

Examiners' Report

June 2025

Int GCSE English Language B 4EB1 01R

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Introduction

The texts about unusual friendships were accessible across the full range of abilities and candidates were able to engage with the tasks and respond appropriately. Examiners commented that there was a strong sense of the subject matter being something which was familiar to the candidates and it was something they could respond positively to.

Examiners commented that there was some evidence of good teaching and learning in preparation for this examination in the responses seen and they commented that most candidates seemed well-prepared on the whole.

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 a few 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 the candidate is 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 retrieval question on Text One which does not require candidates to use their own words.

The majority of candidates correctly identified one of the points made about the nomads' arrival in Kabul, from the given section. The most popular responses included: 'could hear the mewling of the sheep', 'could hear the baaing of the goats' and 'could hear the jingling of the bells on the camels'. All bullet points in the mark scheme were seen. Occasional incorrect responses used ideas from outside the line references or did not give the full point, missing out key information e.g. 'long, colourful shawls' without identifying who this referred to.

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

Question 2

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

The majority of candidates successfully identified an activity that Hassan does from the given lines, commonly 'washed up', 'prepared breakfast' or 'made the bed'. Incorrect responses were either from outside the line references or confused Hassan with the narrator.

A number of candidates wasted time copying down too much or offered too many points which was not necessary.

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

Question 3

The question asks the candidate how the writer presents his relationship with Hassan.

The majority of candidates understood the text and were able to engage with the content of the passage and understood the close relationship between the narrator and Hassan. Examiners commented that most candidates demonstrated at least some understanding of the text and some awareness of the devices used to present ideas. They were able to select examples of language use, make some relevant points and provide some appropriate references but they did not always explain how these features helped the writer to achieve his effects.

Most candidates were able to show some understanding of and comment on language and structure. They often described the content and plot of the passage, using quotations which, however, were not supported by explanation or exploration. Some candidates felt the need to comment on every paragraph of the text and so provided many quotations to support their points, but this often lacked an exploration of the language and structure. Many candidates commented on the use of descriptive devices used, including onomatopoeia to describe the scenery/setting but did not relate this to how their friendship was presented.

Responses included comments on: the repetition of 'Never mind'; the use of short sentences for effect e.g. 'Neither is religion'; the use of tricolons e.g. 'hide-and-seek, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians' and the idyllic description of their childhood: 'one long lazy summer day'. Sometimes candidates made generic comments such as: 'this connected to the reader' or 'this was very engaging to the reader' with little or no explanation of how it was engaging or how it connected to the reader.

More successful candidates showed a thorough understanding of the writer's techniques and these candidates were able to engage with the significance of language using a variety of examples. They focused on how the writer presents his experiences and were able to engage with the writer's use of language by commenting on the techniques and how they were used for effect. They often embedded short, purposeful quotations and used them to support a detailed analysis of language and narrative perspective. They were able to explore devices such as metaphors e.g. 'the face of Afghanistan is that of a boy...' and symbolism e.g. the pomegranate tree and the inscription 'Amir and Hassan, the sultans of Kabul' to suggest both emotional closeness and the desire to immortalise their bond. Some identified the inner conflict of the narrator in terms of how he presented his friendship with Hassan. They commented on the juxtaposition between the narrator's assertion that he and his friend were equal (using the carving names on tree reference) and the narrator's jealousy of his friend's intelligence. The rhetorical question, 'What use did a servant have for the written word?' was frequently cited.

Less successful candidates often produced responses that were content based. These tended to focus on 'what' the writer said, rather than 'how' the writer presented his relationship with Hassan. Some of these responses would repeatedly write that 'the writer describes' or 'the writer presents', focusing on what the writer said. In some responses many quotations were used but these supported a content-based, narrative response summarising the content rather than focusing on the writer's techniques. Some candidates used very long quotations but offered limited explanations of their chosen examples. There was also evidence of 'feature spotting' where candidates identify (correctly) particular language features and give references to support

them but do not explain how these features have an effect. Some of the weakest responses were simply summaries of the text. There were a few who merely copied out large parts of text.

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

This is an example of a very successful response to Question 3.

3 How does the narrator present his relationship with Hassan?

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

(10)

The text is a story adapted from the novel 'The Kite Runner' written by Khaled Hosseini, where the narrator describes the bond with a servant boy, with the purpose to share the unusual friendship with those who may be interested in the old Afghan culture.

The text starts with a declarative sentence where Amir confesses that he 'never thought of Hassan... as friends'. Indicating the start of the unusual bond the two of the children shared, foreshadowing the differences in lifestyle Amir and Hassan had. The writer then negates his very statement ~~saying that~~ using anaphora through repeating 'Never mind' and explaining all the things that they did together. This ~~shows~~ creates an irony and shows that Amir himself was unsure of their different relationship, nodding to the motif of unexpected friendship.

Moreover, this motif is further elaborated ~~later~~ through the admiration Amir shows towards Hassan, declaring how for Amir, 'the face of Afghanistan' was Hassan, ~~this act~~ as well as his entire childhood being 'one long lazy summer day with Hassan'. This makes Hassan a symbol of Amir's ~~the~~ early life and his life in Afghanistan. This clearly states the importance of ~~Amir in Hassan's~~ Hassan in Amir's life though he

negates it initially.

Adding to this, ~~the~~ Hosseini describes their daily life in a descriptive way. 'Mewling' of sheep, 'bawling of goats' and 'jungle of bells' create auditory imagery through the use of onomatopoeia. This creates a realistic scenery for the reader as they visualise the way the children lived their life in the country. ~~How~~ Negative language like 'chased', 'weather-beaten', 'hurled', 'fire', shows the Afghans attitude towards the 'Kochi' or nomads, ~~one~~. This use of cultural authenticity shows the realism of the Afghan people and life, making the story appear more realistic.

Moreover, the mention of places such as 'Shame No', 'Kabul' and 'Wazir Akbar Khan district' add to the credibility of the text and show that Hosseini is well versed in the country's life, enhancing the credibility of the story. The parallelism between 'merchants and the beggars' show the difference in class of the Afghans.

Next, the writer Hosseini juxtaposes the lifestyle ~~between~~ of Amir and Hassan where Amir's 'Ford Mustang' acts as a symbol of wealth and power while Hassan's 'day's chores' reannounces his position - being a servant - in the house. The ~~listing~~ of Hassan's chores 'washed up, prayed broken

and prepared hand-washing dirty clothes ...'; juxtaposes with Amir's ~~text~~ routine of him complaining about 'homework'. This contrast signals why initially Amir had thought Hassan of anything but a friend as he was not the same as him in many ways.

Moreover, the juxtaposition between the change of tone towards Hassan as at first it was declared that 'the tree ~~was~~ or was ours,' signaling that post Hassan and Amir were the 'sultans', however the change to 'what use did a servant have for the written word' shows how he still considered Hassan below him. This superiority complex was repeated as the 'stopper' reading' riddles to Hassan as he was better at solving them. This jealousy again showcases the reason why they were never considered friends, though his reflective tone contradicts it.

