were able to select the relevant information and, whilst the majority of candidates did receive full marks, a number did not follow the instruction '**In your own words**'. Of these candidates, some copied at length or used embedded quotations to make a point.

There was a good range of possible points that could be made; those most commonly made were the location, the nature of the accommodation, the fact that it had recently opened and the abundance of greenery,

The most successful approach for this straightforward 'retrieval of information' question is to make at least four clear discrete points. If these are set out separately then it can help both the candidate and the examiner to see at a glance how many points have been made. It is important to remember that the question asks candidates to 'describe' and therefore, although it is not necessary to write at length, it is not acceptable to simply list very brief points. The response must be written in full and complete sentences that clearly demonstrate understanding and secure interpretation. It is important that the given lines are read closely and carefully.

Question 3

This is the final AO1 question; it is worth 5 marks and, like Q2, requires candidates to show their understanding of the text by selecting and interpreting ideas and information. For this examination, they were asked to look again at lines 30-42 and explain the writer's thoughts and feelings.

In Q3, candidates are told that they 'may support' their points 'with **brief** quotations' and most did so to good effect, demonstrating a secure understanding of what was required.

Successful candidates often worked through the set section of the text identifying key points. Of those that did not do so well, some offered a summary of the whole passage or focused on the wrong part of the text. Others were too vague in their comments, for example stating 'we see Boland's thoughts about Crocodylus' without specifying what those thoughts were. A few expected

long quotations with no comment to act as evidence of their own understanding, but answers including overlong quotations very rarely gained full marks.

Most showed a good understanding of Boland's thoughts about her future, her sense of joy and freedom at being in Australia and her desire to keep her job at Crocodylus. A few wrote about the fact that she took a run each morning but this was not related to a relevant thought or feeling. Where candidates had started each point with 'The writer thought ...' or 'The writer felt ...', it helped them to stay on task.

In summary, the best answers used a good balance of short quotation and some interpretation, paid attention to how many marks the question is worth and made five clear and discrete points.

Question 4

This question is on Text Two, the Anthology text, and is assessed for **AO2**: Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects. It is therefore a more challenging and discriminatory question and is worth 12 marks divided over five levels.

In this examination, candidates were asked how the writer, Jamie Zeppa, uses language and structure in the extract from *Beyond the Sky and the Earth: A Journey into Bhutan* to convey her experience.

This piece contains a very wide range of features of language and structure as exemplified in the mark scheme, but these are just examples of possible points that could be made and any valid points that candidates make that are securely rooted in the text can be rewarded. There does not need to be an equal number of points on language and structure, but both should be addressed.

Candidates generally seemed to have a familiarity with the passage and understood what was described, often working through the text and making a number of points about the writer's views. However, the ability to explore or analyse the writer's use of language and structure, required for marks within the higher levels, was less secure. Quotations were frequently selected to illustrate a point of content without close focus on the impact of individual words or phrases. Features such as use of repetition or alliteration were commonly identified without any real comment or explanation of their effect. Candidates often wrote at length but simply re-telling the story will not gain many marks.

Question 5

This question provides the only assessment in the specification of **AO3**: Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.

This question is the most demanding of those in Section A and, with 22 marks distributed between five levels, carries almost half of the total marks available for reading so it is extremely important that candidates allow sufficient time for a developed response.

It was pleasing to see that all candidates attempted the question and were able to make some links between the extracts. Comparisons tended to be quite straightforward, for example both texts are about a place, both are written by a woman who has travelled abroad and often there was explanation rather than exploration of the texts. As a result, most candidates achieved marks within Level 3. If candidates attempted to look at language, quite often texts were considered side by side

with points such as 'the writer of Text One uses listing, whereas the writer in Text Two uses repetition.' Unless such points are used to demonstrate a similarity or difference in theme/tone/perspective they are rarely useful or effective.

The report for the linear version of this paper provides more information about approaches to this question.

SECTION B

Candidates are required to answer just one writing task but it carries half of the total marks available for the paper and so they must ensure that they allow sufficient time to plan and organise their response.

There are two assessment objectives for writing.

AO4: Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences. (27 marks spread over five levels)

AO5: Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation. (18 marks spread over five levels)

Question 6

This question asked candidates to write a magazine article with the title 'The place that means the most to me'; one examiner reported that 'I really enjoyed marking this question and there were some lovely responses.'

The majority of candidates showed a sound awareness of the required form and wrote interesting descriptive responses of a variety of places from their hometown to places of strong personal significance such as the home of a friend or family member or in one original piece, the idea of a football ground that wherever it is situated has the power to unite people and create friendships. Some were clearly inspired by the two texts and produced heartfelt and engaging pieces. Some responses were quite short indicating either that the candidate was unsure of how to develop ideas or had run out of time and others digressed from the topic. The best responses were focused carefully on the task and structured effectively.

The majority of candidates made appropriate vocabulary choices but writing is most effective when candidates employ words that they understand. It is good to be ambitious in word-choice but it is important that such words are used appropriately and enhance the response rather than distract or confuse the reader. Basic punctuation was generally used correctly but candidates at all levels could consider how sentence structures might be varied and crafted for deliberate effect.

Question 7

This question required candidates to write the text of a speech giving views on the statement 'Some people may want expensive possessions but the best things in life are free'. Most candidates who attempted this question showed a sound understanding of the requirements but there were some who took 'things' to also mean possessions and argued that everything had to be paid for. The majority, however, wrote about how memories, friends, family etc were more valuable than anything that money could buy and offered some strong criticism of a materialistic society. There

was clear awareness that the given form was a speech with most candidates opening with some variation on 'Good afternoon...' and generally ideas were communicated clearly. However, there was limited use of the rhetorical techniques that are commonly used to enhance a speech and persuade an audience to a point of view.

Final feedback on the writing questions:

To achieve the highest level in AO4, writing needs to be 'perceptive', 'subtle' and 'sophisticated' and there should be a clear focus on the appropriate form. For AO5, candidates should consider the ordering of their ideas, write in clear paragraphs and aim to link them effectively. There needs to be accuracy but also a 'strategic' use of an 'extensive vocabulary'. Candidates should not avoid using an ambitious vocabulary because they fear making spelling errors. They should also aim for an assured and controlled use of a range of carefully-crafted sentence structures 'to achieve particular effects'.

Based on their performance in this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Be aware of the different assessment objectives for each question.
- Highlight the relevant lines in the text for Qs 1-3 to ensure that your answers come from the correct part.
- Answer Q2 in your own words as far as possible. Aim to make four clear and distinct points written in full and complete sentences.
- You should make five clear points for Q3; brief quotations can be used to support these points but quotations without explanation are not sufficient. Do not spend time analysing the language of the quotations. Points can be set out separately but must be in full and complete sentences and offer some interpretation.
- Consider the effects of language and structure features within the context of the given extract in Q4. Ensure that you focus on the question and avoid simply describing what happens in the text.
- Make a range of comparative points in Q5. Rather than simply compare the ideas or events within the texts, try to link similar elements such as content, theme, tone, purpose, narrative voice, language and support points with relevant quotations or textual references. Ensure that references are balanced across both texts by making each paragraph a point of comparison.
- Take time to make a brief plan for the higher tariff questions (5 and 6 or 7) and use it.
- Consider the given form and audience for the writing task and use these to inform register and tone. Try to use a wide vocabulary and varied sentence structures. Think carefully about how you can engage the reader right at the start and consider how you will end.
- Read all instructions carefully. Consider the marks allocated to each question and plan your time accordingly so that you are able to attempt every question.
- Take great care with handwriting so that it is legible.

