



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Example Candidate Responses – Paper 1

Cambridge O Level English Language 1123

For examination from 2024



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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge O Level English Language, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the syllabus requirements. This document helps teachers to assess the standards required to achieve marks beyond the guidance of the mark scheme.

In this booklet candidate responses have been chosen from the June 2024 exam series to exemplify a range of answers.

For each question, the response is annotated with examiner comments about where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This is followed by comments on how the answer could be improved. There is also a list of common mistakes and guidance for candidates.

Please refer to the June 2024 Examiner Report for further details and guidance.

The questions and mark schemes are available on the [School Support Hub](#)

1123 June 2024 Question Paper 12

1123 June 2024 Mark Scheme 12

1123 June 2024 Insert 12

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the [School Support Hub](#)

How to use this booklet

This booklet goes through the paper one question at a time, showing you the high-, middle- or low level response for each question. In the left-hand column are the candidate responses, and in the right-hand column are the examiner comments.

Example Candidate Response – high	Examiner comments
<p>Question 1</p> <p>(a) In paragraph 1, what did the writer enjoy the most about moving the ice blocks the first time he did this?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p><i>shoving the ice blocks at the kitchen walls from a distance and watching them shatter into jewel-like shards.</i> [1]</p> <p>(b) Using your own words, explain what the text means by 'I neglected my other duties.' (line 4)</p> <p><i>He carelessly forgot about and neg did not acknowledge or</i> 2 <i>complete the other tasks of his job.</i> 3 [2]</p> <p>(c) In paragraph 3, how did the writer <u>feel at first</u> about being in the ice house?</p> <p>Give two details from the text to support your answer.</p> <p>writer's feeling <i>content with the cold and relieved and proud of himself</i> details <i>inside, in pleasant contrast to the stuff stifling heat outside, it was</i></p>	<p>1 The candidate locates the correct answer in the second half of the opening sentence, noting that 'best of all' corresponds to the word 'most' in the question. Both alternative correct responses have been given; only one is necessary. Mark for (a) = 1 out of 1</p> <p>2 The candidate provides a correct meaning for 'neglected' with 'forgot'. He 'did not... complete' is also correct.</p> <p>3 The candidate provides</p>
<p>Responses are written by real candidates in exam conditions, demonstrating the types of answers for each level. These could be used to discuss and analyse the answers with learners in the classroom to improve their skills.</p>	<p>Examiner comments explain where and why marks were awarded. These help to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams to help learners refine their exam technique.</p>

How the candidate could improve their answer

To make efficient use of time, the candidate should have focused on providing one correct answer when required.

This section explains how the candidate could improve each response. It helps learners to improve their exam technique.

Common mistakes and guidance for candidates

- Candidates need to make sure they read the questions carefully. They need to take careful note of key instructions such as 'own words' and paragraph and line references.
- For (b) it was not uncommon for candidates to repeat 'neglected' or 'duties'. In this own word question, candidates needed to provide a meaning or synonym for each of the two words.
- (h) Candidates must ensure that they identify feelings a

This section lists common mistakes as well as helpful guidance from the examiner. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes. You can use this alongside the relevant Examiner Report to guide your learners.

Question 1

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

Question 1

- (a) In paragraph 1, what did the writer enjoy the most about moving the ice blocks the first time he did this?

shoving the ice blocks at the kitchen walls from a distance and watching them shatter into jewel-like shards. [1]

- (b) Using your own words, explain what the text means by 'I neglected my other duties.' (line 4)

he carelessly forgot about and ~~neg~~ did not acknowledge or complete the other tasks of his job. [2]

- (c) In paragraph 3, how did the writer feel at first about being in the ice house?

Give two details from the text to support your answer.

writer's feeling content with the cold and relieved and proud of himself. details inside, in pleasant contrast to the stuff stifling heat outside, it was the temperature at which water becomes ice. [3]

Initially, though dressed in a thin shirt and short breeches, I stood congratulating myself on avoiding the task of cleaning up. [3]

- (d) Explain what the writer was thinking when he leant against the door and it 'surprisingly swung open'. (lines 13–14)

he thought he had been locked and trapped in the prickling cold and was not expecting the door to be open left open. [1]

1 The candidate locates the correct answer in the second half of the opening sentence, noting that 'best of all' corresponds to the word 'most' in the question. Both alternative correct responses have been given; only one is necessary.

Mark for (a) = 1 out of 1

2 The candidate provides a correct meaning for 'neglected' with 'forgot'. He 'did not...complete' is also correct.

3 The candidate provides a correct meaning for 'duties' with the word 'tasks'. 'Job' is an alternative correct answer.

Mark for (b) = 2 out of 2

4 The candidate demonstrates understanding of the writer's feeling with 'content'. 'Relieved' is also correct but is unnecessary since a single feeling is required. 'Proud' is incorrect but it does not negate the correct answer.

5 The candidate selects the correct supporting detail from the text which focuses on the heat outside.

6 The second supporting detail focusing on avoiding the task of cleaning is correct.

Mark for (c) = 3 out of 3

7 The candidate correctly infers what the writer was thinking and offers alternative answers: he thought he was locked in; he thought he was trapped; and he did not expect the door to be left open. All are correct.