Lastly, the text goes in a chronological order explaining each part of Amir's early life, one by one through cultural references to 'bazaris' and 'naan', making the reader visualise the Afghanistan more clearly. The sentence structure consists of long ~~and~~ sentence such as line 56-57, adding a descriptive touch to the text. This line 'we sat for hours' aligns with the long sentence where the 'Hoseini describes the flow of time 'sun faded in the west' and the desperate plea of 'one more story' indicating a more ~~flowy~~ detailed ~~chapter~~ text.

(Total for Question 3 = 10 marks)



This response makes some very perceptive points and tracks its way through the text methodically and in detail. It picks up on the nuances of the relationship sensitively, and confidently uses a wide range of terminology e.g. 'parallelism', 'juxtaposition', 'cultural authenticity'. A wide range of judiciously chosen references are cohesively interspersed in the discussion.

Level 5 - 10 marks



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 3.

3 How does the narrator present his relationship with Hassan?

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

The narrator presents his relationship with Hassan from childhood as ⁽¹⁰⁾ ~~with~~ narrator portrays the activities that ^{they} learn together since childhood, "We taught each other to ride a bicycle with no hands". Moreover, the narrator told us about the bond they have for each other and describes that it can't be change as narrator writes "no history, ethnicity, society, or religion was going to change that either". The narrator explained the event he has with Hassan in which they chased the Kochi, the nomads who passed through Kabul on their way to the mountain of the north, to engage the reader and bring strong impact to writing, narrator has used Onomatopoeia to describe ~~the~~ more clearly, the details of the Kochi they chased 'mewling of their sheep, the baaing of their goats, the ~~jing~~ jingles of bells around their camel necks'. The narrator uses ~~informati~~ informative language to ~~descried~~ describe relation with Hassan as he even wrote about smallest detail of ~~the~~ ~~no~~ ~~the~~ the ~~event~~ memories they had together 'father gave us each a weekly allowance of ten Afghanis and we

spent it on warm Coca-Cola and rosewater ice cream topped with crushed pistachios" it shows ~~the~~ that narrator ~~has~~ had ~~remotely~~ special relation with Hassan, due to this the reader ~~is~~ can also start thinking about his childhood memories. The narrator has told about their daily routine of them which will develop interest of the reader to the story as narrator told "we had a daily ~~rounti~~ routine..... packed my books and pencils". The narrator ~~the~~ writes the story in first person which will develop ~~the~~ personal interaction with the reader. The writer is using informal language to portray his perspective to the reader. ~~showing that~~ Giving them title 'Amir and Hassan, the Sultans of Kabul' it shows that the writer is not biased he had an authority. Writer uses personification and alliteration so he can engage the reader "sunlight and shadows of pomegranate leaves dancing on his face".



This response focuses on 'what' the writer says rather than 'how' and the discussion of the effects of language is limited with some feature spotting and a mostly narrative approach. There is the beginning of an awareness of the effects of language e.g. the points about personification and alliteration, to move this into the bottom of Level 2.

Level 2 - 3 marks



Always remember to focus on how the writer uses language and structure, and explain the writer's intended effects on the reader.

Question 4

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

Most candidates answered this correctly. Examiners saw all the bullet points but popular points about the way Claudia helped the writer were: 'she made the necessary phone calls', 'she tracked down a spare set of keys' and 'she offered to drive the writer to collect them'. Incorrect responses were mostly taken from outside the given lines.

A number of candidates wasted time copying down too much or offered too many points which was not necessary.

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

Question 5

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

Many candidates answered this correctly. Common correct responses were: 'her house is cosy', 'she feels relaxed', 'she feels comfortable' and 'she feels unselfconscious'.

However, a number of candidates lost marks on this question by identifying single word answers which did not answer the question e.g. acceptable one word answers which described her feelings were 'relaxed' or 'comfortable' but single word responses about the house such as 'stylish' or 'lived-in' needed more information to be rewardable.

A number of candidates wasted time copying down too much or offered too many points which was not necessary.

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

Question 6

The question asks the candidate how the writer presents her friendship with Claudia. Most examiners commented that candidates' responses had similar qualities to the responses to Question 3 although some examiners felt that the responses to this question were less secure.

Examiners commented that candidates responded to the text positively and engaged with the idea of an unusual friendship.

Most candidates were able to show some understanding of and comment on language and structure. They were able to identify and explain what the writer was saying and the language used to express this although there was often a tendency to describe what the chosen examples said rather than how the language was used for effect. Candidates were able to identify the positive tone used by the writer to represent her friendship and comment on descriptive devices used to present the friendship positively. Many candidates were able to identify the use of tricolon e.g. 'beauty treatments, cocktails, brunch', 'unconditional love, protection and emotional support'; juxtaposition e.g. 'mortified and distraught', 'calm and collected'; repetition e.g. of 'because', and listing e.g. of the help Claudia offered. Most were able to explain the phrase 'the one', highlighting the importance of Claudia to the writer, but often did not explore this further.

More successful candidates were able to explore the writer's use of language and structure to present her friendship with Claudia. They selected a range of examples and explored how the writer's tone, imagery, and structure conveyed the emotional support and comfort she received from Claudia. Some candidates explored the metaphor of friendship as 'the real love stories of our lives,' noting how this sets the tone for the depth of connection that follows, together with the reference to romantic love in the phrase 'the one,' which demonstrates how special the relationship is. They considered the writer's use of anecdote and detail, particularly in the story of locking herself out of the house, to reveal the reliability and selflessness of Claudia. Others identified language choices like the warmth in Claudia's 'radiating smile' or the comfort of her home, noting how these details created a sense of trust and affection. They were able to explore the cyclical nature of the text and comment on the final sentence linking back to the anecdote at the beginning. Examiners commented that there were some considered, sophisticated and very analytical responses which demonstrated insight and appreciation of the writer's purpose.

Less successful responses tended to focus more on what happened rather than how the writer presented it. These candidates often summarized the events, such as the Santa Barbara trip or the coffee date, without connecting them to the writer's craft or exploring the language used. Some less successful responses listed references from the text without explaining how they informed the reader about the relationship between the writer and Claudia. Some candidates listed their points with little explanation and often no references. Some simply re-stated their chosen quotations. Sometimes candidates made generic comments such as 'it makes it more interesting' or 'this makes the reader want to read on' which do not clearly explain how the writer has achieved her effects. There was also evidence of 'feature spotting' where candidates identify (correctly) particular language features but do not explain them.

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 her friendship with Claudia?

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

The text 'Lonely in Los Angeles, I made a remarkable⁽¹⁰⁾ friendship with my older neighbour' is adapted from an article by Martha Hayes. The theme revolves around finding unexpected friendship for people who struggle with making friends or are interested in this mechanism.

The text starts off with a cliché like 'friendships are the real lone stories', 'I knew Claudia was the one,' contrasts the idea of friendships with lone, declaring the platonic lone Hayes found in Claudia in a humorous way. Her anecdote of recalling the time she forgot her keys, emphasizes when she found help in someone unexpected.

Hayes use of long complex sentences such as from line 4-7 explain the situation clearly. Her optimistic approach of being 'grateful for two things' explained in a humorous way showcases her bubbly personality. This flow in sentence shows how Hayes felt thought quickly and urgently in a flow without a break about the situation.

