

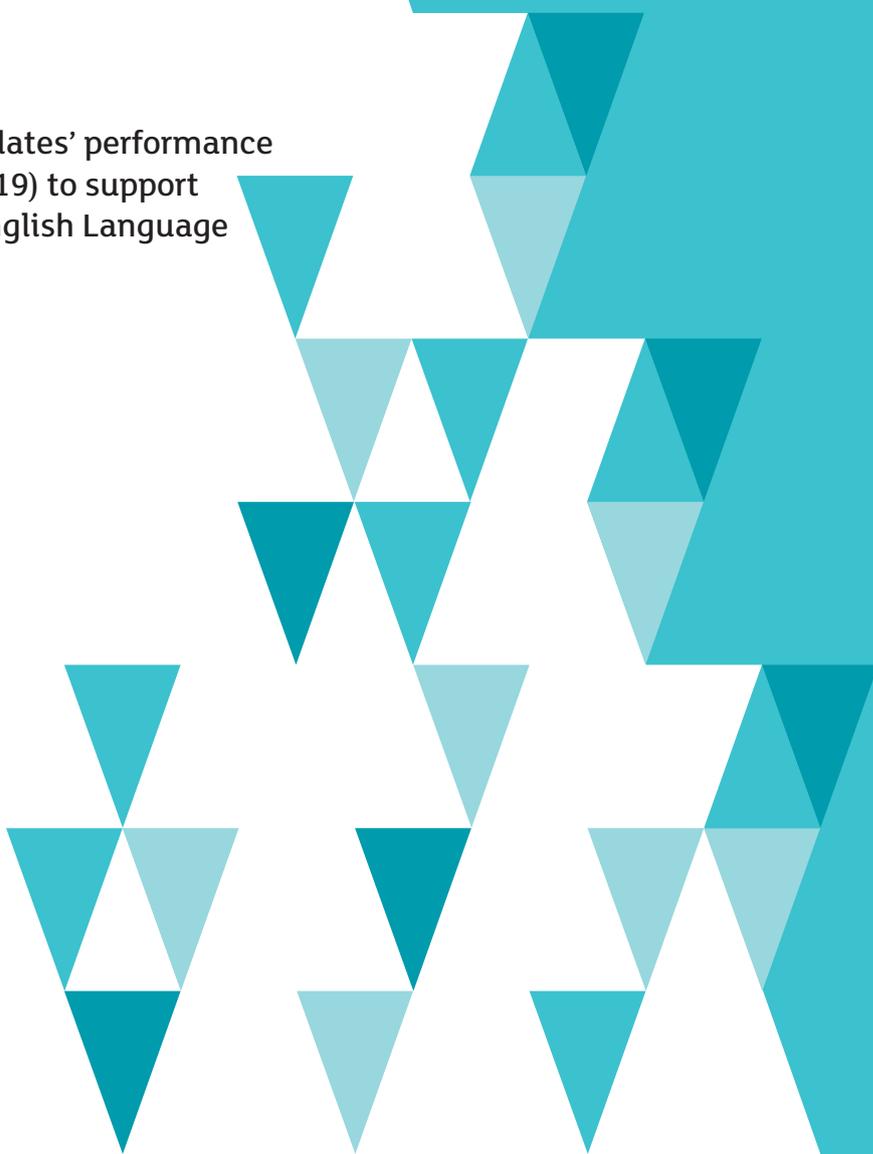
# GCSE



## CCEA GCSE Exemplifying Examination Performance English Language Grade A

This is an exemplification of candidates' performance in GCSE examinations (Summer 2019) to support the teaching and learning of the English Language specification.

Updated: 22 December 2020



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# EXEMPLIFYING EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

## GCSE English Language

### Introduction

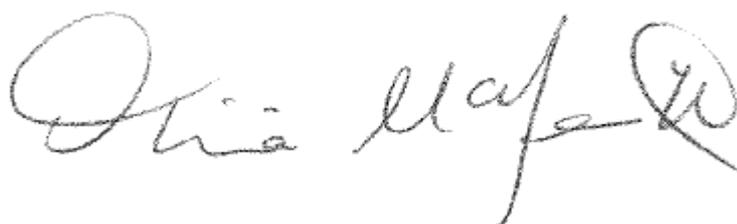
These materials illustrate aspects of performance from the 2019 summer GCSE examination series of CCEA's revised GCSE Specification in 2017.

Students' grade A responses are reproduced verbatim and accompanied by commentaries written by senior examiners. The commentaries draw attention to the strengths of the students' responses and indicate, where appropriate, deficiencies and how improvements could be made.

It is intended that the materials should provide a benchmark of candidate performance and help teachers and students to raise standards.

