

# Examiners' Report

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel PLSC in English  
LEH01 Paper 01

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## PE Report LEH01 June 2016

Overall the exam was accessible. Centres will need to continue to teach candidates how to respond successfully to some of these tasks but there was some evidence of candidate engagement.

Better candidates were able to engage fully with the texts and respond appropriately. In their writing they produced lively responses which were well controlled and accurate. Weaker candidates sometimes struggled to understand the passages. Their writing lacked coherence, accuracy and the use of idiomatic English.

There were some questions left unanswered. Sometimes this was the later ones suggesting candidates had run out of time. This limited candidates' overall achievement.

### Section A (Questions 1-26) Reading

Questions 1-14 were fairly straightforward questions testing the candidates' ability to read and retrieve relevant information from the non-fiction texts. In response to Question 1 most candidates did not correctly identify the specific phrase and quoted too much. Questions 2- 5 were generally answered correctly. In response to Question 6 many candidates offered 'distance learning programmes' without 'using' or 'connecting'. Questions 7-10 were generally answered correctly. The common incorrect response for Question 10 was '200 years'. In responding to Question 11 a number of candidates did not underline the correct specified phrase or their underlining extended to adjoining words. For Question 12 many candidates achieved 1 mark but some found it difficult to fill in the 'intellectual' and 'emotional' boxes. Question 13: many candidates could identify examples of sensory language but struggled to identify the correct sense for their example. Most candidates had difficulty with Question 14 and only a few understood the effect of the modal verbs, or were able to explain it clearly.

Question 15: There were some attempts at comparison but many candidates simply identified features of both texts with limited attempts at comparison. Some summarised the texts and some simply narrated the content rather than comparing how the writers presented the content. Candidates should be told that simply using 'whereas' or other words of comparison and then not actually comparing the texts is not a successful way of responding. The majority of candidates simply discussed the two texts separately. Not many candidates were able to compare 'how' the writers presented their ideas by focusing on the writer's use of language and techniques. Some candidates successfully commented on bullet points and sub-headings. It was, however, pleasing to see in more successful responses the evidence that candidates had been taught how to respond to this type of question.

Questions 16 – 26 on the fiction text produced some correct responses but there were some questions that were more challenging. Question 16 was mostly answered correctly but the most common incorrect answer was 'four'. Question 17 was generally well answered. Unfortunately, some candidates just identified the subjects they were taught rather than engaging with the idea that they had learnt very little. Question 18 produced some correct responses but a number of candidates thought 'peak' meant the top of a mountain or hill. Question 19 was generally answered correctly. Question 20: the most common error was confusing 'child-like' and 'stubborn', however many candidates still managed to gain 1 mark for the other 2 connections. In responding to Question 21 the majority of candidates did not identify two words and only crossed one box suggesting the candidates did not read the question carefully enough. Question 22a: a number of candidates struggled to explain the simile. Question 22b: while many candidates could correctly identify another simile, they struggled to explain it. Most candidates had difficulty with Question 23, apparently not clearly understanding what was required or what the word 'viewpoint' meant. Question 24 was generally well answered. Question 25a: not many candidates correctly identified 'present' as 'now' often identifying it as meaning 'attendance'. However in responding to Question 25b, the majority of candidates were successful.

Question 26: many candidates did not fully understand the question of how the paragraphs were used to introduce the story, focussing instead on content and events. Many lacked evidence when they did make relevant points. Many candidates simply paraphrased or summarised what the first two paragraphs were about without referencing that they introduced the first day at school. Some candidates, who did talk about them being an introduction, failed to relate their comments to evidence and gave generic responses. Some responses concentrated on the setting of the school but unfortunately some did not use evidence to back up their responses. A number of candidates explored the writer's opinion of the school but very few identified that it was written from the perspective of an adult looking back over time. Not all candidates attempted this question.

Candidates must read the questions carefully and respond appropriately. In response to the longer reading questions (in this exam, Questions 15 and 26) it is essential that candidates understand that re-telling the content of a text is not an appropriate response. Centres need to continue to work with candidates to make sure they have a clear understanding of valid ways of responding to texts.

### **Section B (Questions 27 – 32) Grammar and Punctuation**

Question 27 was generally answered correctly but some candidates used a semi-colon for Question 27b rather than a colon. Question 28: some examiners commented that candidates could identify prepositions but some examiners also noted that there were some candidates could not identify the prepositions or

only chose one correct one. Questions 29 and 30 were generally answered correctly although some examiners commented that some candidates do not understand what a clause is. Question 31a: many candidates struggled with this question. Most could not clearly explain the idea of reversing an action. In contrast Question 31b was generally answered correctly. Question 32: most candidates could identify where the mistakes were but not all corrected them properly and some candidates lost marks by re-writing the sentences rather than correcting the errors.

Candidates must read the questions carefully and respond accordingly. Centres need to work with candidates to ensure they have a secure grasp of the rules and conventions of grammar and punctuation.

### **Section C (Question 33) Writing**

This question is a writing task and candidates are assessed on their skills in writing appropriately and accurately in a range of forms and with an awareness of audience and purpose.

It was rare to see evidence of candidates planning their response to this question.

Form, Communication and Purpose.

The majority of candidates were able to make some response to the question. Some responses were engaging and quite well written and examiners commented that candidates enjoyed responding to this task and recalled in some detail their first experiences of school. Some did not focus well enough on the question and wrote about other moments of their school life. Better responses were able to develop their ideas convincingly. There were some touching and humorous responses, and some showed excellent control and engagement in what they wrote. It was clear that the majority of candidates had used the bullet points in the question to structure their responses. Some responses were very short. Weaker responses tended to be pedestrian and the weakest were not able to maintain a coherent narrative.

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

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

Some candidates demonstrated accuracy across their chosen range of spelling and punctuation however in some responses the range of sentence structures was not varied sufficiently. Spelling was fairly accurate. Some examiners commented on weak punctuation. Language controls were not always secure and candidates had problems with grammar, sentence structure and idiomatic English. Examiners commented in particular on problems with tenses and subject/verb agreement.

Centres need to focus on developing accurate and effective grammatical structuring and idiomatic English to enable candidates to express themselves clearly.

Most successful candidates:

- read the texts with engagement
- read the questions carefully
- selected relevant points in response to the reading questions
- were able to compare texts effectively
- were able to make relevant and supported comments on the writer's techniques
- engaged the reader with creative writing that was clearly expressed, well structured and developed
- used ambitious vocabulary
- wrote with accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Least successful candidates:

- did not engage fully with the texts
- did not read the questions carefully or did not understand them
- did not find enough relevant points in response to the reading questions
- did not compare texts successfully
- were not able to make relevant and supported comments on the writer's techniques
- were not able to sustain and develop ideas in their creative writing
- did not demonstrate accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.