Next, Hayes shows ~~her~~ ^{the} difference in the personalities of Claudia and her, ~~say~~ stating she 'was mortified and distraught' and Claudia 'was calm and collected'. This comparison creates curiosity as to how two different personalities became friends. The anaphora through the repetition of 'Because

~~show~~ supports Claudia's calmness. The humorous addition of Claudia being in 'her dressing gown' shows how ready she was to help despite the time and effort it was going to take. This supports Hayes' point of justifying 'Claudia' being the one.

Moreover, the word 'somehow' again denotes the unexpectedness of the friendship as Hayes abruptly mentions that Claudia is '72' in a short sentence and 'three decades older than' Hayes. This ~~sets~~ shocks the readers as they find it hard to believe the difference in ages yet similar habits as such as them going to 'beauty treatments, cocktails and brunch' together.

Adding to this, Hayes abruptly transitions to a flashback, describing how the two first met. The juxtaposition between Hayes looking 'blankly' and being a bit wary of Claudia to becoming best friends within six months shows supports the theme of finding friendship in unexpected places.

Moreover, the writer's humorous self and desperate behaviour to be with Claudia is seen in her humorous actions of 'kicking' herself for not asking for details. This reluctant behaviour shows Hayes' shyness towards Claudia but as well as her love towards the

72 year old woman. Hayes supports the shyness by second guessing ~~at it~~ whether they will have 'anything in common'. This creates a relatable scenario ~~as it~~ ^{Hayes} explains her unfiltered thoughts, allowing those who struggle making new friends relate to her.

Next the fast pace and change of - setting from the park to coffee and then Claudia's house shows how quickly they bonded together despite Hayes initial concerns, showcasing a beautiful bond. Hayes stating she felt ~~was~~ using longer more compound-complex sentences such as 'We don't stop talking about everything ... not a friend' shows the fast change in the relationship and how immediately Claudia became a 'family member'.

Lastly, the structure of the text is cyclical as the writer starts with Claudia being 'the one' and ends in an admirable and loving tone towards her new friend ~~who brought to her~~ life is who brought 'something else' to her life. The lack of words shows the strong bond and love Hayes feels towards Claudia. As she shifts from humorous to emotional tone and back and forth, she declares that friends 'appear' in our lives 'when we need them to most' assuring the reader that they will find friends one day or another. Wrapping the text in a humorous way going back to the point of losing her keys and Claudia having a spare one, showing her trust towards a new friend

(Total for Question 6 = 10 marks)

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This response explores a wide range of language in the text. It addresses the author's use for effect of cliché, humour and sentence variety as well as techniques such as analepsis and cyclical structure. It pays particular attention to how tone is used to reflect the warmth of this unlikely relationship. This strong, even scholarly, focus on language gives depth to the answer. All points are supported by well-chosen references that highlight with perceptiveness and discrimination the similarities and differences of these two women.

Level 5 - 10 marks



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

This is an example of a Level 3 response.

6 How does the writer present her friendship with Claudia?

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

(10)

The writer starts the text with a positive tone 'If friendship are the real love stories of an life' she compares claudia as ~~the love of~~ her real love, this shows the impact claudia has on the writer. A positive opening of the text interests the readers.

The writer states she is only grateful for 2 thing 'her phone & her dog' 'I was grateful for two thing : ... in the house!'

The writer uses short paragraph 'I no longer ... keep to my house' short paragraph contains immense information ~~to~~ which does not bore the readers. The text is informal.

The use of colloquial language to make the text more friendly and outgoing.

The writer incorporates hyperbole 'three decades older than me' this sentence contains humour, too, humour makes the text more lively and hyperbole is exaggerating which makes the ~~reads~~ text more interesting.

Furthermore the writer uses contrast 'Because I was mortified ... reluctant' This adds vividness to the text and also Claudia was very calm like she had been in this situation a lot many times. The writer also incorporates humour 'I kick myself' this adds voice to the text, makes it more ~~clear~~ ~~be~~ lively to the audience.

The writer first refers to Claudia as a woman and how she did not want to have a conversation with a stranger and then in the ending of text how she mentions that Claudia now has a span of keep to her house and how she remains unconditional love, protection and emotional support like she once received from her mum. (line 19) This contrast makes the text more interesting and will not bore the audience.

'When I take my shoes off... I am at home' This states how comfortable she feels at Claudia's place.

Writer states herself and Claudia has so much in common. Despite only knowing each other for six months. (line 20 / 19)

This helps the readers to understand the kind of relationship she had with Claudia.

The writer has used more colloquial ~~casual~~ language and it is ~~now~~ in a informal tone.

Therefore ~~the~~ she has also incorporated rhetorical questions 'why should this be any different' this helps the writer to engage with the readers.



The response shows some clear understanding and explanation of language with references that are appropriate and relevant to the points made.

Level 3 - 5 marks



To improve the mark, the candidate would need to provide more examples of how the writer uses language and structure for effect and develop their points on the intended effects of the writer's choices.

Question 7

This question requires candidates to compare how the writers present their ideas and perspectives on friendship. Examiners commented that the majority of candidates were able to identify and discuss basic comparisons at a minimum, and some produced well-thought-out comparisons of the extracts. Some examiners observed that candidates are improving their ability to write comparative responses.

Most candidates were able to identify some similarities and differences and make obvious comparisons on the theme of friendship. They were able to list obvious comparisons between the texts and provide generic comments on the writers' ideas and perspectives. Most candidates included references from both texts but they were not always developed. They commented on: the use of first person; the intended audience; the different purposes; the gender difference; the unusual nature of the respective friendships. Candidates often noted that both texts presented close, meaningful relationships but with different characteristics and under different circumstances. Some candidates only made comparisons of the stylistic features of the texts instead of comparing the ideas and perspectives, which limited their achievement.

More successful candidates developed a balanced approach in comparing the texts. They developed a wider range of comparisons and explored the writers' ideas and perspectives. They were able to analyse the differences and compare the language as well as the content. Some compared language features successfully and explored how these features helped the writers present their ideas. They supported their points with apt references. These candidates made relevant comparisons throughout, rather than writing about each text separately, and focused not only on what the writers said but how they presented their ideas. They supported their points with well-chosen quotations and explored language features such as metaphor, tone, and structure to show how the writers conveyed their perspectives. These responses explored the contrasting contexts: in Text One, the narrator reflects on a childhood friendship shaped by social and class divisions, while in Text Two the writer describes an adult friendship formed unexpectedly between two people of different ages and backgrounds. They included thoughtful discussion of narrative perspective (first person in both) and tone (nostalgic and conflicted in Text One, warm and reflective in Text Two). Some candidates identified similarities such as loyalty, emotional connection, and trust in both friendships, and differences such as the power imbalance in Text One compared with the equality and mutual respect in Text Two.

Some candidates wrote about each text separately with a comparative section at the end which did not enable them to compare in any depth. More successful responses made points of comparison linking the passages throughout. There were some candidates who offered a number of reasonable comparisons but did not provide any kind of support or references to the texts to support their comparisons.

