

Examiners' Report

June 2023

Int GCSE English Language B 4EB1 01

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Introduction

The texts about walking and being outdoors were accessible across the full range of abilities and candidates were able to engage with the tasks and respond appropriately.

Examiners commented there was evidence of some good teaching and learning in preparation for this examination in the responses seen and many candidates seemed generally well-prepared. Examiners saw some good responses across all the questions.

More successful candidates were able to engage fully with both texts and respond thoughtfully and articulately. Their writing responses were often engaging and effective and were well-controlled and accurate. Less successful candidates sometimes struggled to understand the passages and the questions. Their writing was often pedestrian or lacked coherence and had weak language controls.

There were some candidates who made references to the pictures in their responses to Question 3, Question 6 and Question 7. This is not an appropriate way to respond to the texts as the pictures are not language or structural devices chosen for effect by the writers.

There were a number of blank responses, notably for Question 7, which may indicate issues with timing. Candidates should be encouraged to respond to every question.

There were some candidates who copied out all, or considerable parts, of the extracts in response to Question 8. This can never be a successful way to respond as candidates are required to produce their own work and show the ability to adapt the original texts for a different audience and purpose.

There was evidence of planning which is to be encouraged. However the use of very long plans or draft essays is to be discouraged as they are not a good use of time. Candidates should be encouraged to plan their response in the answer booklet rather than on separate additional sheets.

Question 1

This is a straightforward question on Text One which does not require candidates to use their own words.

The majority of candidates responded correctly and the most popular correct responses were: 'immersing yourself in nature' and 'you can switch off from worries'. The most common errors came from using the wrong lines, eg the heading of the previous section: 'improves and strengthens mental health' or using the heading to the section given in the question: 'Being outdoors reduces stress.'

Examiners did comment that many candidates were writing too much and giving too many points for this one mark question and perhaps spending too long on it.

Candidates must ensure they read the text and the question carefully.

Question 2

This is a straightforward question on Text One which does not require candidates to use their own words.

Most candidates provided correct examples of the ways the writer says that people can take more exercise outside. All six of the bullet points were seen. Common correct responses were 'hiking a trail', 'an evening walk' and 'popping outside in your lunch break'.

Common errors included 'taking a break from your phone', 'thinking more effectively and carefully' and 'it is completely free of charge'. Some took points from the wrong lines, such as 'a stroll in the park'.

Examiners did comment that many candidates were writing too much and giving too many points for this one mark question and perhaps spending too long on it.

Candidates must ensure they read the question and the text carefully.

Question 3

The question asks the candidate how the writer presents her ideas about the importance of spending more time outdoors.

Examiners commented that most candidates demonstrated at least some understanding of the text and some awareness of the devices used to present ideas. Candidates were able to demonstrate some understanding of language and structure and how these were used to present the writer's ideas about the importance of spending more time outdoors. Some examiners observed that candidates had been prepared for this question and knew how to approach it.

Candidates were able to identify a range of features and support them with examples from the text such as the use of colloquial language to make a link to the readers, sub-headings with some commenting on young people's attention span, listing, direct address and first person.

Successful responses were developed, analytical and examined a range of language and structural features used, exploring the impact on the reader and the intended effects. These candidates used embedded quotations and explored and analysed these in depth. They were able to explore how ideas were presented, supporting their ideas with well-integrated quotations and references. A good range of points was selected and detailed references were offered supporting the points being made. Points made included the advisory tone, use of imperatives, the self-deprecating tone of the writer and the use of research to give credibility. A number related the writer's techniques successfully to the intended audience of young people, identifying features like the use of informal language.

However a significant number of examiners commented that candidates did not comment on the effects of their chosen features on the reader. A number of responses that did identify techniques failed to make specific reference to the writer's intended effects, saying little more than 'this interests the reader', 'to help the passage flow' or 'this makes the reader want to read on'. There was also evidence of 'feature spotting' where candidates identify (correctly) particular language features and offer textual support but do not explain them. Occasionally candidates adopted a list like approach to this question identifying techniques and choosing appropriate references but doing no more.

Less successful candidates produced responses that were content based. These tended to focus on 'what' the writer said rather than 'how' the writer presented her ideas about the importance of spending more time outdoors. Some of the weakest responses were simply summaries or direct copies of the text.

Centres need to remind candidates that this question asks **how** the writer achieves his/her effects, not **what** he/she says.

This is a successful response to Question 3.

- 3 Explain how the writer presents her ideas about the importance of spending more time outdoors.

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

The writer uses ^{language⁽¹⁰⁾} colloquial ~~tone~~ and a chatty tone; this is to engage and relate to target audience, 'young people.' ~~She also~~ This helps the reader - younger people - to realise that they are the ones being addressed 'you', and helps present the importance of spending ~~to~~ more times outdoors. ~~as~~ Also, by using the personal ~~pro~~ pronoun 'I' and talking about the writers own experience 'I still watch cat videos on Facebook' and 'We're all guilty of it', helps the readers feel less ~~guilt~~ shamed for their 'couch potato' self and can relate with the writer and her experience. The use of the collective pronoun ~~we're~~ 'we're' also helps the reader see the writer as a human who empathises with their struggles, and hence the readers feel more connected and willing to trust the writer's advice.

on the importance of spending more time outdoors.

Moreover, the writer uses data and studies 'many psychological studies' and 'scientific studies have proved.' This factual and concrete evidence to back up her points, helps Dunbar illustrate his points and makes them more reliable. Hence, by showing the trustworthy data to emphasize her points, allows readers to realise the importance and need to heed the ~~ad~~ advice Dunbar is demonstrating.

Furthermore, Dunbar uses lists to accentuate the negatives of not spending time outdoors 'fatigue, depression, hair loss...' and the positives of spending more time outside 'combat many health issues... high blood pressure, heart disease and obesity.' This allows readers to visually see the positives of ~~as~~ spending time outside and realise the bad side effects of not. Hence this allows Dunbar to stress how 'unhealthy and unhappy' it is to not exercise.

Also Dunbar retells her experience 'It wasn't until I rediscovered' and 'I can vouch for' to instill confidence into the reader by illustrating the personal experience of the writer. By presenting her own experience, she connects with the readers and makes the points made more valid and believable. This is accentuated through the use of positive language 'enjoyable', 'extremely positive' and 'magnificent'. Both of these engages the readers and helps them by presenting the positive and greatness of spending time outdoors. Dunbar emphasises the importance of doing so.

Additionally, the use of separate headlines and subheadings for each 'definitive reason' makes it easier for the reader to absorb Dunbar's ideas. The simplicity and to the point subheadings reflect how Dunbar strongly feels that how it's easier than you think to step outside and heed her ideas. And, by finishing the passage with an exclamatory sentence 'the outdoors is our natural environment!' creates an upbeat and inspiring tone, and allows the reader to feel energised to reflect on her words and ideas of the importance of spending time outdoors.

(Total for Question 3 = 10 marks)



The selection of references is often discriminating and clarifies points being made. There is some perceptive understanding of the text, but a lack of analysis keeps it at the lower end of Level 5. Mark = 9, Level 5.