Mark for (d) = 1 out of 1

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

(e) From paragraph 5, identify **two** techniques used by the palace kitchen cooks that the writer thought could be useful to improve the flavour of the ices he is making with Ahmad.

- *processing fruits to intensify the flavours.* 8
- *extracting the perfumes of flowers to flavour creams and liqueurs.* [2]

(f) Give **two** reasons why the secrets of ice had remained 'known to few'. (line 22)

The old secrets had been passed down within families. Most of the secrets of ice were locked away in Ahmad's memory. 9 [2]

(g) In paragraph 7, the writer asked Ahmad what the ices they made tasted like.

(i) What reason did the writer give Ahmad for wanting to know?

To increase his understanding of the methods to make the ice. 10 [1]

(ii) Suggest the real reason the writer was asking about the taste of the ices.

To feed his curiosity as to what was so good about the ices. He wanted to taste them. 11 [1]

(h) Explain **using your own words** the writer's different feelings and opinions about Ahmad while he was working for him.

Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer.

The writer realised that he was simply a worker to Ahmad, a relationship of two workers lacking care or empathy since "to him I was simply a workhorse". He also felt inferior to Ahmad, a feeling Ahmad maintained by withholding knowledge from him: "to ensure that I would always know less than he did". The writer believed Ahmad to be a cold and strict man, never failing to remind him of how he lacked: "he was taunting me of course: he knew I couldn't read". 12 [3]

[Total: 16]

8 The candidate makes good use of the bullets to clearly and efficiently identify two techniques used by the palace cooks.

Mark for (e) = 2 out of 2

9 The candidate omits the key word 'two' in the first answer. It is the fact that only two families know the recipes that ensures they remain secret. The second part of the answer correctly identifies that the secrets are memorised by Ahmad and so are inaccessible.

Mark for (f) = 1 out of 2

10 The candidate correctly identifies the reason: the writer's understanding of ice making will increase.

Mark for (g)(i) = 1 out of 1

11 The candidate offers two correct answers although only one is required for this one mark question.

Mark for (g)(ii) = 1 out of 1

12 The candidate's response demonstrates a secure understanding of the writer's different feelings and opinions. Three feelings or opinions about Ahmad are required. The response is clear and focused. The candidate explains in their own words that Ahmad 'lacks care or empathy'; he is 'cold and strict'; and the writer 'felt inferior'. Each of these feelings and opinions is supported by an appropriate textual detail therefore gaining full marks.

Mark for (h) = 3 out of 3

Total mark awarded = 15 out of 16

How the candidate could improve their answer

To make efficient use of time, the candidate should have focused on providing one correct answer when required.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

Question 1

- (a) In paragraph 1, what did the writer enjoy the most about moving the ice blocks the first time he did this?

Throwing them at the ice blocks at the kitchen wall from far away and watching them break into pieces. [1] **1**

- (b) Using your own words, explain what the text means by 'I neglected my other duties.' (line 4)

He did not give that much priority to his other works tasks. [2] **2**

- (c) In paragraph 3, how did the writer feel at first about being in the ice house?

Give two details from the text to support your answer.

writer's feeling He felt joyous jubilant [3] **3**
 as, details In pleasant contrast to the extreme heat outside he felt good and for congratulated himself for skipping task of cleaning up. [4] **4**

- (d) Explain what the writer was thinking when he leant against the door and it 'surprisingly swung open'. (lines 13–14)

The writer felt learnt a lesson to and not to play with ice again thought he was trapped inside [1] **5**

1 The candidate provides a correct response: 'throwing the ice blocks at the kitchen wall'. The response also includes an attempt at the alternative correct answer: 'watching them break into pieces'. On this occasion, the own word alternative for 'shatter' is not creditworthy without the suggestion of breaking into 'small' pieces. However, only one correct answer is required and the candidate is awarded 1 mark.

Mark for (a) = 1 out of 1

2 The candidate offers a full explanation for this 'own words' question: 'not give that much priority to' is a correct meaning for 'neglect' while 'tasks' correctly explains 'duties'.

Mark for (b) = 2 out of 2

3 The candidate's choice of word 'jubilant' is not creditworthy as a feeling since it is too extreme for the context.

4 The supporting textual details are both correct. Because the 'feeling' is incorrect, 1 mark maximum is awarded for the details in this question.

Mark for (c) = 1 out of 3

5 The candidate correctly infers that the writer thought he was trapped.

Mark for (d) = 1 out of 1

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

(e) From paragraph 5, identify **two** techniques used by the palace kitchen cooks that the writer thought could be useful to improve the flavour of the ices he is making with Ahmad.

- Pureed fruits to intensify the flavours. 6
- extracted the perfumes of flowers to flavour creams and [2]

(f) Give **two** reasons why the secrets of ice had remained 'known to few'. (line 22)

- They were passed down within two families who supplied frozen ice and the secrets were kept in a stained leather-bound notebooks. 7 [2]

(g) In paragraph 7, the writer asked Ahmad what the ices they made tasted like.

(i) What reason did the writer give Ahmad for wanting to know?