Less successful candidates often compared the content. Some made obvious connections such as Text One is about a male friendship and Text Two is about a male friendship or both texts are about friendship without any development. Some candidates wrote paragraphs which summarised the content of the two extracts but did not compare them. Sometimes they wrote about one text and then added some undeveloped points about the other text at the end. Some listed points of comparison but did not comment on them. The least successful candidates wrote very little or copied the texts.

Centres will need to continue to work with candidates to make sure they have a clear understanding of valid ways of responding to texts in Section A. This should include how to analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve their effects (Questions 3 and 6) and how to write comparative responses (Question 7).

This is a successful response to Question 7.

Refer to BOTH Text One and Text Two to answer the following question.

- 7 Compare how the writers of Text One and Text Two present their ideas and perspectives on friendship.

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

(15)

The Kite Runner is ^{novel} ~~a story~~ about the writer and his servant boy, named Hassan. Similarly Text-2 is an article about the relationship of the writer with her neighbour Claudia. Both of the texts are written in the first person perspective and boast an anecdotal structure. However they convey their feelings and experiences with a different tone.

Both text start out with a direct sentence. ~~However, they achieve a completely different effect.~~ They achieve a similar effect, but present it in a different manner. Text-1 builds confusion, the writer says, "The curious thing ... friends, either." This is abrupt and the writer states he doesn't think of Hassan as a friend. This makes the reader more curious and looks them into the story.

On the contrary in Text-2 the writer does the opposite and calls Claudia "the one". She says, "If friendships ... was the one." Here the writer purposefully stays vague not only about Claudia, but also when they become friends. The effect of this is to again create curiosity and keep the reader hooked. The difference in both approaches can be clearly

seen. As in Text-1 the writer uses shock factor by saying something unexpected, while in Text-2 the writer makes it convey a special image of Claudio keeping the reader curious.

Although both texts are focused on describing a close friend the writers portray their feelings differently. This can be seen especially when creating a contrast between the writer and the friend.

In Text-2 the writer explores the themes of social inequality and class differences through contrasting between him and Hassan. The writer uses juxtaposition such as, "My father... black Ford Mustang," "Hassan stayed home... watering the lawn." This emphasizes that the two despite being so close are from completely different worlds and backgrounds. The writer not only uses this to show how strong his bond was with Hassan, but how Hassan had suffered at the hands of fate.

He says, "That Hassan would... the written world?" The use of rhetorical question makes the reader stop and truly understand what the writer is trying to convey. The writer emphasizes the theme of inequality, how the world decided education was not for Hassan, but for people like the writer. This helps the reader sympathize with Hassan and his circumstances.

On the other hand Text 2 does not explore darker themes and has a much more lighthearted tone. Contrast between the writer and Claudia is used to emphasize themes of compassion and kindness. Such as when the writer says, "Because I was... calm and collected?" This helps the reader understand Claudia's personality and relate with the writer.

The writer uses juxtaposition as well to further emphasize Claudia's kindness. She says, "I am frazzled... I want to be immediately..." The writer emphasizes how Claudia has such a lovable character and she always enjoys talking with her. This helps create a proper image of Claudia for the reader and, so they can better understand the writer's feelings.

Like Text 1 the writer also uses a rhetorical question, "Why should this be any different?" The effect is this is to show the writer's hesitation compared to Claudia's direct and more straightforward personality.

Through this we can see that in Text 2, the relationship of the writer and Hassan was used to emphasize how inequality has affected Hassan, but despite that their bond is still strong. In Text 2 it is used to show how different Claudia and the writer are, and how they clicked so well together. Moreover to emphasize Claudia's kindness and compassion.

While these texts aren't so different is the use of imagery and some other literary devices in the text. In the text-1 the writer generously uses imagery, such as, 'menting of sheep', 'musty-smelling bazars.' This helps the reader feel more immersed in the text and provides a proper setting, which the reader can understand.

Likewise text-2 uses metaphors and similes. However rather than to describe a setting it is used to describe Claudia in great detail. She compares Claudia to a family member and even her mum, "It is the... from my mum." This is to show how great of an impact Claudia has had on the writer to give her such a high standard. It also helps the reader comprehend her love as everyone has a close relationship with their mother. Moreover-

Both writers also use anaphora in their text to achieve a similar effect of praising their friend. In text-1 "Nevertheless that" is used to help the reader better understand the writers relationship with Hassan while in Text-2 "Because she..." is used to show Claudia's kindness.

Text-1 explores a much more mature theme than text-2. The writer uses his relationship with Hassan to subtly address topics like social inequality and unfair opportunities. Text-2 on the other hand is a heartfelt love letter to a close friend, Claudia. In the end both texts leave the reader with many questions.



The response considers a wide range of comparisons between the texts with mostly analysis of the writers' ideas and perspectives. References are balanced across both texts and are mostly discriminating and fully support the points being made.

Level 5 - 14 marks



Look at the variety of comparative points made. Note how the candidate compares both texts throughout the response.

This is a less successful response to Question 7.

Refer to BOTH Text One and Text Two to answer the following question.

- 7 Compare how the writers of Text One and Text Two present their ideas and perspectives on friendship.

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

(15)

In text one, Khalid shows how he had been friends with his servant from childhood. He felt like he was with his brother. They were friends since he started crawling for the first time. Hassan would make him breakfast, sweep the floors, clean ~~the~~ his room, and wash the clothes to show how much Hassan loved him. This gives a clear view of how friendships can be. Friendship means to show unity, trust, and worth in the relationship. He explains how they would go to a bowl-shaped hill and would read Hassan stories until the sun sets to the west. They would read riddles, tell stories, and cherish the moment. This shows ~~how~~ no matter what religion you are, what culture you have, what your ethnicity is, what matters is that friendship is strong and you are trustworthy in the friendship.

In text two, the writer describes how she became friendly with how 3 times older her age. She explains how she has one daughter and had to pick a delivery all across the city. Her neighbor Claudia who was kind enough, took her to pick the delivery. They had an adventurous drive that day even though Claudia was in her pyjamas and was about to go to sleep after a hectic day. Claudia had a warm, kind, caring heart as she would bring gifts for her daughter. They would cherish their happy times and worst times together which made many memories and built a stronger relationship. She mentions how Claudia was like a mother by the way she cared about her and her daughter. She felt very comfortable and relaxed with Claudia and wanted to spend time with her as she felt like she was living her life again. She believes that friendships comes to you, and when you find the right person you cherish every moment together to relive moments.

In both texts, they have provided stylistic devices and both have similar stories about their friendship. Both ~~te~~ convey their message by letting know the worth of friendship and how it builds a strong and healthy relationship. They both show how ethnicity, culture, religion, and age does not matter when you have friendship. The only thing that matters is building a strong, worthy, trustful relationship with your friend. Both text show unity and friendship. The difference between both text are ~~that~~ the structure of the text. In text one it is a descriptive and long-sentences text. In text two however, it shows that it is a ~~te~~ conversation type tone with small sentences and personal opinions based text. Both texts convey the message of meeting friends and shows dignity and unity between friendship. Both text have metaphors and similes. They both encourage friendship as it can be life changing.