Note how the candidate has focused on individual words and phrases and their effects to show how the writer presents her ideas.

This is a less successful response to Question 3.

- 3 Explain how the writer presents her ideas about the importance of spending more time outdoors.

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

(10)

The writer begins by using first person and talking about her own personal experience, 'wasn't until I', 'I still watch cat videos'. Because the text is aimed at young people that often need motivation and ^{support} ~~proof~~ in order to seriously consider something, the use of this makes the text personal to the reader, almost like they are friends.

Supporting this is the use of colloquial tone. By using phrases like 'so, listen up...' and 'ditch the wifi' it makes the writing less like an instruction manual and more like friendly advice. ~~or~~ This may mean young people are more likely to listen to the advice and take it into consideration.

The text is organised into a list with short, concise subheadings. This ultimately makes it more ~~accesible~~ ^{accessible} as it may be portrayed as an easy read to younger people making them more likely to read it. This is further supported by the use of shorter paragraphs which provide the same effect.



Some understanding is shown but the response lacks range. The last paragraph is vague and generalised when it suggests that shorter paragraphs make it easier to read for the younger reader. Mark = 4, Level 2.



Try to find a range of points from across the whole text.

Question 4

This is a straightforward question on Text Two which does not require candidates to use their own words.

The majority of the candidates responded correctly with the most popular responses being 'he was out of shape' and 'his pack was too heavy'. Incorrect responses used the wrong line references – a common one was that there was 'more hill' which comes from line 12 – or identified descriptions such as 'chuckling stream' and 'brittle ice', which were not difficulties.

Some candidates tried to reword the points from the text, not always successfully. There is no requirement for candidates to use their own words and examiners commented that it wasted time which could have been spent on higher tariff questions.

Centres need to make sure that candidates read the question carefully.

Question 5

This is a straightforward question on Text Two which does not require candidates to use their own words.

Most candidates correctly identified two of the experiences the writer had.

The most popular experiences identified were 'the chilled air', 'the smell of pine sap', 'sprawling face down', 'looking at nature' and 'the view is sensational'. A number succinctly achieved the two marks with 'the chilled air smelled of pine sap'. Incorrect responses sometimes identified feelings rather than experiences, eg 'he was tired', 'he is past caring'. Some used 'had your first magnifying glass', not recognising that this was not a current experience. Other unsuccessful responses chose material from outside the line references, eg 'It was hell.'

Some examiners commented that candidates were writing too much and giving too many points for this two mark question and perhaps spending too long on it.

Centres need to make sure that candidates read the question carefully.

Question 6

The question asks the candidate how the writer presents his experiences of his walk.

Some examiners commented that candidates' performance was similar to Question 3, however other examiners observed that candidates did not do as well on this question. Many candidates missed the humour in the text, seeing it as a gritty, realistic account.

Most candidates were able to identify some features and attempt to describe the writer's intentions and effects on the reader; however examiners commented that candidates did not always develop their comments on the intended effects of these features. They were able to comment on the language used although there was often a tendency to explain what the language meant rather than to explore how it was used for effect. Most candidates commented on the negative tone, particularly 'It was hell'. Most were able to identify the use of first person eg 'I trudged', direct address eg 'What else can you do?' and listing eg 'bug-eyed, breathing hard, heart kabooming alarmingly'. They also commented on the use of repetition of 'way too much' and 'I was hopelessly out of shape – hopelessly', for example. The use of short sentences throughout the text was also mentioned.

Successful responses used supporting textual evidence to illustrate the points they were making, selecting apt examples of language and structure and then analysing the writer's intended effects. They understood language techniques and stylistic devices at a greater depth, could identify them in the text, used better linguistic terminology in their writing, and offered a variety of points. They often understood the tone – as one marker commented, they appreciated 'the heavy irony and self-abasement' typical of Bryson. They were able to explore and engage with the contrast between the description of the sky and the repetition of the word 'brown' and the contrast between 'heaven' and 'hell'. Some commented on the personification of his pack and others discussed the effect of 'heart kabooming alarmingly'.

There was evidence of 'feature spotting' where candidates identify (correctly) particular language features but do not explain them. Occasionally candidates adopted a list like approach to this question identifying techniques and choosing appropriate references but doing no more. A number of responses that did identify techniques failed to make specific reference to the writer's intended effects, making generic comments such as 'it makes it more interesting' or 'this makes the reader want to read on'.

Some candidates commented on the picture and also the glossed word as though they were part of the text. Candidates should be reminded that the picture and glossary are provided to aid understanding and are never part of the passage they should be commenting on.

Less successful responses struggled to develop their responses beyond identifying obvious features with a little comment. They often used over-long quotations in support. The least successful tended to re-tell the events or simply copied out sections of the text.

There were some blank responses.

As with Question 3, centres need to remind candidates that this question asks **how** the writer achieves his/her effects, not **what** he/she says.

This is a very successful response to Question 6.

6 How does the writer present his experiences of his walk?

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

(10)

The writer presents his experience as overwhelming. The use of short sentences places emphasis on them 'it was hell'. He repeats this phrase again later on in the passage, this accentuates his tumultuous journey of his walk. Contrastingly, he also uses long sentences; he does this to mirror the ~~ascending~~ 'ever receding contours' of the slope. The long sentence makes the reader tired and breathless, ~~mirroring~~ reflecting 'plodding weariness' of the writer.

Moreover, the writer constantly uses negative language to illustrate his tiring experience and hardships 'hell', 'hopelessly', 'so hard' and 'struggle'. This ~~also~~ demonstrates the 'impossible' and how his 'faltering spirit' was just hanging on. The alliteration in 'weariness and we' symbolises the desperation ~~and~~ of the writer, while the 'dispiriting discovery' with the harsh

constant 'd' mimics the hardships the writer faces.

Also, the use of repetition in 'hopelessly' and 'way too much' evoke the stress and tiredness of the writer. While the repetition in 'ages and ages' showcases the ever ending walk and the desperation the writer felt.

Additionally, the use of rhetorical question 'what else can you do?' accentuate the helplessness felt by the writer, and poses the question to ~~em~~ emphasise the racing thoughts that he felt. Also, he ~~expresses~~^{uses} the imperative 'don't tell me' and 'but it's not' to illustrate the anger and ~~frustration~~ frustration of the writer on his walk but also 'believe me' suggests how his experience was so gruelling it's almost unbelievable.

Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the ~~ex~~ energy in the exclamatory phrase 'nearly there now!' and the loss of

hope in 'pitiless deception' presents the turmoil and the ongoing hills when the 'seven miles' 'must have done... by now surely'. ~~This is also~~ The use of contrasting feelings and imagery is also seen in 'this really could be heaven' and 'it was hell'. The presentation of 'the view is sensational' and 'you spread face ~~down~~ down' reflects the treacherous journey and the irony of the beautiful view. *

The use of direct address 'you' allows the writer to present and share his tumultuous journey. The vivid imagery and descriptive language 'chuckling stream' paint an image in the readers head as they try to fathom the 'hell'-like experience.