- To know how they ice are meant to taste like so the writer could understand better. [1] 8

(ii) Suggest the real reason the writer was asking about the taste of the ices.

- To know what the ices tasted like. 9 [1]

(h) Explain **using your own words** the writer's different feelings and opinions about Ahmad while he was working for him.

Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer.

- The writer felt that Ahmad was selfish person as he did not share the full secrets and just wanted to share the ~~the~~ workload. He ~~the~~ also thought Ahmad was was taunting as he ^{poked} ~~taunted~~ the writer. ~~At~~ lastly, the writer thought Ahmad was perilous as he did not dare to ask what the ice tasted like for 2 years. [3] 10 [Total: 16]

6 The candidate clearly identifies the two correct techniques used by the palace cooks.

Mark for (e) = 2 out of 2

7 The candidate provides one correct reason: the secrets were passed down 'within two families'. The second reason offered – that they were kept in notebooks – is incorrect. The fact that *not all* of the secrets were in notebooks, and therefore were inaccessible, is key to being awarded marks here.

Mark for (f) = 1 out of 2

8 The candidate's response is incomplete since it needed to state *what* the writer could understand better: the making of ices.

Mark for (g)(i) = 0 out of 1

9 The candidate provides a concise correct answer.

Mark for (g)(ii) = 1 out of 1

10 The candidate provides one valid opinion about Ahmad – that he was 'selfish'. This is supported with a relevant textual detail – Ahmad's reluctance to share the secrets. The following point that 'Ahmad was taunting' is not creditworthy because this is textual detail ('He was taunting me') without providing a feeling or opinion. The final attempt is also incorrect; since 'Ahmad was perilous' does not make sense in context. Overall, this demonstrates some awareness and is awarded 1 mark.

Mark for (h) = 1 out of 3

Total mark awarded = 10 out of 16

How the candidate could improve their answer

- (f) Instead of copying from the text, the candidate needed to rework the passage details to answer the question.
- When choosing their own words, the candidate must select words which are appropriate in meaning. There are occasions, such as in (c) and (h), when this was not the case. For (c) feeling, 'happy' or 'pleased' would have been more appropriate choices.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

Question 1

- (a) In paragraph 1, what did the writer enjoy the most about moving the ice blocks the first time he did this?

The ~~is~~ curiosity of playing with the frozen slabs - of seeing how they slid away from him like eels. [1] 1

- (b) Using your own words, explain what the text means by 'I neglected my other duties.' (line 4)

As he neglected his duties ~~to~~ in a state of childish enthusiasm. He likes to play with frozen slabs. [2] 2

- (c) In paragraph 3, how did the writer feel at first about being in the ice house?

Give two details from the text to support your answer.

writer's feeling He feels that it was pleasant contrast to the shifting heat outside. [3] 3
 details Initially he was dressed in a thin shirt and short breeches he stood congratulating himself on avoiding the task of cleaning. After few minutes he began to shiver. His confidence crumbled. [4] 4

- (d) Explain what the writer was thinking when he leant against the door and it 'surprisingly swung open'. (lines 13–14)

so that he can reveal Ahmed waiting patiently outside. [1] 5

- (e) From paragraph 5, identify two techniques used by the palace kitchen cooks that the writer thought could be useful to improve the flavour of the ices he is making with Ahmad.

- He was observing how they pureed fruits to intensify the flavours
- How they extracted the perfumes of flowers to flavour ~~ice~~ cream and liqueurs. [2] 6

- (f) Give two reasons why the secrets of ice had remained 'known to few'. (line 22)

It was passed down to within two families who supplied frozen ices to the royal court. This knowledge was inscribed in leather bound ~~books~~ ~~notebooks~~. [2] 7

1 The response is incorrect. The candidate indiscriminately lifts the beginning of the paragraph without reading on to locate the correct answer.

Mark for (a) = 0 out of 1

2 The response demonstrates insecure understanding. The candidate repeats the words 'neglected' and 'duties' instead of explaining their meanings.

Mark for (b) = 0 out of 2

3 The candidate provides a supporting detail from the text instead of a 'feeling'.

4 The candidate provides one correct textual detail: 'avoided the task of cleaning'. Elsewhere, the response is unfocused and includes indiscriminate content. 1 mark is awarded for the correct textual detail.

Mark for (c) = 1 out of 3

5 The response demonstrates misunderstanding of the question. The candidate copies a section of the text which does not answer the question.

Mark for (d) = 0 out of 1

6 The candidate correctly identifies two techniques used by the cooks.

Mark for (e) = 2 out of 2

7 The candidate provides one correct answer: the secrets were passed down within two families. The lifted text which follows does not answer the question so only 1 mark is awarded.

Mark for (f) = 1 out of 2

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

(g) In paragraph 7, the writer asked Ahmad what the ices they made tasted like.

(i) What reason did the writer give Ahmad for wanting to know?

He thought he'll understand better how make these ices if he know how they are meant to taste. [1] 8

8 The answer is correct. The candidate provides a clear reason for 1 mark.

Mark for (g)(i) = 1 out of 1

(ii) Suggest the real reason the writer was asking about the taste of the ices.