Throughout this response, there are virtually no quotations nor detailed references to the texts to support the points made. The candidate writes about each text and then makes some comparisons at the end. The comparisons are obvious and the response makes comments on the writers' ideas and perspectives, but this does not develop into explanation.

Level 2 - 5 marks



This could be improved by giving examples from the texts to support all the comparisons and also by developing the comparative comments. Try to compare the texts throughout the response rather than adding a comparative paragraph at the end.

Question 8

This task required candidates to use ideas from both source texts to write an engaging and informative talk about different types of friendships and their value. Most candidates engaged well with the topic and demonstrated a reasonable understanding of purpose and audience, with many using a conversational tone and clear structure appropriate for a talk to their peers.

AO1

Most candidates referred to the three bullet points and managed to cover a reasonable number of points although examiners commented that bullet point 2 (the things people do with their friends) was sometimes undeveloped. Candidates often included their own perspectives and experiences about friendship. They discussed different types of friends using ideas from the texts such as people from different religions and backgrounds but often including their personal experiences of friendship such as best friends or online friends. Ideas about things you can do with your friends included trips to the beach, the local café, sharing conversations at home, to going on holiday together. Friendships were important because they were a means of support, they provided the ability to share experiences, provided companionship and it was felt that it was rewarding and inspiring to know that there were people who liked you, cared about you and supported you.

The more successful candidates used a systematic approach and fully developed the ideas from the texts. They offered a good number of relevant points, made well-focused comments about different friendships people have, dealt with the three bullet points in some detail, using ideas from both texts and skillfully incorporating their own examples. These candidates often used the idea of having different friends as the basis for their speech and interpreted the other two bullet points from this perspective; a clear focus on the benefit of having different friends was presented.

Less successful responses only referred to one or two of the bullet points, most commonly missing out the third one (how having different friendships can improve life). Their responses tended to have too much reliance on the texts e.g. lifting phrases or whole sentences from the texts, without demonstrating evidence they could interpret and assimilate the ideas. The least successful candidates directly lifted much material from the source texts.

AO4

Examiners commented that most candidates understood the requirement of the task and were able to use the appropriate register and tone for a talk to their peers and there was clear evidence of an understanding of the purpose, audience and format required. Most candidates demonstrated an understanding of the format and audience of a talk, opening with a greeting and including rhetorical questions, direct address ('Have you ever had a friend like that?'), and persuasive elements to engage their peer group. In most cases the text was convincing. It sounded like a talk to peers and the writer was able to engage with their audience.

More successful candidates wrote lively and well-shaped talks that sustained the register throughout. These candidates showed an awareness of the audience, using humor, empathy, or personal voice effectively to create a realistic and persuasive talk. These candidates also effectively employed persuasive elements like rhetorical questions, statistics and anecdotes

throughout their speech, and were able to link the ending of their speech back to their introduction. The tone was friendly and informative and there was no sense of the speaker being patronising. These responses were lively and engaging.

Less successful responses were not able to adapt the texts for audience and purpose and often had problems sustaining the required register throughout their response. In some cases, the responses read more like articles or descriptive or narrative writing, and their form also suggested the same. There were some quite brief responses.

A05

Most candidates were able to develop and express information and ideas in suitable way with the use of appropriate structural and grammatical features. They were able to write with clarity and spell a range of vocabulary correctly and were able to use punctuation with some control.

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.

Less successful responses were often repetitive with their word choices and sentence structures and had many errors. They had poor language controls and weak paragraphing.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but all examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression such as problems with tenses and sentence structure including missing words. Examiners commented that punctuation and vocabulary choices sometimes lacked variety.

Common errors were: missing out definite and indefinite articles; comma splicing; lack of capital letters, especially for the personal pronoun 'I' and sometimes at the start of sentences; grammatical errors such as incorrect subject/verb agreement.

Centres should continue to work to ensure candidates have a clear idea of how to adapt ideas from texts and how to write appropriately for different audiences and purposes. They should also be able to write with accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

This is a successful response to Question 8.

- 8 You have been asked to give a talk to your peer group about the different friendships that people have.

You should include:

- the different types of friends that people have
- the things people do with their friends
- how having different friendships can improve life.

Write the text of your talk.

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

(30)

Ideas / points / perspectives from text ① and ② for bullet point 1 :	ideas / points / perspectives from text ① and ② for bullet point 2 :	ideas / points / perspectives from texts ① and ② for bullet point 3 :
→ Friendship with a servant boy → we learned to crawl together, no history, ethnicity, society or religion was going to change that. → neighbour → I was mortified and distraught and she was calm and	→ spent money on warm Coca-Cola and rosewater ice-cream → read books together → took strolls → talked about films they had just seen → playing hide- and seek	→ the conversation -n feels so easy not forced or fake → feel relaxed and comfortable → don't feel like it is an obligation → less lonely

collected	→ get together at her house	→ I no longer believe you can search for new friends, I think they simply appear in your life when you most need them.
→ older friends	→ we don't stop talking - about everything	→ receive unconditional love like from your mother
→ friendly	→ erupt into giggles	→ we had a daily routine
→ unconditional love, protection and emotional support I once received from my mum.	→ go for a drive	→ feels natural and not a forced friendship
→ finding things that are common	→ experiences together morphed into a funny story	→ happier
→ some things are no common	→ beauty treatments, brunch	
→ the servant was illiterate	→ text constantly	
→ 'she's everything I want in a friend	→ comforted me even though she was ready for an early night after a long day	
→ smile that radiates warmth	→ arrange a coffee date	
→ feeling happier by looking at them	→ completely unselfconscious in conversation, the way you do with family.	
→ friends are not always made in school		

Good afternoon everyone!

My name is Mahi and today I wanted to give you guys a talk about friendship - which I think, having only one best friend doesn't make me as qualified, but I'm here to tell you how even that one friend has made all the difference in my life.

Friends. It's a pretty interesting word if you think about it. Although a lot of people have ~~large~~ those large friend groups that make most of us who don't have one jealous, it's rather chaotic don't you think? Making plans, making sure everyone's mom says yes - and not only that, sharing your secrets to that one trusted friend with the potential risk that they might announce it to everyone else in the group like it's breaking news. That is one of the many reasons I prefer or glorify having either one friend or a small group of trusted ones.

Friendship is natural, that's the thing about it. It can happen with anyone and you may

not even realise it. Your maids kid, or your neighbour, or even your moms cool old friend that just... gets you. Oh! we can't forget that one friend a grade above us graduating this year. Your true friend can be anybody. Anyone that makes you feel happier just by looking at them. Whether you have things in common or not, like your age, the sports you play, even if their your complete polar opposite. We hate to admit it but their smile makes you feel all warm and fuzzy inside, like their the embodiment of everything you want in a friend.

I myself have started to realise that before I met my best friend... all I did was... well nothing. That's when it hit me, it's not like I didn't have friends before it's more like meeting them felt like an obligation. But with my best friend, we don't get enough of each other! We go on coffee dates and spend money on all kinds of food when we're out.