* the contrast of 'sky was a hearty blue' and the repetition of 'brown' in 'at ground level' symbolically presents how the writer became more grounded, as well as the hope that the larks at the top of the ~~tree~~ walk.



Perceptive understanding and analysis of language is demonstrated throughout. A range of language and structural features are explored, including sentence structure, negative language, rhetorical questions, imperatives and juxtaposition. The selection of references is discriminating and these are successfully embedded in the response to clarify the points being made. Mark = 10, Level 5.



Note how the candidate has focused on and analysed individual words and phrases to show how the writer presents his ideas.

This is a less successful response to Question 6.

6 How does the writer present his experiences of his walk?

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

(10)

The writer presents his experiences of his walk by including the parts where ^{he} struggled and disliked it. For example, in the beginning where he talks about how he felt at the start of his walk, where he felt like "it was hell" and that his heart was beating hard whilst he thought that he "was hopelessly out of shape". He also felt like he was "ill-prepared". The writer explains that there was a "constant dispiriting discovery" that there is still more to walk to get higher up the hill.

The writer also repeats parts of his sentences to emphasise how serious it was. In the part "hopelessly out of shape" he then repeats the word "hopelessly" showing that he felt ~~hopeless~~ hopeless, also where he felt that his "pack weighed way too much" he repeats the part "way too much" of the sentence.

Gradually, his feelings about his experience turn positive. Where he starts to reach far enough to ~~reach~~ see the trees near the end, making him feel that he is "nearly there". After what he says felt like "ages and ages" he reaches the top. He then begins to explain in detail what he experiences

as he looks around at what he has accomplished. He speaks positively about the view and the smell. He tells us of "the chilled air" that "smells of pine sap" which sounds like it smelt good.

The writer also mentions his rest for a short while, how he sprawled "face down, pressed to the rock". He also describes it as "heaven", where as at the beginning he described the walk as "hell". He also repeats a sentence he used, at the beginning, at the end, where he says "It was hell". He also tells us to imagine as he describes how he felt physically. That his ~~to~~ pack felt like "a bag of cement", to "imagine walking with that weight" up a hill for hours and days.



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Examiner Comments

The answer identifies and lists a series of points made in the source text but focuses more on what the writer is telling us, rather than how the writer has used language and structure to achieve effects. There is some understanding of and comment on language and structure, e.g. when talking about the effect of the author repeating part of his sentences. Mark = 3, Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

Remember to focus on how the writer achieves his effects not what he says.

Question 7

This question requires candidates to compare how the writers convey their ideas and perspectives about being outdoors. It was evident that many candidates had been taught how to answer this question. Examiners commented that the majority of candidates were able to identify and discuss basic similarities and differences at a minimum, and a number produced well-thought-out comparisons of the extracts. Some examiners commented that candidates engaged well with the task and most understood the need to make points of comparison but other examiners thought candidates found this task more demanding. Some examiners commented positively on evidence of planning these responses although others felt that there was very little evidence of even simple plans which might have aided comparison. Examiners noticed that some candidates appeared to be responding in the style of the mark scheme. This is not a successful way to respond to this question. The mark scheme offers indicative content as a guide for markers.

Most candidates made comparisons between the texts and wrote about both. They were able to identify similarities and differences between the texts and support their ideas with valid references. Points of comparison included: the first text was very positive about going outside for exercise and the second text was less enthusiastic; the intention of the texts (the first one was instructive whereas the second one was a personal account); one was an article and the other a travel book; both were 'informal' in style.

More candidates are writing responses that are comparative throughout, eg identifying points of comparison from each text in an integrated response. This is a successful way to respond to this task. There were some candidates who wrote about each text individually and then wrote a comparative comment at the end. Examiners commented that these responses were not as successful as those candidates whose responses were comparative throughout.

Successful candidates were able to structure their responses comparatively by taking the various features of the text and comparing and contrasting them throughout. They were able to make a wide range of comparisons with clear exploration of ideas and perspectives and support their points with references which were balanced across both texts. They were able to examine the similarities and differences and what these showed about the writers' viewpoints. Some compared how the writers convey their thoughts and feelings about the benefits of being outdoors/walking through structural and language devices. There were some good, developed responses which examined and explored a variety of comparisons of both presentational features and ideas and perspectives. Comparisons made included: the use of colloquial and direct address; the use of humour in both texts; how Text 1 is more positive than Text 2, although some candidates commented that the overall effect of Text 2 was still quite positive as the physical challenge was part of the experience; Text 1 was persuasive and Text 2 was descriptive, literary non-fiction that people would read for pleasure and some understood that Bill Bryson's account was meant to be a good read about overcoming adversity.

Some candidates compared the writers' techniques and did not relate these comparisons to the writers' ideas and perspectives. They wrote about what the writers used in terms of language and structural devices but did not really elaborate on how these techniques helped them to present their ideas and perspectives. Some candidates offered a range of comparisons but did not support their points with references to the texts, which limited their achievement.

Less successful candidates made few comparative comments. They tended to respond by listing comparisons one after the other often with no references, or by listing quotations from each text with no further comment. They sometimes gave summaries of the texts and concluded their response with a brief overview of one or two similarities. Some less successful candidates focused on inappropriate points of comparison such as the use of full stops or commas which showed little understanding of the writers' ideas and perspectives. Some candidates paraphrased the texts, retelling the passages or directly lifted from the texts.

Some examiners commented that there were more unfinished or blank responses to this question than any other. This may be a time management issue or candidates prioritising Section B and C over Section A. Candidates should be encouraged to respond to every task.

Centres will need to continue to work with candidates to make sure they have a clear understanding of valid ways of responding to texts. This should include how to analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve their effects and how to write comparative responses.

This is a very successful response to Question 7.

- 7 Compare how the writers of Text One and Text Two present their ideas and perspectives about being outdoors.

Support your answer with examples from **both** texts.

(15)

Both texts present their respective experiences and ~~of~~ of being outdoors. However, while Text One is ~~inform~~ informative and inspiring, ~~the~~ Text 2 is descriptive and the negative personal experience on a track outdoors.

While text 1 constantly uses positive language to illustrate the benefits of being outdoors, 'extremely positive', 'enjoyable' and 'magnificent', text 2 uses negative ~~and~~ language 'weariness and cool', 'hell', 'struggle' and 'dispiriting'. So, while text 1 wants to encourage and inspire 'young people', by using a chatty and ~~inform~~ informal tone*, text 2 presents the gruelling hardships he faced, while attempting his walk. * 'telly'.

Moreover, while text 1 is adapted from an article - & hence uses subheadings that summarise their points - , text 2 is

adapted from a travel book and hence includes more vivid imagery and descriptions. The use of subheadings for the 'definitive' reasons, allows Dunbar to clearly and easily showcase her ideas and ~~benefits~~ benefits of being outdoors. This reflects how she believes in the simplicity of adding it into your routine, ~~the way~~ she uses a list to state many ways that can cater to each person's needs, 'evening walk, ... in your lunch break ... get off the couch on the weekend'. These ~~reliable~~ relatable scenarios, as well as the inclusion of her ~~story~~ personal journey 'I still watch cat videos on Facebook', 'until I rediscovered' and 'we're all guilty of it', ~~also~~ allows readers to feel less guilty and take inspiration from Dunbar and her ideas. While, the descriptive story of Bryson, is ~~used to paint the vivid~~ ~~sight and~~ use of olfactory, 'chuckling stream' and ~~on~~ imagery 'Sun was shining' to set the scene, contrasts the 'struggle' and 'pale, shaking thighs' ~~th~~ to emphasise his negative experience.