He said that this is not a dish for us. They are here to entertain only. [1] 9

9 The question refers candidates to paragraph 7. The candidate's incorrect answer is text lifted from paragraph 9.

Mark for (g)(ii) = 0 out of 1

(h) Explain **using your own words** the writer's different feelings and opinions about Ahmad while he was working for him.

Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer.

He had been working for Ahmad almost two years before he dared to ask what the ices they made tasted like. He sometimes wondered why Ahmad shared his knowledge so readily with him, but soon realised that to him he was a workhorse, a creature incapable of reason. [3] 10

10 The candidate's response does not explain any feeling and opinion but simply refers to details from the text. A mark can only be awarded if a textual detail supports a correct feeling or opinion.

Mark for (h) = 0 out of 3

[Total: 16]

Total mark awarded = 5 out of 16

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The candidate could have read the questions more carefully. For (a), the word 'most' was missed so the focus of the answer was incorrect. The candidate needed to see the connection between 'most' in the question and 'best of all' in the paragraph.
- (h) The candidate should have identified feelings and opinions which are supported by the details. For example, the details in the response provide evidence that the writer is *scared* of Ahmad and that Ahmad is *selfish*.
- When a paragraph is identified in a question, the candidate needs to locate the answer within this section of the text.
- The candidate should rework and rephrase the text to answer the questions precisely, rather than simply copying from the passage.

Common mistakes and guidance for candidates

- Candidates need to make sure they read the questions carefully. They need to take careful note of key instructions such as 'own words' and paragraph and line references.
- For (b) it was not uncommon for candidates to repeat 'neglected' or 'duties'. In this own word question, candidates needed to provide a meaning or synonym for each of the two words.
- (h) Candidates must ensure that they identify feelings and opinions in response to this question.

Question 2

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

Question 2

- (a) Read this sentence from the text:

'Ice crystals cracked and crunched against my teeth, dissolving on my tongue with a sparkling sensation.' (lines 38–39)

What effect does the writer suggest about the sensation of the crystals dissolving on his tongue by using the word 'sparkling' to describe it?

that they were a bit sharp or prickly and tingled on his tongue like fireworks and he had a tickling sensation. [2]

- (b) Read this extract from the text:

'But, once I'd got over the initial strangeness, I found I could not forget that extraordinary flavour, nor the cold, frozen grittiness. It was as if the ice itself was enticing, daring me on. From then on, without Ahmad knowing, I tasted every ice confection we made.' (lines 43–46)

What does the writer want to suggest to the reader at this point in the story?

that they don't know if now ^{the writer} is going to get caught going behind the back and trying flavours or if he will come up with something new. [1]

- (c) Explain why the writer uses the word 'creature' rather than 'boy' in the expression 'a creature incapable of reason.' (line 48)

That Ahmad did not see him as a human or value him enough. He just thought of the writer as a dumb animal that had no comparison ^{with Ahmad}. [1]

- (d) What two impressions does the writer want to convey to the reader in the sentence:

'And so I learnt the subtle art of more complex water ices: 'sorbetti', in which the syrups themselves were frozen, transforming magically to mounds of glittering crystals; and 'sherbets', the most difficult and enchanting of all, expertly infused with fragrant cardamom, and resembling refrozen snow.' (lines 50–53)?

that the writer was learning more and more about the beauty of complex water ices and that he was most amazed ^{by how} expertly everything was made with most careful detail. [2]

1 The candidate's answer that 'sparkling' suggests a 'ting[ling]' and 'tickling' sensation is correct. Only 1 mark is scored since these words describe a similar effect. Further attempts at the effect are incorrect: 'sharp' and 'prickly' suggest discomfort and the 'firework' comparison lacks precision.

Mark for (a) = 1 out of 2

2 The candidate's answer demonstrates understanding that the writer's behaviour is risky since he could 'get caught'.

Mark for (b) = 1 out of 1

3 The candidate correctly explains the effect of the word 'creature' rather than 'boy', recognising that it suggests the writer is not regarded as human, is seen as an animal and is not valued. Each of these three ideas are correct; only one answer is required for 1 mark.

Mark for (c) = 1 out of 1

4 The candidate provides two correct impressions recognising that the vocabulary in the extract suggests the 'beauty' of the ices and that they are 'made with most careful detail', evident in the detailed description of their construction. Each correct impression is awarded 1 mark.

Mark for (d) = 2 out of 2

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

- (e) Identify **one example** of how the writer uses language effectively to convey his feelings once he begins his double life, in this extract from the text:

'So began a period in which I lived a double life. By day, I followed Ahmad's instructions dutifully. But by night I was a kind of alchemist, the kitchen my laboratory as I experimented wildly, without method or purpose, trying increasingly outlandish and ridiculous combinations of flavours and ingredients. I froze soft cheeses, vegetable juices, even soups, hoping to chance on something – some method, some key – something that could unlock the deepest, frozen secrets of ice cream.' (lines 61–66)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified.

example ...I...experimented...wildly..... 5

explanation The writer felt free like an animal in the wild he could do anything without being trapped to follow orders or being

scared of getting scolded. He was open to all ideas and let his imagination flow with no restriction until he found ^{the} right combination. He felt like an unstoppable force. [3] 6

[Total: 9]

- 5 The example selected is both relevant and precise and is awarded 1 mark.