She's a book person so everytime we text, which is really all the time, she rants about this new Dan Brown book she read and I blabber about how they should make a film

out of it because it's just better. That's the thing with friendship, you don't stop talking, you talk about everything. That's the beauty of it. You feel like you could tell them anything without feeling self-conscious. You erupt into giggles when the worst experiences you've had turn into a funny story. You laugh your way through life and that is beautiful.

Maybe we don't all have that one friend. We may have varieties. But with variety also comes boundaries. When you find that one friend though, you will know. They come into your life when you need them the most. You feel happier, less alone - you feel complete. You shower them with insults but they know it's a facade of the unconditional love you have for them. You feel relaxed and comfortable.

Even when there's nothing to say, just having them there can make your day better.

And if you have someone like this already in your life, be grateful. If you don't, don't worry, when the time comes you'll find them.

Thank you everyone.



A01: The candidate offers a wide range of relevant points. The response covers all three bullets with detailed information and the selection of material is persuasive in clarifying the points made.

Level 5 - 10 marks

A04: This response is sharply focused on the task, and communication is perceptive and subtle. There is a sophisticated use of tone and register.

Level 5 - 12 marks

A05: There are a few minor errors, which do not impede overall meaning. It manipulates complex ideas and uses extensive vocabulary strategically. Punctuation is accurate and aids emphasis and precision. A range of sentence structures used accurately for deliberate effect.

Level 5 - 8 marks



Look at how the plan may have helped organise the response. Note how the candidate has covered all the bullet points in detail and maintained the sophisticated form, tone and register throughout the response.

This is a less successful response to Question 8

- 8 You have been asked to give a talk to your peer group about the different friendships that people have.

You should include:

- the different types of friends that people have
- the things people do with their friends
- how having different friendships can improve life.

Write the text of your talk.

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

(30)

Good evening my dear friends, I'm nang akwi aye and our topic is about friendship. Friendship is a pretty common word isn't it? I'm sure most people have friends they cherish as families, am I not? wrong? Friends they can be seen in many various form, act in their own preferences and would give a satisfying feeling right into your heart. So some people for example me have friends that aren't the same race, ethnicity, history as me. for example I'm from the shan nationality and my friend is chinese and another is burmese. Not only may we differ in nationality, but appearances may differ too. Your friends may have black hair, a brown hair. The skin tones may be different and sense of fashions may be different as well. But what's most important of friends are that they will be by your side, their preferences, skin tones, appearance, fashion sense, how they have their lives all doesn't really matter. We humans are different from each other but, that doesn't mean we

can't be friends & at all. Let me ask when we're out with our friends, the ones we love most do you sense a feeling a light shining down on your body? It just feels like you're in a different place somewhere you can be at peace, to have someone to talk with. Besides with your friends you can do various stuff with them such as go out to have shopping with them. Have serious business talk with them. Maybe hangout with your friends at home. Talk about the funniest memories you had, laugh out loud together with them. Talk about something that displeases you, work it out together. There various more things you can do with your friends.

Your friends can be sometimes also your business partner, they can also be your family ones that would cherish you. Some would spill out news for you worry about you. Different friends can help with your life whether small or big, they can change it. Friends can support you through your darkest time as some friends are like your family members. Another friend may benefit you in helping out with chores or maybe tell you the latest news. & If you have friends in school they could help you out in learning and have fun in schools. That's how important having friends can be.

Friends may be different from you, however they are still people that you should appreciate, they can help you in many different ways in your life. They are people whom would help you later. So have fun with your friends and now I am concluding my talk. Thank you for listening to this speech I have.



A01: There are a reasonable number of points, showing a secure appreciation of information and ideas. The response addresses all 3 bullet points.

Level 3 - 6 marks

A04: The response is clearly communicated with a clear sense of audience and purpose and appropriate use of form tone and register. At times, it is less secure on sense of audience but does use some features of a talk.

Level 3 - 6 marks

A05: There is some correctly spelt vocabulary and some control of punctuation, although there are errors and vocabulary is not ambitious enough.

Level 2 - 4 marks



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

The majority of candidates agreed with the statement 'People are more interested in celebrities and influencers than in their friends and family' although examiners noted some candidates disagreed.

Ideas included: that people spend too long on Instagram and social media in general, to the detriment of friends and family. Indeed it was felt that perhaps family members were taken for granted. Candidates tried to explain the appeal of celebrities and influencers and considered their elusive nature, their wealthy status and believed their lifestyle created a fantasy. This was appealing to many as a form of escapism from school and boring everyday life. The reality was these celebrities and influencers did not care about their followers, they did not know them. Candidates argued that while interest in celebrities and influencers is common, friends and family still hold a deeper and more meaningful place in people's lives. Many acknowledged that social media has increased visibility and admiration for celebrities, but maintained that personal relationships are ultimately more important. Celebrities and influencers have become increasingly popular but they are also dangerous, if individuals allowed them to become so important in their life that they ignored 'real people' who they were interacting with on a daily basis.

Most candidates were able to communicate their ideas reasonably clearly and were able to express a personal viewpoint on the topic. They offered a range of relevant points to support their arguments although responses sometimes became a little narrow and repetitive.

More successful candidates structured their responses coherently with well-balanced arguments that fully supported their views. They used a range of techniques successfully to add interest and variety to their writing. They used persuasive language features such as rhetorical questions, counterarguments, and analogies. Their tone, form and purpose were convincing and persuasive. They were structured clearly, with thoughtful introductions, logically ordered points, and effective conclusions.

Less successful candidates offered points that were quite predictable and found it difficult to sustain an argument, often leading to repetition. Some of these responses tended to be one-sided. Some began by agreeing with the quotation but contradicted themselves later. These responses often presented muddled ideas or were very brief.

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

AO5

The comments for AO5 are the same across all three options.

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.

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.

Less successful responses were often repetitive with their word choices and sentence structures and had many errors. They had poor language controls and weak paragraphing.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression such as problems with tenses and sentence structure including missing words. Examiners commented that punctuation and vocabulary choices sometimes lacked variety.

Common errors commented on by examiners were: comma splicing, problems with homophones, missing or misused apostrophes, not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun, missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences, and grammatical errors.

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

This is a response to Question 9.

Write approximately 400 words on one of the following:

EITHER

- 9** 'People are more interested in celebrities and influencers than in their friends and family.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

(Total for Question 9 = 30 marks)

OR

- 10** Write a story (true or imaginary) entitled 'An unexpected find'.

(Total for Question 10 = 30 marks)

OR

- 11** Describe your best friend.

(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** ☐

Everyone in the world has their own personalities and dreams. Some become famous celebrities and influencers while the rest become some of our most important people in life which are friends and family. These people are the most crucial part of our life ~~because~~ and recently, celebrities and influencers are changing that. So, I strongly agree that people are more interested in celebrities and influencers than in their friends and family.