Furthermore, both writers use first person 'I' and direct address 'you'. While Dunbar constantly ~~add~~ addresses her young ~~as~~ people audience, to create a more engaging and ~~personal~~ inspiring article - and ~~as~~ text 1 is about Dunbar encouraging others to go outdoors, here focuses on the audience, with occasional personal inputs - Bryson mainly focuses on 'I' and his ~~is~~ retelling of his story, while the direct address is used to illustrate and showcase the emotions the grueling struggle he faced.

Text one uses data and sources to back up her points 'many psychological studies' and 'scientific studies have proved' to accentuate how her reasons are 'definitive' and very valid. This reliability shows the confidence Dunbar has in her ideas and perspectives, which allows the reader to gain a greater ~~can~~ connection with her reasoning, and are more likely to implement her ideas. In text 2, the use of short sentences 'every step was a struggle' and the repetition of the phrase 'It was hell', is

used to instigate and emphasise the 'struggle' and challenges the writer faced.

While Dunbar uses rhetorical ~~gas~~ questions to 'why?' to engage the reader and provide more information - reflecting how she is presenting her ideas to be taken action on 'make that conscious decision' - Bryson uses them 'what else can you do?' to not only making the readers reflect on his experience, but also to mirror the questioning thoughts and lack of hope he had. Similarly, the use of exclamatory sentences in text 1 'outdoors is our natural environment!' creates an upbeat and energising tone; ~~subtly~~ where Dunbar is subtly pushing the reader to take note and reflect on her surroundings; while text two uses 'nearly there now!' to juxtapose the 'pitiless deception', illustrating the treacherous and tiring experience.

Both ~~readers~~ writers urge the readers to ~~to~~ that 'I can vouch' and 'believe me' to increase credibility of their respective opinions; as the ~~gas~~ reasons of

Durban has to trustworthily and purposeful for the readers to believe them, and the gemelling experience of ~~Bayson~~ Bayson is too shocking to be understood.

Additionally, text one uses lists 'fatigue, depression, hair loss...' and 'combat many health issues... high blood pressure, heart disease and obesity.' This not only adds a stronger reasoning to Durban's points - negatives of not exercising, and positives of being outdoors, but the rhythm of the lists leads the reader on and makes them more knowledgeable of the side effects on not being outdoors. This exemplifies Durban's strong belief in being outdoors and ~~how~~ presents her ideas as credible, engaging and realistic. The use of lists in text 2, 'brown trees, brown earth, fewer brown leaves', creates a tiring and ~~representing~~ breathless feeling as for the reader - reflective of the 'ever receding' hills and tiredness of the author. This presents Bayson's perspectives as frustrated, tiring and ~~hope~~ a struggle.



This is a very full response which meets all of the Level 5 criteria. There is a varied and comprehensive range of comparisons including the contrasting perspectives on walking, the different ways descriptive writing is used and the use of first person. Analysis of writers' ideas and perspectives is clearly demonstrated and references are balanced across the texts and fully support the points being made. Mark = 15, Level 5.



Note how the candidate compares both texts throughout the response and considers a comprehensive variety of different comparisons.

This is a less successful response to Question 7.

7 Compare how the writers of Text One and Text Two present their ideas and perspectives about being outdoors.

Support your answer with examples from **both** texts.

(15)

Text one displays an outsiders perspective on exercise and what the estimated outcome of going outdoors would be. The writer encourages her readers to go outdoors by telling them about the potential outcomes, but doesn't show direct proof. The text is an informative but personal article written in an informal manner to try and draw in their target audience more.

Text two encourages the reader to go outdoors by letting us experience how it feels through his writing. He is truthful about the negatives of going outdoors, but he shows that it's worth it through his description of the end result. This ~~passage~~ passage is a personal formal piece that uses creative writing to describe a real life experience.

Whilst both texts are trying to display the same message, they go about it very different ways. They have different structures, one being an information piece whereas the other lets you actually experience what they're encouraging as well as being personal in their own separate ways. The first text uses minor personal anecdotes, such as admitting she still goes online, but they aren't as in-depth. On the other hand, the

second text is primarily a personal anecdote, with all of the information being from his experience instead of statistics and other sources.

Both texts achieve the same ~~that~~ goal of encouraging readers to spend more time outdoors, they just had different approaches and writing styles.



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Examiner Comments

This response makes several valid comparisons, e.g. about the differing use of personal anecdotes in the texts and offers valid explanations of these. The points made are not supported by references to the text and so the response does not go beyond Level 2. Mark = 6, Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

Always remember to support your comparisons with examples from the texts.

Question 8

There was some evidence of good teaching and learning in the responses to this section. Most candidates understood the requirement of the task and were able to use the appropriate register for a talk to peers. It was generally felt that most candidates engaged with this task and some produced lively and convincing responses. The most successful responses had a strong sense of audience and purpose and included personal touches and rhetorical language to engage the audience. Many candidates were able to adopt an appropriate register and there was clear evidence of an understanding of the purpose, audience and format required, although some examiners commented that a few candidates struggled to adopt an appropriate register.

AO1

Most candidates referred to the three bullet points and managed to cover a reasonable number of points. Most were able to make fairly equal use of the texts, although some examiners noted that Text 2 sometimes was referenced less successfully. Some candidates were able to make appropriate use of their own experiences. The first and second bullet points were often covered in the most detail, with different walks including dog walks, city walks and hiking. Oddly a number of candidates identified jogging as a form of walking. More attention was paid to the benefits of walking than to the other two bullet points in some responses. For bullet point 2 there was a lot of borrowing from Text 1, but most did manage to use their own words to some extent. Some did get side-tracked into writing about problems you might encounter if you didn't exercise for bullet point 3, but most did answer it as intended. Many were inspired by Text 2 to write about physical problems and heavy bags, but there were also a few sobering ones who wrote about the danger of getting robbed and attacked in the city they lived in. Others wrote about physical dangers such as snakes and bears or the danger of dehydration. There was also evidence that many candidates live in physical environments where it is too hot to walk outside most of the time and too hostile to ramble in the remainder.

More successful candidates were able to refer perceptively to information and ideas whilst maintaining the required tone and register. These responses were more balanced and offered a good range of points on all three bullets from both texts. They were able to include a wide range of ideas and cover the bullet points in detail, adding their own examples to make their talk more persuasive. They used the passages skilfully and were genuinely persuasive in the way they presented the benefits of walking and going outside and cleverly blended in ideas from the texts.

Less successful candidates were able to select and interpret a small range of bullet points, sometimes paraphrasing the content of both texts. Some of the less successful responses were brief, did not have much focus on the ideas in the passages, and did not offer balance between the texts and bullet points. In the least successful responses there was evidence of much lifting from the original texts without any attempt to re-work the material.