- 6 The explanation demonstrates a clear understanding of the effect of the selected example. The response explores the associations of the word 'wildly': the idea of being 'free'; not having to 'follow orders'; letting 'his imagination flow'; and feeling like 'an unstoppable force'. This is a very full response and two of these effects would have been sufficient for maximum marks.

Mark for (e) = 3 out of 3

Total mark awarded = 8 out of 9

How the candidate could improve their answer

- (a), (c) The candidate could have avoided repeating ideas, thereby allowing more efficient use of their time.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

Question 2

- (a) Read this sentence from the text:

'Ice crystals cracked and crunched against my teeth, dissolving on my tongue with a sparkling sensation.' (lines 38–39)

What effect does the writer suggest about the sensation of the crystals dissolving on his tongue by using the word 'sparkling' to describe it?

He suggests that the crystals moved around in his tongue almost as they sparked. Sparkling as in tiny explosions in form of sparks. [2]

- (b) Read this extract from the text:

'But, once I'd got over the initial strangeness, I found I could not forget that extraordinary flavour, nor the cold, frozen grittiness. It was as if the ice itself was enticing, daring me on. From then on, without Ahmad knowing, I tasted every ice confection we made.' (lines 43–46)

What does the writer want to suggest to the reader at this point in the story?

He started having an addiction to the ices and showed his more interest in it. [1]

- (c) Explain why the writer uses the word 'creature' rather than 'boy' in the expression 'a creature incapable of reason.' (line 48)

Ahmad did not care about who works for him, just if they work for him as writer uses work horse as an example. [1]

- (d) What two impressions does the writer want to convey to the reader in the sentence:

'And so I learnt the subtle art of more complex water ices: 'sorbetti', in which the syrups themselves were frozen, transforming magically to mounds of glittering crystals; and 'sherbets', the most difficult and enchanting of all, expertly infused with fragrant cardamom, and resembling refrozen snow.' (lines 50–53)?

He conveys that he had now learnt special techniques only mastered by few. He conveys his dedication to the work trying to create new items by learning new methods. [2]

- (e) Identify one example of how the writer uses language effectively to convey his feelings once he begins his double life, in this extract from the text:

'So began a period in which I lived a double life. By day, I followed Ahmad's instructions dutifully. But by night I was a kind of alchemist, the kitchen my laboratory as I experimented wildly, without method or purpose, trying increasingly outlandish and ridiculous combinations of flavours and ingredients. I froze soft cheeses, vegetable juices, even soups, hoping to chance on something – some method, some key – something that could unlock the deepest, frozen secrets of ice cream.' (lines 61–66)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified.

example I was a kind of alchemist [5]

explanation He referred to him as an alchemist as he made the kitchen into his personal lab experimenting and trying to make something which would unlock the secrets of ice creams. [3]

[Total: 9]

1 The candidate offers one correct effect likening the sensation to 'tiny explosions'. The opportunity for a second mark has been missed since in the rest of the response the word 'sparkling' is repeated as 'sparked' and 'sparks' rather than being explained in their own words so understanding of the effect is not fully secure.

Mark for (a) = 1 out of 2

2 The candidate's answer, likening the writer's behaviour to 'an addiction', is correct.

Mark for (b) = 1 out of 1

3 The candidate's response ('did not care about') is too general and does not relate specifically to the comparison of the writer to a 'creature'.

Mark for (c) = 0 out of 1

4 The candidate provides one correct impression that ice making requires skill. This is evidenced in the words 'special techniques' and 'mastered'. The second sentence is a general overview of the situation rather than the effect of specific vocabulary or an image so the second mark is not awarded.

Mark for (d) = 1 out of 2

5 The candidate selects a relevant and precise example. This is awarded 1 mark.

6 This candidate's answer is incorrect as it does not explain the impression the writer creates. Instead, it provides narrative detail about what is happening in the extract as a whole.

Mark for (e) = 1 out of 3

Total mark awarded = 4 out of 9

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The candidate should focus on individual words or an image and explain their effect rather than giving a general overview of the situation or event. In **(e)**, for example, the candidate could have explained what an alchemist and the writer have in common.
- **(e)** The candidate's explanation must only focus on the words in the selected example.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

Question 2

(a) Read this sentence from the text:

'Ice crystals cracked and crunched against my teeth, dissolving on my tongue with a sparkling sensation.' (lines 38–39)

What effect does the writer suggest about the sensation of the crystals dissolving on his tongue by using the word 'sparkling' to describe it?

There were small ice pieces which would ~~also~~ melt instantly when ever it touched the tongue. 1 [2]

(b) Read this extract from the text:

'But, once I'd got over the initial strangeness, I found I could not forget that extraordinary flavour, nor the cold, frozen grittiness. It was as if the ice itself was enticing, daring me on. From then on, without Ahmad knowing, I tasted every ice confection we made.' (lines 43–46)

What does the writer want to suggest to the reader at this point in the story?