Firstly, the reason as to why I ~~I agree~~ ^{strongly} I strongly agree is that nowadays, ^{young adults} ~~kids~~ and teenagers mostly idolize people who are famous celebrities and influencers. This is ~~because~~ because of the advanced technology we have recently with social medias and other platforms. ~~I'm~~ I am not saying that it is a bad thing but, going crazy ~~and~~ ~~over~~ over these people and idolizing them without even knowing them fully is certainly not good. These teenagers and young adults even go so far as to saying that they would die for these people which has created a phrase called "die-hard fans". If you're going to be idolizing these people who ~~do~~ does not even ~~know~~ know know you, then what ~~is~~ ^{is} our ~~family~~ ^{family} ~~parents~~ for?

Secondly, ~~people~~ these celebrities and influencers also persuade their fans by saying many wrong and non-trustworthy things. ~~People even create~~ Some people even ~~also~~ create stuffs for these famous people

by putting ⁱⁿ a lot of their time. For example, there are books and websites ~~ab~~ solely about how the celebrities and influencers became successful. This ~~is~~ would be a good thing if those people actually did good things ~~a~~ to become successful, but most of them lie about their motives and what they do.

However, there are some who ~~don't~~ ^{does not} like to support these famous people. They believe that celebrities and influencers are supposed to inspire and help people grow which some of them do, but not a lot. ~~Those~~ ~~not~~ Those who ~~don't~~ ^{do not} support give more time and value ^{to} their friends and family instead of trusting people which they ~~do~~ do not know. This proves that there are still ~~a lot of~~ ^{some} people who are ~~intereses~~ interested in their friends and family than in celebrities and influencers.

In conclusion, celebrities and influencers have become very popular in recent decades due to the ~~g ad~~ growth of technology and many people are interested in them without knowing their motives.



A04: This response communicates clearly, with a clear sense of purpose and appropriate use of tone and register.

Level 3 - 12 marks

A05: There is use of accurate and varied punctuation and vocabulary. It adapts sentence structures appropriately. It lacks ambition for a higher mark.

Level 3 - 6 marks



Think about how the development of the ideas and how more detail would have improved this response.

Question 10

This was the most popular choice.

AO4

Some examiners commented positively on the quality of some of the responses to the title 'An unexpected find'. There were some effective narratives with engaging plots.

Different interpretations of the title were plentiful. The unexpected find covered many different types of items: money, jewels, maps, hidden treasures, mysterious letters, or more down-to-earth moments like finding a friend, a pet or a lost letter or more philosophically, even a new sense of meaning or courage. Many candidates saved the 'unexpected find' for the final paragraph, which kept their narratives engaging.

There were a number of responses which ended rather weakly with 'It was all a dream'.

Most candidates were able to successfully write a narrative that had links to the task and created some kind of intrigue. They were able to communicate clearly and some of the narratives were full of pace and conflict and were often fast moving. Their tone was appropriate and characters were developed.

Most candidates were able to follow a basic story structure with some level of scene-setting, a beginning, middle and end and some type of turning point, adventure or struggle. Most attempted to use figurative language techniques and paid some attention to describing the setting or characters' feelings. Most often the unexpected find was linked to a happy outcome that had a positive impact on the narrator/character who discovered it.

More successful candidates developed well-structured narratives with a clear sense of purpose and direction. These candidates demonstrated effective control over plot progression, character development, and atmosphere. Examiners noted that the best responses often focused on a single event or moment, allowing for more depth and emotional engagement. These candidates often interweaved the unexpected find into a bigger narrative, focusing on the effect of the find on the narrator or character, rather than on the unexpected find itself. In these responses the unexpected find was not always an object, but a moral or an unexpected outcome. They were carefully planned and avoided over-complicated plotlines. They made skilful use of narrative techniques such as flashbacks, symbolism, and carefully placed dialogue, which helped to build tension and interest.

Less successful candidates lacked development of ideas or the ability to maintain a narrative. Some responses lacked clear development, had limited characterisation, or concluded abruptly with clichés such as 'it was all a dream' or overly rushed resolutions. They often gave a lengthy narration, with repetitive and unfocused plot ideas. They struggled at times with clarity, with muddled storylines and weak endings. Some candidates used plots from films, computer games or novels.

Centres need to ensure candidates have a secure understanding of narrative techniques and the ability to develop a coherent and cohesive personal response.

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. Examiners did comment that the range of punctuation used was quite limited.

Better responses had full control of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Better 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.

Less successful candidates tended to use fairly basic vocabulary and often used fairly simple sentence structures throughout their responses. Weaker candidates had poor language controls and weak paragraphing.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but most examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression. There were problems with tenses and sentence structure including missing words. Some examiners noted that the lack 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; problems with homophones; misspelling of basic vocabulary; missing or misused apostrophes; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences and 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 to enable candidates to express themselves clearly and access the higher mark levels.

This is a successful response to Question 10.

EITHER

- 9 'People are more interested in celebrities and influencers than in their friends and family.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

(Total for Question 9 = 30 marks)

OR

- 10 Write a story (true or imaginary) entitled 'An unexpected find'.

(Total for Question 10 = 30 marks)

OR

- 11 Describe your best friend.

(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 ☒

'An unexpected find'

The cursor blinked like an accusing eye, relentless and unforgiving. Angel stared at it, her mind, ~~an~~ empty, numb. The weight of exhaustion clung to her like a second skin, each second feeling ^{heavier} ~~heavier~~ than the last. Her thoughts were a whirlwind — mix of confusion and burnout. She had once believed her engineering ^{studies} ~~studies~~ would pave the way to her future, ^{but} now it felt like prison. Each assignments, each lectures, each deadlines had blended into an endless blur of

emptiness. What ~~was~~ once a utopia of opportunity, had now turned into a dystopia of pressure. Her dreams, once cherished with vibrant colors, had now turned into faded photographs of a life she couldn't reach.

Engineering was now a barren landscape, once fertile with ambitions, now parched by overwork. ~~The~~ The lectures, once captivating, now seemed like hollowed echoes and each assignments were a battle she no longer wants to fight. Intermittent and perpetuous — was her rhythm of burnout, like the ebb and flow of a tide she can not escape.

One evening, the weight of it all became too much for her. The banal tasks piling up on top of each other, drowning her spirit. She closed her laptop with a final click, a sound that resonated deep within her. Her mind screamed for release. Without hesitation, she stood up, walked out of her dorm room, her suitcase in hand, weight of her own decision ^{sinking} ~~burdening~~ her. There was no dramatic farewells; no tearful goodbyes. It was just a quiet retreat of a life she no longer held on to.

Back at home, her childhood room seemed like a ghost of her former self. The walls, once adorned with colorful posters of scientific wonders, now stood silent, bearing witness to her loss. She collapsed onto her bed,

staring at her ceiling, her mind spinning like a broken record. The photos she had cherished now seemed malevolent, mocking her with the smiles on their faces. Had she been fooling herself all along? ~~to~~ Had she transgressed her own boundaries? Had she been too eager, too driven, too ambitious?

Then, on a ~~pre~~ quiescent afternoon, a letter arrived; its edges torn, crinkled like a relic from another time. Angel tore open the envelope, her heart thudding in her chest.