AO4

Most candidates wrote using an appropriate tone and register for their perceived audience. They were able to communicate their ideas clearly and sometimes persuasively, with a clear sense of audience. Most responses were written in an appropriate style for a talk to peers and made use of features like direct address, humour and rhetorical questions to create a convincingly chatty and persuasive tone. There were a lot who started with something jokey like: 'I know you'll be shocked to see me talking about the benefits of exercise.' There was the usual mix of familiarity: 'you all know me', and comments aimed at audience participation: 'put your hands up if you have walked to school this week'.

Successful responses were lively and engaging with a good personal voice, clearly addressing an audience of peers. They used a wide range of techniques to communicate their ideas often adopting a highly persuasive tone and selecting techniques such as humour, direct address and rhetorical questions to communicate their ideas. They offered clear and well-organised responses adapting form, tone and register in an effective and sophisticated manner. They were able to relate directly to the teenage audience, for example commenting on 'teen issues' such as 'nagging parents' or 'revising for exams' or by using anecdotes and personal experiences to support the benefits of walking.

Less successful candidates communicated at a basic level and had problems sustaining the required register throughout their response. Some did not convey any sense that this was supposed to be a talk, writing in a style that resembled a letter, an article or an essay. They often had issues with clarity as they had weak writing skills and this impeded their ability to communicate clearly.

AO5

There were some examples of successful responses with good levels of accuracy.

Most candidates were able to use spelling, punctuation and grammar to make their meaning clear. They were able to communicate clearly with reasonably accurate sentence structures and a range of vocabulary. Spelling was often correct and many candidates tried hard to use a range of sentence structures and punctuation for effect. Most employed some paragraphing, sometimes using the given bullet points to help them. However some examiners commented that although spelling was often accurate, expression, grammar and punctuation were not always secure. Some examiners commented that it was pleasing to see evidence that candidates were checking and correcting their work.

More successful candidates used a varied range of correctly spelt vocabulary with some ambition and used a range of appropriate punctuation and different sentence structures to help them create particular effects. These responses employed accurate paragraphing which could be for effect. There was often evidence of proofreading.

Less successful candidates sometimes struggled to communicate their ideas and their language controls were not always secure, especially grammar. Some examiners commented that weaker candidates had problems with grammar and expression, despite good spelling and punctuation. Other examiners noted that punctuation was an issue with candidates writing long, one sentence paragraphs or using very little sentence punctuation.

Common errors commented on by examiners were: missing basic sentence punctuation; the use of very long, unstructured sentences; comma splicing; missing or misused apostrophes; problems with homophones; misspelling of basic vocabulary; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences as well as random capital letters within sentences; verb tenses and other grammatical errors.

Centres should continue to work to ensure candidates have a clear idea of how to adapt ideas from texts and how to write appropriately and accurately for different audiences and purposes.

This is a very successful response to Question 8.

- 8 You have been asked to give a talk to your peers about the importance of walking and getting outside.

You should include:

- advice about different types of walks
- the benefits of walking outside
- the problems you might experience.

Write the text of your talk.

Think carefully about the purpose of your talk and the audience for whom it is intended.

(30)

Greetings my fellow peers. I am Abigail Pennington, and I will be talking to you about the ~~important~~ importance of walking and going into the great outdoors. I will be giving you advice about the different types of walks you can do. The amazing benefits of walking outside. Also some of the problems you might experience ~~as~~ along the way.

There are many different types of walks you can embark on. You could go on a 10 mile hike ~~•~~ up a snowy mountain. ~~•~~ Alternatively, you could stroll around a sunny park with your dog. The advice I would give you about what type of walk to go on

It is what you want to see on your walk and your fitness level. I would advise you if you wanted to go on the 10 mile hike, having never done a hike or 10 mile in one go, not to do it. Also think about the people you might want to go with and what they could achieve. I wouldn't ~~can~~ do a 1 mile stroll with an athletic friend for example. Remember to always walk on paths designated for walks, and to not walk through private property (like a farmer's field).

The benefits of just walking outside are ~~by~~ huge. One, it will improve your mental health and distract you from the stresses of life. Two, ~~it~~ it will improve your physical health, even a mile a day will make you fitter. Finally three, you ~~will~~ will get to see the wonderful natural world. Whether it be a city pigeon or a ~~mag~~ ~~mag~~ majestic stag in the woods, I ~~hope~~ ~~hope~~ hope you will see something that makes you go wow.

It's not as easy as it sounds though, there ~~are~~ are some problems you might experience.

Always check the weather forecast before going on a walk. ~~there~~ You don't want to dress for a thunderstorm ~~when~~ when it's in fact thirty degrees and ~~sun~~ ~~so~~ sunny. Make sure you have the proper equipment for the walk you will take. For example a water bottle if you ~~are~~ are taking a walk in the sun, or a headtorch if you are taking a walk in the dark.

There is a chance that you will get injured on a walk so always make sure you have your phone on hand in case of emergencies. If you fell and twisted your ankle for example and there was ~~there~~ no one about, you could still phone a friend or family member to ~~put~~ pick you up. If it was something more serious, like a broken leg from falling down the side of a mountain from that 10 mile hike, then you could call 999 in a flash.

(and domestic)

~~Try to always~~ Be mindful of wild animals on walk, especially in rural areas. Boar, adder, and even cows are some of the animals that you must be mindful of on walks.

staying on the path and not going into restricted areas will mean not disturbing animals in most ~~cases~~ cases. Be aware of insects and use antisept repellent, especially in the ~~summer~~ ~~summer~~ summer. I know insects don't sound like a threat, but they carry lots of harmful infection and ~~deases~~ diseases with them.

To conclude, taking a walk outdoors is a must to a happy and healthy lifestyle. You will see many wonderful and interesting things along the way. Do remember to stay safe, and not forget the things you will need on your walk. Only do the walk you are capable of achieving with your skill set. ~~And~~ Always be respectful and mindful of your surroundings as well. ~~Th~~

Thank you for being an attentive audience and listening to my talk.



AO1: The material is persuasive throughout and there is a wide range of relevant, well-focused points. Mark = 10, Level 5.

AO4: The writing is perceptive, subtle and sharply focused on the purpose and audience with only the occasional lapse. Mark = 12, Level 5.

AO5: Whilst there are a small number of errors, this does manipulate complex ideas with a range of features and an extensive vocabulary. Mark 8, Level 5.



Note how the candidate has covered all the bullet points in detail and maintained the sharp focus on purpose and audience throughout the response.

This is a less successful response to Question 8.

- 8 You have been asked to give a talk to your peers about the importance of walking and getting outside.

You should include:

- advice about different types of walks
- the benefits of walking outside
- the problems you might experience.

Write the text of your talk.

Think carefully about the purpose of your talk and the audience for whom it is intended.