It was so attractive that he could not resist of trying it again because of its rich flavour and ice. 2 [1]

(c) Explain why the writer uses the word 'creature' rather than 'boy' in the expression 'a creature incapable of reason.' (line 48)

He was just one of the simple creatures with no importance. 3 [1]

(d) What **two** impressions does the writer want to convey to the reader in the sentence:

'And so I learnt the subtle art of more complex water ices: 'sorbetti', in which the syrups themselves were frozen, transforming magically to mounds of glittering crystals; and 'sherbets', the most difficult and enchanting of all, expertly infused with fragrant cardamom, and resembling refrozen snow.' (lines 50–53)?

Everything was done naturally which helped to create such type of ices. 4 [2]

(e) Identify **one example** of how the writer uses language effectively to convey his feelings once he begins his double life, in this extract from the text:

'So began a period in which I lived a double life. By day, I followed Ahmad's instructions dutifully. But by night I was a kind of alchemist, the kitchen my laboratory as I experimented wildly, without method or purpose, trying increasingly outlandish and ridiculous combinations of flavours and ingredients. I froze soft cheeses, vegetable juices, even soups, hoping to chance on something – some method, some key – something that could unlock the deepest, frozen secrets of ice cream.' (lines 61–66)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified.

example *In the morning he was ^{a worker} ~~not a worker~~ and at night he was an inventor.* 5

explanation *In the morning he used to work as an employee and* 6

would only do it in the way it was ordered and at night he 6

used to make the flavours which he liked to make and invent

different flavours. [3]

[Total: 9]

1 The candidate's response is incorrect. It does not focus on the effect of the word 'sparkling'.

Mark for (a) = 0 out of 2

2 The candidate's response is correct. It demonstrates understanding of the writer's inability to stop tasting the ices with 'he could not resist'.

Mark for (b) = 1 out of 1

3 The candidate understands the connotation of 'creature' which suggests the writer was considered to be of 'no importance'.

Mark for (c) = 1 out of 1

4 The candidate's response is incorrect. It is a general comment on the making of ices instead of focusing on the vocabulary and explaining the impressions conveyed by the details in the extract.

Mark for (d) = 0 out of 2

5 The candidate does not select a relevant and precise example from the extract.

6 Without a valid example, the candidate's explanation is not creditworthy.

Mark for (e) = 0 out of 3

Total mark awarded = 2 out of 9

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The candidate needed to give more careful consideration to the vocabulary and images in the extracts.
- The candidate needed to read the questions carefully, such as **(a)** which directed the candidate specifically to the word 'sparkling', and **(e)** which instructed the candidate to identify one example and provided a designated space in which the example should be written.

Common mistakes and guidance for candidates

- Candidates need to recognise that Question 2 is testing understanding of the use of language – that is the effect of vocabulary, an image or a structural feature. Sub-questions might ask for an *effect*, an *impression* or what is being *suggested*. Candidates should consider the associations, connotations, pictures and feelings created by individual words or an image.
- Some candidates missed the opportunity to gain an additional mark when two ideas or impressions are required for maximum marks. Candidates should recognise the correlation between the number of marks available and the number of ideas required.
- It was not necessary for candidates to identify language features, such as metaphor or personification; no marks are awarded for this. The real skill lies in explaining *how* these features are effective.
- Candidates' examples for **(e)** were often too long. Candidates should select the example carefully, ensuring that it does not exceed the designated space and that it is rich enough in connotation and suggestion for two ideas to be confidently explained. Candidates must not substitute words with line references or ellipses.

Question 3

Example Candidate Response – high

Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer and up to 10 marks for the quality of your writing.

1 In 1987 'Authentic Travel' was founded by Bob Hunter
 who expanded it globally in 1998 to 130 countries with
 1200 tour guides. Bob Hunter thinks a great number of
 people would love backpacking around the world, but, are
 concerned about their safety. This is one of the reasons he
 created his company which provides an assisted form of
 backpacking where ~~not~~ customers stay in nice rooms
 with good facilities without losing the experience of taking
 in the culture of the country in the way that backpackers
 do. The travelling plan allows for freedom meaning people
 can go somewhere alone and they can come back to
 the group whenever they desire, as many activities overseas
 require a group to experience. Other travel companies copy Bob
 Hunter and take their customers to isolated areas with no
 proper facilities, which is why his company is the best way

Examiner comments

- 1 Reading: The candidate includes a good range of relevant ideas. The opening sentence covers the company's date of origin, its global destinations and also touches on the appeal of tour guides.
- 2 Writing: The opening is focused on the task with three relevant ideas concisely embedded in the first sentence.
- 3 Writing: Original structures enhance fluency and organisation. The accurate use of relative pronouns ('who expanded...'; 'which provides...'; 'which is why...') organises and shapes the candidate's content.
- 4 Reading: There is some digression when the candidate explains what prevents people backpacking. The content then becomes more relevant with reference to the company's aim to provide 'assisted' travel and 'good' accommodation, along with the opportunity to 'take in' the country's culture.
- 5 Writing: The summary is in the candidate's own words and is expressed clearly. Where text vocabulary has been used, such as 'special interest', it is embedded into original structures. Own word vocabulary choices, such as 'assisted... backpacking' or 'whenever they *desire*', are mostly appropriate and contribute to a formal register.
- 6 Reading: The candidate carefully selects ideas about the flexible travel plan allowing an individual to join the group when they desire, while noting that some activities 'require a group'.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

7 to experience travelling, as well as special interest travelling like going on food tours, where you can taste and cook the various food.