Angel,
I noticed your absence, your brilliance does not disappear in silence. Your mind is what sparks the competition against ordinary and I believed in it since the moment I saw your passion in projects and my lectures. I saw your mid-terms project that you made and no amount of obstreperous claps ~~can~~ are enough to cheer you. Heavy hearts, feelings forgotten. The unexpected find of your draft of our upcoming event is out of ordinary. Burnout doesn't mean failure, it's simply a pause. A moment for you to take the time to dream again, this time, with intentions. The future is not written in stone; it is simply made for those who ^{pared} ~~dared~~ to dream again when their path ahead seemed unclear. Take this time to rediscover the fire within you, it will be exciting for you, when you are ready.

- Professor Ellis.

The words seemed to fall on her like droplets of rain after a drought. She had felt the warm fuzzy feeling ~~to~~ that ripples inside her body and the adrenaline rush of being noticed again. Her heart swelled, and for the first time in life, ~~she~~ she had felt the stirrings of something more than just ^{survival} ~~surviving~~. In that moment, her world seemed to expand, a floodgate of possibility and probability opened up, the horizon before her shimmering with potentials. Her dreams, though delayed, ~~were~~ ^{were} not lost, they've simply just been waiting for her to find them again.

The future is still uncertain, but Angel no longer feared the unknown. The letter opened up a new way of thinking in her. It is like an unexpected find of treasures worthy enough for lifetime of wealth, but for her, the letter was an unexpected find that unlocks the key to many opportunities and utopias of the bright future ahead of her. Opportunities are not just something that ~~came~~ ^{came} out knocking: it's something she can create or choose, just the way she had chosen to leave the suffocating cycle of burnout behind. The unexpected find of professor Ellis made her find her true self, stronger than her former self ~~and~~ ~~the~~ Her dreams were vibrant and colorful again, potentials ~~welcoming~~ her, as big as the sky before her.





A04: This response has a very effective opening. There are the occasional awkward expressions and unevenness, which do not detract from the response. The comments about utopia and dystopia are particularly perceptive and subtle. There is some sophisticated use of tone and register.

Level 5 - 18 marks

A05: There are occasional slips, which do not detract from meaning. This response manipulates complex ideas and uses extensive vocabulary, punctuation is used with accuracy and aids emphasis and precision. A range of punctuation is used to create varied sentence structures for specific effect.

Level 5 - 10 marks



Note the imaginative interpretation of the title that is always fully focused. The opening paragraph immediately grabs the reader's attention. Think about how the narrative is cleverly controlled and engages the reader.

Question 11

A04

Candidates produced some effective responses that were focused on the task of describing a best friend. However, examiners noted that some candidates wrote narrative responses.

The task produced a wide range of responses, many of which were heartfelt and focused well on the task of describing a specific person. Most candidates were able to provide descriptions of a best friend, often drawing on real-life experiences, shared memories, and character traits to build a vivid picture. Best friends described included classmates, childhood companions, cousins, siblings, or even pets described metaphorically.

Most candidates were able to provide some element of description about their best friends, whether true or imaginary. They were able to describe their best friend in appearance and character as well as the positive effects the friendship has on them. Most candidates included descriptions of how they met their best friends and how their best friends make them feel, but unfortunately this often turned their writing into more of a narrative than a description.

More successful candidates used ambitious vocabulary and created vivid images of their best friend, allowing the reader to visualise the person clearly. These candidates employed sensory imagery to create rich descriptions and avoided the narrative of how they met their best friends or what activities they did together. These responses were often rich in imagery and detail, with well-chosen anecdotes used to illustrate the friend's qualities—such as loyalty, humor, kindness, or supportiveness. These descriptions were both specific and vivid, helping the reader to imagine the friend and understand their importance to the writer. Descriptions from these candidates left the reader desiring to be friends with the person who was described.

Less successful responses were often underdeveloped or too general. Some candidates listed traits without elaborating (e.g. 'He is funny. He is smart. He is helpful.'), which limited the impact of the description. They lacked sensory imagery in their descriptions and focused on superficial, vague descriptions of their best friends. These responses were often short, undeveloped and used a limited range of vocabulary. Weaker candidates wrote from a narrative perspective and often told the story of how they met their best friends, instead of describing their best friends. Others focused more on what makes a good friend rather than describing their best friend.

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.

A05

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. Examiners did comment that the range of punctuation used was quite limited.

Successful responses had full control of spelling, punctuation and grammar. They 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.

Less successful candidates tended to use fairly basic vocabulary and often used fairly simple sentence structures throughout their responses. These candidates had poor language controls and weak paragraphing.

There was evidence of good spelling and reasonably accurate punctuation but most examiners commented on candidates who had problems with grammar and expression. There were problems with tenses and sentence structures. 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; not capitalising 'I' for the personal pronoun; missing capital letters at the beginning of sentences and 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 to enable candidates to express themselves clearly and access the higher mark levels.

This is a response to Question 11.

Write approximately 400 words on one of the following:

EITHER

- 9 'People are more interested in celebrities and influencers than in their friends and family.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

(Total for Question 9 = 30 marks)

OR

- 10 Write a story (true or imaginary) entitled 'An unexpected find'.

(Total for Question 10 = 30 marks)

OR

- 11 Describe your best friend.

(Total for Question 11 = 30 marks)

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross ☒. 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 ☐

She has dark ~~black~~, brown shoulder length hair with hazel eyes that sparkle in the sunlight. She is slightly shorter than me, but with a big, lively grin. She smiles ^{and confidently} widely, even though she wears braces.

She has a kind personality, she always loves to help ~~and~~ stray animals, keeping canned cat food where kittens gather and petting them with love and warmth.

Me and Lucy met for the first time ever when we were in 4th grade. we both were small and lively but what drew me to her was her talent in drawing. When I first saw her draw I was amazed, looking back now obviously they were not perfect, but to me then ~~As~~ they were deserved to be in museums.

She was the athletic type and would rush to play whenever we had recess. In contrast I liked to stay back and read storybooks. I would sometimes watch her through the window as she jumped up and down energetically under the sunlight.

We had completely differed tastes, once when we went to buy ice cream, we entered the shop the soft ~~ja~~ jingle alerting the shopkeeper. I could smell the sweet and ~~sweet~~ ^{fruity} smell of the fig and honey, my favourite. But, Lucy always went for the rich, dark, and creamy belgian chocolate.

One thing I love about her is her intelligence, even though she is smart she was never arrogant and always helped when I had doubts or when I was confused about something.

I love her bubbly personality and how she was always with me. I want everyone to have a best friend as they could change your life.



A04: This response covers all the descriptors in Level 3 and just edges into Level 4, as it does show some successful communication and effective use of tone and register.

Level 4 - 13 marks

A05: As in A04, this response covers all the descriptors in Level 3 and just edges into Level 4, as it does at times manages information and ideas. There is some use of wide, selective vocabulary and some range of punctuation for deliberate effect and clarity.

Level 4 - 7 marks



Note how the writer maintains the focus on description throughout the response.

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 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
- 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 or copied the texts in response to Questions 3, 6 and 7
- were not able to select and adapt relevant information for Question 8
- sometimes copied from the original texts in response to Question 8
- did not write in an appropriate register 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>