(30)

~~Now I know you don't~~ really like speeches or talks like this (i get you) but we like seriously gotta stop ignoring our health! I really don't think we've been spending enough ~~the~~ time outside like we did when we were younger. the benefits of walking or even just being outside are sure to get your attention. First, obviously, our appearance changes the healthier we get! we lose weight ~~and~~ and gain confidence! ~~Not~~ to mention how much healthier our eyes get after taking a break from the toxic media which is so easy to ~~get~~ get our hands on with our phones. You could try taking strolls in the park while listening to music! Or perhaps you'd want to walk by the canals and see the geese take their adorable babies with them. Whatever you choose make sure you don't get

discouraged by minor inconveniences ~~like~~ like getting too tired and feeling the weight pull you down. Just ~~make~~ make sure you have some water with you and take breaks but try to get back up and keep going. ~~There~~ There is more to this than what meets the eye. ~~With~~ With all the benefits why ~~wouldn't~~ wouldn't you like to spend more time outside? I hope you think about this and try to be healthier and happier by spending more time outside and I hope you have a great day! Thank you for listening to my talk.



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Examiner Comments

A01: Although the response touches on all of the bullets, the third bullet is only briefly covered in terms of the problems they might face. Some points made are undeveloped and quite thin. There is not enough evidence of secure appreciation of the audience to move beyond Level 2. Mark = 4, Level 2.

A04 : The response is clearly communicated, but a lack of detail means there is not enough evidence to move beyond some grasp of purpose and reader and this is a straightforward use of form, tone and register. Mark = 5, Level 3.

A05: The writing is accurate, but the brevity of the response means there is a lack of range in evidence. No paragraphs are used. Mark = 4, Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

This response could have been improved by having a wider range of ideas used from the two texts and using a stronger register.

Question 9

AO4

Examiners commented positively on some candidates' responses to this question. However some examiners thought that some candidates struggled to develop and sustain a response.

The topic 'Fresh air and exercise are the keys to happiness' was accessible and many candidates who chose this question had clear and informed opinions.

Most candidates were able to communicate their ideas successfully and understood the nature of discursive writing. They were able to put forward reasonable points and explain and justify them. Ideas presented included: family and friends were more important; the effect of endless revising; the impact of COVID; mental and physical health benefits.

More successful candidates adopted a persuasive and argumentative tone and had clearly been prepared to write this kind of response. These responses had a clear structure with a strong introduction and conclusion. They generally took a broader view and looked at the positives and negatives of exercises and generally came to a more balanced judgement. They included anecdotes and examples that illustrated their ideas in a thoughtful way. Some candidates disagreed, quite persuasively, that 'fresh air and exercise are not the only keys to happiness'. Some referred to people who could not get fresh air and exercise because of their circumstances and made the sensible point that fresh air and exercise were important but could not guarantee happiness. It was clear that these candidates had been well-prepared in meeting the demands of this type of task and had a range of appropriate skills to tackle the task in a focused and sustained manner. There was a good range of rhetorical techniques used such as the use of questions, expert opinion, anecdotes and listing, to convince the reader to their own side of the argument.

Less successful candidates had problems with both maintaining a clear argument and structuring their responses. They sometimes struggled to find enough ideas and these responses became repetitive or were brief. Some did not discuss and just wrote about fresh air being good for you in as many ways as they could think of. They often relied heavily on the texts for their ideas.

Centres need to ensure that candidates who choose this option are well prepared in argumentative, discursive and rhetorical techniques and are able to develop and sustain their ideas effectively.

AO5

AO5 comments are the same across all three options (Question 9, 10 and 11).

Most candidates were able to develop and express information and ideas in a suitable way with the use of appropriate structural and grammatical features. They used a range of correctly spelt vocabulary and were able to punctuate with some control. Most were able to communicate successfully even if there were errors. Examiners did comment that there was a lack of variety in the use of punctuation.

More successful responses had full control of spelling, punctuation and grammar. These candidates were able to use a wide range of structural devices together with accurate spelling of a wide vocabulary and correctly use a wide range of punctuation often used for effect.

Less successful candidates had difficulty communicating clearly. They were often repetitive with their word choices and sentence structures and had many errors. They had poor language controls and weak paragraphing. There were often numerous errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but most examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression such as problems with tenses and sentence structure, including missing words. Some examiners also commented on the use of over-ambitious vocabulary which was not effective or appropriate. Some examiners noted that the use of paragraphing was an issue for some candidates. These problems limited the effectiveness of the communication.

Common errors commented on by examiners were: missing basic sentence punctuation; comma splicing; missing or misused apostrophes; problems with homophones; misspelling of basic vocabulary; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences as well as random capital letters within sentences; grammatical errors such as problems with sentence structures, subject-verb agreement and verb tenses.

Centres need to focus on developing accurate and effective grammatical structuring and punctuation to enable candidates to express themselves clearly and access the higher mark bands.

This is a response to Question 9.

EITHER

9 'Fresh air and exercise are the keys to happiness.' Discuss.

(Total for Question 9 = 30 marks)

OR

10 Write a story (true or imaginary) entitled 'A Difficult Decision'.

(Total for Question 10 = 30 marks)

OR

11 Describe your favourite walk.

(Total for Question 11 = 30 marks)

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 9 ☒ Question 10 ☐ Question 11 ☐

Some people would agree that fresh air and exercise are the keys to happiness but I ^{don't} understand why some wouldn't.

Some people might assume that by exercise people mean that you have to be skinny/fit to be happy

which is of course very untrue. Although many researches do show that physical exercise can improve mental health.⁵⁶

Fresh air and just being outside in the sun will give you a good dose of vitamin D. A vitamin D ~~including~~ deficiency has many symptoms including fatigue and depression therefore Fresh air/increasing vitamin D will ³⁷infact make you happier.

However, Some could say that getting fresh air/going outside would decrease your mood depending on the weather. For example if it was raining you would obviously feel sad ^{and} maybe a bit irritated.

Being cooped up indoors can increase stress levels and make it harder to sleep at night which obviously will increase fatigue. There are so many things to do with staying indoors and not being active that, ~~obviously~~ cause sadness and depression

yet i still do not believe that fresh air and exercise are the keys to happiness. my reasoning for this is, there are many different things things that make everyone happy. Not everybody has the same brain, body, likes or dislikes. For example, a person with social anxiety will not always get happiness from going outside. Some people get the most amount of happiness from just sitting down and watching their favourite movie tucked in their bed.

Some people may say to that, never mind a singular persons likes, its human nature to spend all your time outdoors and moving.

In conclusion, my opinions on "Fresh air and exercise are the keys to happiness" are that it is false, those are not the only things you need to be happy.



AO4: The response communicates clearly and demonstrates a clear sense of purpose. There is a range of points supporting the candidate's argument and form, tone and register are appropriate throughout, but lack the effectiveness required for Level 4. Mark = 11, Level 3.

AO5: The response is paragraphed appropriately and spelling is generally accurate, including words with irregular patterns. The response does not demonstrate the wide, selective vocabulary required for Level 4. Mark = 6, Level 3.



Think about how more development of ideas and a more persuasive use of form, tone and register might have improved this response.

Question 10

Question 10 was the most popular question.

Examiners, as always, commented on how much they enjoyed reading the responses in this section.

AO4

Examiners commented positively on the quality of some of the responses to the title 'A Difficult Decision'.