Staying in a black-hole resort is an amazing experience. It helps you take a break from your busy life and lets you enjoy nature with no distractions from your phone or other devices. It helps you to appreciate the luxuries that you have access to every single day and helps you find enjoyment in little things. Apart from that there's so many activities available like hiking, sightseeing and taking pictures along with many other activities. [5]

[Total: 25]

7 Reading: The observation about what other travel companies do is not relevant, but the summary ends recognising the appeal of special interest travel.

Mark for (a) = 16 out of 20

Reading – Level 4 = 8 out of 10
Writing – Level 4 = 8 out of 10

8 The candidate selects specific details from the relevant paragraph – paragraph 6 – recognising that the perspective is that of a 'busy city' person and that at the black-hole resort phones do not work.

9 The candidate develops these ideas with inference: the resort provides a break for a busy person; one can enjoy nature without the distraction of a phone; and it makes one appreciate 'the luxuries' while enjoying the 'little things' in life.

10 The list of activities suggests some misunderstanding since the passage states that at a black-hole resort one does 'nothing for a week'.

Mark for (b) = 4 out of 5

**Total mark awarded =
20 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

(a)

- The candidate needed to avoid content which did not explicitly answer the question. This would have allowed for the skilful selection of more relevant content points.
- The candidate could have included a greater range of vocabulary, avoiding simple words like 'nice'.

(b)

- The candidate should have carefully read all the relevant content in Text B to ensure full understanding of what a black-hole resort offers.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

1 Staying in clean and comfortable hotels and
 1 guest houses rather than musty, old and questionable
 hotels ^{while} and still being able to step outside
 and experience a different culture with new 2
 people without being isolated from the activities
 of everyday life and the locals. The schedule is
 replaceable and customers can join in with the
 group anytime they want. Although solo travellers can
 3 change their schedule, some activities require
 a group. Rather than rotting in a hotel pool,
 customers get to enjoy stuff that is happening
 outside the resort. Travel companies provide
 destination with no water or electricity and
 it is highly unlikable that people would 4
 5 like to stay in a place with no basic supplies
 or smartphones and internet. Authentic traveler
 provides the opposite of such black-hole
 resorts and back packing trips. The future
 of the company lies in extreme adventures
 and food trips that prove to be famous. 6

1 Reading: The candidate selects relevant ideas from the third paragraph, identifying the 'clean and comfortable hotels' and being able to 'experience a different culture'. The candidate however misses relevant content points in paragraphs 1 and 2.

2 Writing: The summary opens abruptly with the candidate embedding text phrases into some original constructions. The construction of this opening is insecure.

3 Reading: Relevant ideas are selected from the fourth paragraph. The candidate identifies the appeal of being able to join 'the group any time they want' as well as the fact that 'some activities require a group'.

4 Writing: The second half of the summary is mainly in the candidate's own words and structures. The writing is generally clear. However, vocabulary choices are not always appropriate: 'the schedule is *replaceable*'; '*rotting* in a hotel pool'; it is highly *unlikable*'.

5 Reading: The candidate loses focus on the task by commenting on what other travel companies offer.

6 Writing: The candidate sensibly follows the advice to write no more than 150 words.

Mark for (a) = 10 out of 20

Reading – Level 3 = 5 out of 10

Writing – Level 3 = 5 out of 10

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

I believe no holiday is boring. Whether you travel to France or just a farm in the country side, holidays are always exciting, it just depends on the company you take even if it is yourself. 'Black-hole' resorts give you a chance to enjoy nature without being buried in the stress of the internet and it ~~also~~ also gives you a chance to [5]
sonder.

[Total: 25]

7 The candidate writes an unnecessarily lengthy introduction over four lines. Comments here are too general to be creditworthy. The response should be focused on 'your holiday' at a black-hole resort.

8 In the second half of the answer, the candidate focuses on black-hole resorts. The response includes a text detail of being without internet ('impossible to get online'). There is some development in the suggestion of enjoying nature and the benefit of being removed from 'stress'. The candidate's final comment is unclear.

Mark for (b) = 2 out of 5

**Total mark awarded =
12 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

(a)

- The candidate could have read the opening paragraphs more carefully to locate a wider range of content points.
- The candidate needed to include only content which was relevant to the task to ensure the answer was succinct.
- The candidate could have included more linking devices to organise the summary.
- The candidate needed to select vocabulary choices which were appropriate.

(b)

- The candidate could have avoided a lengthy and general introduction and instead used the time and designated space to answer the question more succinctly.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

- 1 The basic point of getting a genuine, ~~at~~ authentic experience which is reflected in the name proved to be a winner. Back in Australia all the people would
- 2 enjoy backpacking overseas but ~~have~~ had the tension of safety so didn't ~~have~~ had the confidence to do it by themselves. 3
- 4 So I, began researching more suitable idea of backpacking, which didn't involve staying at dirty, musty places. The moment guests walked out their hotel they would experience a different culture and wouldn't feel left out from the local people. There are some pluses to travelling solo. 5
- 6 as the ~~ex~~ client knows they can rejoin the group whenever they want. Now much more people realise there's so much stuff going on.