Candidates interpreted this question in a wide range of ways. There was a wide range of difficult decisions, from straightforward material choices to more emotive choices around relationships, choice of further education college, friendships and other moral dilemmas. Difficult choices were identified such as about moving to other schools, different countries or family issues, eg which parent to go with after a divorce. Some were focused on personal events or seemingly personal events such as friendship issues, a problem with a relationship, telling someone you wanted to split up with them. Some of the decisions were life or death ones involving blood transfusions, medical dilemmas or organ donation. Other ideas included deciding whether to steal something or deciding who was to survive in a disaster. A number of candidates successfully used personal experiences to inform their narrative.

Examiners did comment on a number of unnecessarily gruesome and gory stories. It was felt that these were perhaps influenced by themes on contemporary television, films and computer games. These unpleasant plots sometimes struggled to maintain focus on the title.

Occasionally candidates were over-ambitious, producing extremely long responses with complicated plot-lines. Often candidates chose to reveal the difficult decision at the end of their writing and, whilst in some cases this appeared to be a deliberate strategy, examiners commented that sometimes it seemed to be an afterthought.

Most candidates were able to communicate clearly, with an appropriate sense of purpose and some apt use of form, tone and register. They were able to create a narrative with a central plot device and believable characters. They tried to bring the qualities of surprise, drama, suspense and excitement to their narratives. There were attempts to include flashbacks, dialogue, character and setting descriptions.

More successful candidates were able to write entertaining and engaging responses that were sharply focused on the task. These responses had fewer characters which were well-developed and a well-thought-out plot, designed to entertain. They were convincing with believable dialogue and well-constructed plot lines. They were able to use figurative techniques and wide-ranging vocabulary deliberately to achieve particular effects for their reader. These responses were tightly plotted and covered a limited timescale.

Less successful candidates lacked development of ideas or the ability to maintain a narrative or tended to write basic narratives without any great awareness of form, tone and register. They struggled with clarity, with over-complicated or muddled storylines and weak endings that were not closely related to the events that had unfolded. Their responses were often lengthy with repetitive and unfocused plot ideas. Sometimes the difficult decision was added at the end of the story with little sign-posting making the response to the title tenuous. Examiners commented that some less successful responses seemed to be a prepared story which they barely adapted for the given title.

Centres need to ensure candidates have a secure understanding of narrative techniques and the ability to develop a coherent personal response without relying on plots from other sources.

AO5

Most candidates were able to develop and express information and ideas in suitable way with the use of appropriate structural and grammatical features. They used a range of correctly spelt vocabulary and were able to punctuate with some control. Most were able to communicate successfully even if there were errors. Examiners did comment that there was a lack of variety in the use of punctuation.

More successful responses had full control of spelling, punctuation and grammar. These candidates were able to use a wide range of structural devices together with accurate spelling of a wide vocabulary and correctly use a wide range of punctuation often used for effect.

Less successful candidates had difficulty communicating clearly. They were often repetitive with their word choices and sentence structures and had many errors. They had poor language controls and weak paragraphing. There were often numerous errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but most examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression such as problems with tenses and sentence structure, including missing words. Some examiners also commented on the use of over-ambitious vocabulary which was not effective or appropriate. Some examiners noted that the use of paragraphing was an issue for some candidates. These problems limited the effectiveness of the communication.

Common errors commented on by examiners were: missing basic sentence punctuation; comma splicing; missing or misused apostrophes; problems with homophones; misspelling of basic vocabulary; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences as well as random capital letters within sentences; grammatical errors such as problems with sentence structures, subject-verb agreement and verb tenses.

Centres need to focus on developing accurate and effective grammatical structuring and punctuation to enable candidates to express themselves clearly and access the higher mark bands.

This is a very successful response to Question 10.

A Difficult Decision

My stomach fluttered. My hands, slick with sweat, grasped at one another in my lap. Squeezed between my two older siblings in the backseat of our car, I leaned forward to see out of the side windows. I was trying to drink in every sight, commit every little detail to memory. After all, I thought, This might be the last time I see it

We remained silent as familiar sights flashed by. The inevitable crept closer and closer, and ~~my~~ ~~mouth~~ was overcome by a mix of dread and excitement. With every mile we got closer to LAX, the ~~whirlwind~~ whirlwind in my mind spun faster. All the while, my eyes ~~remained~~ flicked from landmark to landmark, taking mental snapshots.

We arrived at the airport. My entire body seemed to be buzzing, charged with anxiety. We unloaded our luggage from the ~~the~~ boot. Each family member took a piece. On the other end of our journey, there would only be two of us to carry the luggage. A lump rose in my throat and ~~in~~ I forced it down. I am not going to cry.

We walked into the terminal and made our way to the Virgin Airlines stall to have our luggage weighed. I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw the length of the queue. Every moment, every last second, with my mom and siblings counted. ~~Remember~~ The ~~patrons~~ patrons around us grinned and chatted happily, soon to be on their way home after a Southern Californian holiday. Their accents stood out starkly, and it occurred to me that soon enough they would sound familiar to me.

We grew closer and closer to the front of the queue. The family talked amongst ourselves just as we always had, ignoring the fact that these would be our last moments together. My sister complimented my hair, and I complimented her outfit. Behind every conversation was an underlying sadness, a sense of finality.

At last we were at the front of the line.

The employees weighed our suitcases. They were exactly fifty pounds each, the maximum weight limit. Of course, we didn't have to remove ~~any~~ anything, and I winced at the loss of any extra time with the rest of my family.

We left the area and found somewhere quiet to exchange our goodbyes. My heart raced, my throat constricted, and I wondered if we had made the right decision. We hugged and kissed, then did it again, and at last my dad and I turned and headed towards security and the transatlantic journey ~~before~~ beyond.

And although we didn't know it then, ~~our~~ our difficult decision would be worthwhile indeed.



AO4: This is an engaging, perceptive and well-crafted response. The candidate is in control of structure and tone throughout and the idea of the difficult decision is used as an effective ending, showing sophisticated use of form. The overall effect is subtle and perceptive and leaves the reader wanting to know more. Mark = 20, Level 5.

AO5: The candidate uses a range of structural devices to sustain interest throughout, shifting effectively between shorter and longer sentences and paragraphs. A range of punctuation is used to create varied sentence structures for specific effect. Vocabulary is precise and used strategically to create effects. Mark = 10, Level 5.



Think about how the narrative is cleverly controlled and engages the reader. The opening sentence immediately grabs the reader's attention. Note the wide variety of sentence structures used.

Question 11

AO4

Some candidates produced well-written responses that were fully focused on the task of describing a favourite walk. However examiners also commented that a significant number of candidates did not focus on the descriptive nature of the task and wrote narrative responses focusing on re-telling the events of a day out rather than describing the walk itself.

Candidates chose a range of walks to describe. Some candidates focused on current walks they take, normally to school or to the shops with their friends, whereas others discussed a walk that had been particularly memorable for them in the past, eg a walk that they had done on holiday, describing the exotic scenery. Some were very familiar landscapes, others were more unusual, eg the walk to a concert, and some were based in fantasy. One successful response, which described a daily walk to school in Kashmir, prompted one examiner to comment on how privileged examiners are to get a glimpse of the lives of others.

Most candidates were able to communicate clearly, with an appropriate sense of purpose and some appropriate use of form, tone and register. Most responses focused at least partially on description of a walk and were able to take the reader along on their walk, although examiners commented that some responses were too narrative-like, with pockets of description. Some described a scene, sometimes in some detail, without including details of walking through the scene.

More successful candidates had been prepared for the requirements of this response and often demonstrated a focused and sustained attempt at crafting a piece of description. These candidates employed a range of techniques appropriately, managing to create a sense of movement along the walk, describing what was seen and experienced along the way. Some pieces had an impressive range of vocabulary, clearly painting a picture with their words. They maintained a clear focus on describing a walk using visual and auditory experiences.

Less successful responses were often undeveloped or unclear. These responses often struggled to describe the walk and were often narrative-like. They spent so much time on getting to the walk that the description or account of the walk was limited to a few lines or a paragraph. Some seemed to use a prepared essay of a described scene and did not make it relevant to the idea of a walk.

Centres need to ensure candidates are aware of the techniques they can use in descriptive writing and also ensure candidates develop a varied vocabulary which they can use appropriately.

AO5

Most candidates were able to develop and express information and ideas in suitable way with the use of appropriate structural and grammatical features. They used a range of correctly spelt vocabulary and were able to punctuate with some control. Most were able to communicate successfully even if there were errors. Examiners did comment that there was a lack of variety in the use of punctuation.

More successful responses had full control of spelling, punctuation and grammar. These candidates were able to use a wide range of structural devices together with accurate spelling of a wide vocabulary and correctly use a wide range of punctuation often used for effect.

Less successful candidates had difficulty communicating clearly. They were often repetitive with their word choices and sentence structures and had many errors. They had poor language controls and weak paragraphing. There were often numerous errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but most examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression such as problems with tenses and sentence structure, including missing words. Some examiners also commented on the use of over-ambitious vocabulary which was not effective or appropriate. Some examiners noted that the use of paragraphing was an issue for some candidates. These problems limited the effectiveness of the communication.

Common errors commented on by examiners were: missing basic sentence punctuation; comma splicing; missing or misused apostrophes; problems with homophones; misspelling of basic vocabulary; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences as well as random capital letters within sentences; grammatical errors such as problems with sentence structures, subject-verb agreement and verb tenses.

Centres need to focus on developing accurate and effective grammatical structuring and punctuation to enable candidates to express themselves clearly and access the higher mark bands.

This is a successful response to Question 11.

Ravens caw in the pine wood ahead.
The bitter wind bites my face.
The patchwork country spreads out before me
like a perfect painting in an art
gallery.

I walk on, my clothes billowing around me
in the "seemingly furious wind, my hands
numb but still clutching my binoculars as

I closely observe a ~~beautifile~~ beautiful Pied flycatcher.

I jog down a steep slope to the sound of a gurgling, ~~AAA~~ clear stream, I cross through the clear water, careful of the rocky bottom, ~~My~~ my trusty walking boots don't let in a drop of water.

I hike up ~~ref~~ another gravel path to see a regal, dapple grey stallion grazing peacefully on a patch of rich green grass next to his wooden stable.

A busy farmer herds sheep in his sky blue tractor as the sheep run from the growling vehicle.

I ~~sa~~ scarcely believe I have seen so many sheep in one place. Their content grazing was to be seen in almost every field - I smile as I watch the excited lambs bounce and play by the gaze of their protective mothers.

The only noise to be heard was the

whistling wind, the caw of ravens and the ~~busy~~ so busily grazing sheep, this was true peace and ~~quite~~ quiet - although not entirely peaceful - I sigh at the beauty of the moors and countryside and continue to walk.

I come to a ~~formidible~~ (although small in size) forest, it's was like walking from day into night the ~~canopy~~ canopy was so thick. My footsteps are almost silent as I walk along a pine needle blanket that was the path. I gasp in shock as I see nestled around great pine ~~fur~~-tree trunk, a dusty white-grey sheep skull, staring at me with missing eye sockets. Later seeing a second sheep skull ~~no~~ felt a little like a bad omen, by this was nature after all.

I make a slightly hasty exit out of the forest and head up a rocky hill - up and up I hike.

Past more fields.

Past yet more sheep.

What I saw then nearly surprised out of me

my last remaining breath.

A fair view so breath-takingly beautiful stood before me. I stood on the edge of a cliff-like hill looking out over a seemingly endless view of the patchwork countryside. Little white dots spots that ~~field~~ were sheep spotted the scene, bigger black dots that were cows dotted fewer fields, ~~the~~ mighty buzzards and red kites soared ahead, on the hunt for mice and voles below, the now blue sky watched over it all which was also patchy with crisp white clouds. ~~tiny~~ windy country roads snaked around the scene on them were ~~tracture~~ and only a few cars.

I stand there in true ~~disbelieve~~ amazement, it seems like the whole world is spread before me and I'm stood above it.

I take many pictures but none will show - maybe some - but never all the true beauty of the view. Only in the now can I experience the sense of calmness and peace it gives me.

The views I have seen, the animals I have observed, the streams I've crossed, the ~~hired~~ hills I've climbed and the adventures I've had will forever leave a painted portrait of it in my memory - as does every nature walk we experience.

"A walk through the Welsh countryside"
- Lily Clatworthy.



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Examiner Comments

AO4: The candidate communicates successfully and there is a secure realisation of purpose. There is some effective use of form, tone and register and some crafting of sentences and structure such as 'I come to a formidable (although small in size) forest...' Mark = 16, Level 4.

AO5: There is some ambitious vocabulary, although there are quite a lot of spelling errors. A wide range of features are used, such as brackets and the short paragraphs. Some deliberate effect is created. Mark = 7, Level 4.



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Examiner Tip

Notice how the writer is fully focused on describing a walk using descriptions of the experiences, sights and sounds.

Paper Summary

Most successful candidates:

- read the texts with insight and engagement
- were able to explore language and structure and show how these are used by writers to achieve effects in response to Questions 3 and 6
- were able to select a wide range of comparisons and explore the writers' ideas and perspectives in response to Question 7
- were able to select and adapt relevant information from the texts for Question 8
- wrote clearly with a good sense of audience and purpose in an appropriate register in response to Question 8
- engaged the reader with creative writing that was clearly expressed, well developed and controlled (Questions 9, 10 and 11)
- used ambitious vocabulary appropriately
- wrote with accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Least successful candidates:

- did not engage fully with the texts
- were not able to identify language and structure or made little comment on how these are used by writers to achieve effects in response to Questions 3 and 6
- were not able to compare the texts or offered very limited comparisons in response to Question 7
- sometimes narrated the texts in response to Questions 3, 6 and 7
- were not able to select and adapt relevant information for Question 8
- did not write in an appropriate register in response to Question 8
- sometimes copied from the original texts in response to Question 8
- were not able to sustain and develop ideas clearly in response to Section C (Questions 9, 10 and 11)
- did not demonstrate accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Grade boundaries

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

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