1 Reading: The response refers to some ideas in the text; the first being that the company provides a 'genuine' experience. This same idea is repeated later with reference to 'a different culture' but can only be credited once.

2 Reading: This content does not answer the question. It misses the point that the travel company provides safety, suggesting the task is not fully understood. The extensive copying also suggests an insecure understanding of the text.

3 Writing: The candidate tracks through the text lifting phrases. Structures tend to be text-based with very occasional rewording so there is not much that is the candidate's original own words. When changes are made, such as 'didn't have the confidence' to 'didn't had the confidence', errors impede clarity.

4 Reading: The candidate focuses on what Bob Hunter's travel company does not offer rather than what would 'appeal' so focus on the task is lost.

5 Writing: The candidate occasionally offers some original vocabulary including 'client' for 'customer'. Elsewhere, vocabulary is not always appropriate, such as 'the basic point' and 'the tension of safety'.

6 Reading: The idea of a flexible schedule for solo travellers who can join a group is touched on, but it is blurred by focusing on the 'pluses' of solo travelling in general rather than the 'appeal' of the particular travel company.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

...outside the resort which the people want to experience. Therefore, I notice more conventional travel companies who try to copy us by saying 'busy city people care real life'. Some of the destinations they are providing are impossible to get online in, as well as there are no reliable water or electricity supplies. At the same time we also offer fabulous foodie trips which are proving to be popular.

(b) Imagine you are someone who lives in a city and has recently been on holiday at a 'black-hole resort'. You really enjoyed your stay.

You are asked to give feedback about your holiday in a survey.

Give your answer to the survey question, using information from the text.

The survey question: Some people think that a holiday at a 'black-hole resort' would be boring.

What is your opinion and why?

Your answer:

In my opinion it is no way near being boring, its all rumours that it is a boring place to visit. People should definitely go over there - when I had went over there I got to see new people, different cultures and overall it felt amazing. With 24/7 clean water and electricity supplies there was nothing to worry about.

7 Writing: There is little evidence of organisation. Ideas do not connect and linking devices such as 'Therefore' and 'At the same time' are incorrect.

8 Reading: The candidate does not navigate around the redundant content. There is a lot of irrelevant detail about black-hole resorts showing limited evidence of selection.

9 Writing: The summary lacks concision. It includes lengthy sections of irrelevant content and repetition, taking it over the word limit.

10 Reading: The summary ends with a relevant content point about the 'foodie trips'.

Mark for (a) = 4 out of 20

Reading – Level 1 = 2 out of 10

Writing – Level 1 = 2 out of 10

11 The response opens with a lengthy introduction comprising half of the designated answer space.

12 The candidate is confusing a Bob Hunter holiday with a holiday at a black-hole resort so content is selected from the incorrect part of Text B. The response misses the fact that at a black-hole resort one does 'nothing for a week'.

13 There is further misunderstanding. The candidate has misread the text: a black-hole resort has unreliable water and electricity supplies.

Mark for (b) = 0 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 4 out of 25

How the candidate could improve their answer

(a)

- The candidate should only have selected content that was relevant to the task.
- The candidate needed to use their own words and avoid copying sections of text.
- The candidate should have written no more than 150 words.
- The candidate could have included correct linking devices to ensure ideas connected and flowed.

(b)

- Before answering, the candidate should have located and reread the section in the text relevant to the question: paragraph 6 focuses on black-hole resorts.
- Details from the relevant paragraph should have been used to support the perspective targeted in the question.
- The candidate needed to avoid a lengthy introduction which repeated the question and instead begin including text detail from the start.

Common mistakes and guidance for candidates

(a)

- Candidates sometimes lost sight of the question and included indiscriminate and excess content. Candidates must read the question carefully and only select ideas relevant to the task.
- Summaries which were overlong lacked concision. Candidates should adhere to the 150 word limit. Counting words is not an efficient use of time; however, candidates ought to be able to estimate the number of words they write.
- Some summaries were written in the first person and in a conversational style. Instead, the register for a summary should be formal and candidates should avoid phrases, such as 'on the flip side' or 'moving on'. More appropriate linking devices would be 'however' or 'furthermore'.
- Vocabulary was not always precise or appropriate. Candidates must demonstrate a range of vocabulary but, at the same time, obscure vocabulary should be avoided.
- Candidates who relied on copying sections of the text missed opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the passage and their writing skills. Candidates needed to rephrase and reshape the relevant ideas in the text.

(b)

- Candidates did not always recognise the perspective they were to take. The question needs to be read very carefully. The candidate must then refer back to the relevant sections in Text B, including where the person identified in the question is mentioned.
- Candidates sometimes unadvisedly offered their own opinions or generalised what they had read. The response must be based on details in the text which are to be extended and developed. The viewpoint must be consistent throughout the response.
- Seven lines were allocated to answer this question. Some candidates' introductions were unnecessarily long and repetitive. Candidates needed to make more efficient use of the designated space by identifying and developing the relevant ideas from the start of their response.

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