For further details of our support package, please visit our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivia McNeill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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## **GCSE: English Language**

### **Unit 1: Writing for Purpose and Audience and Reading to Access Non-fiction and Media Texts**

**Grade: A Exemplar**



## Section A: Writing for Purpose and Audience

**A single task: 55 minutes. Mark allocation: 87 marks**

Up to **57 marks** are available for an **organised and engaging** piece of writing that **matches form and purpose with audience**.

Up to **30 marks** are available for the use of a **range of sentence structures** and **accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar**.

**Task 1:** Spend **55 minutes** on this task.

Write an article for your school magazine persuading the readers to agree  
with your views on the following question:

**“Should school uniform have a place in 21st century schools?”**

You are advised to spend:

- **15 minutes** thinking and planning your response
- **30 minutes** writing the article
- **10 minutes** checking your writing

**Planning Space:**

Article for your school magazine:

## Student's response

### *The Rathmore Ramble*

*6 hours a day ... 5 days a week ... 10 months a year .... We spend around 80% of our childhood sitting behind a desk, learning for our future. The sad truth is, school is essential, we have no other choice and I believe uniform is essential too.*

*We see all these new 'American' movies set in a highschool where these group of students are the main focus and it shows their struggles or successes through school. It is great. However, if you sit down and think about it these kids aren't required to wear a uniform, none of them have to. In every movie that comes out we don't see one single person wear a blazer, shirt and tie, but there is a catch, they get no work done. This is the common denominator in every movie that arrives to our screens. As great as it sounds not doing work in school results in no grades, no grades results in no jobs, no jobs results in no money and eventually our society would quickly fall apart.*

*I believe uniform is the key to success at school. It unlocks the potential you have and controls the environment of our school. Without uniform there would be havoc, rules would not have importance and your safety and your sense of belonging would have an immediate threat. Uniform reinforces rules. If people follow this rule then they will follow other essential rules in school, ensuring that you are safe in school.*

*When we wear our uniform, we wear it with pride, when we walk into the classroom we know we will not be judged, when we sit down we will look around and see a sea of blue, and then we will realise that we are all equal. No one can be judged on their fashion sense, no one can be judged on how they present themselves, no one can be judged on anything, the only thing that separates you from the person you sit beside is your personality, gender and religious beliefs. This sense of equalness evokes a sense of belonging, from the assembly hall, to the classroom and even to the canteen. It advertises the school and shows to the public that they care about their students and they want to ensure that their school days really are the 'best days of their lives.'*

*The common counter to my argument is that 'uniform is too expensive,' yes we all know that a blazer can cost up to £100 but when ever do you wear something else for over 200 days a year. You certainly get your money's worth and the delight is most blazers last 2-3 years anyway meaning it could only cost you less than 10p a day, that really is just loose change that would often be forgotten about in the deep pockets of our blazers. I am fully aware that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century some families just cant afford to buy 3-4 blazers for their children but I assure you the school and other organisations are there to help. Infact just recently the school opened up a campaign for a clothing bank. Isn't that just wonderful!*

*In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we are striving away from all the ugly parts of society. Slavery has been abolished, racism is being kicked out, punishment in schools has been abandoned however one thing that has remained is uniform, over the thousands of years of formal education there has always been uniform. Is this a coincidence? Uniform gives us pride, it gives us belonging, it gives us importance and I ask anyone who is reading this... don't you agree?*

## Examiner's comments

Overall, the development and style of this response is best described as “increasingly competent” and “closely aligned to purpose” (CL 4). The engagement of the audience is sustained throughout the piece. This is achieved in part through “proficient” structuring and the “positive use of structural and linguistic devices” (CL 4). For example, the use of an alliterative title, conscious sentence structuring and inclusive pronouns at the start of the article are clearly intended to create an appropriate tone and capture interest from the outset. This interest is maintained in the body of the response with techniques such as repetition, rule of three and a conscious varying of sentence lengths and types for persuasive effect. Regarding purpose and audience the candidate has clearly demonstrated “a confident handling of purpose” alongside “a consciously developed rapport with the specified audience” (CL 5). This is achieved through a range of precisely selected apposite language and a consciously targeted use of direct appeal to connect positively to the reader.

Competence Level Strands 445      47 marks

The candidate utilises a “wide range of sentence structures” in an “assured” way clearly intended to “enhance the overall effect in terms of clarity, purpose and audience” (CL 5). This manipulation of sentence structuring throughout the piece ensures engagement with the candidate’s views and helps establish the positive rapport with the audience which is a strength evident in this piece of writing. There are lapses in punctuation, particularly in the use of a comma when an appropriate end stop could have been used. Overall, however, the use of punctuation and grammar sustain clarity and “actively engage the audience” (CL 4). Spelling of most words is accurate with only a few errors in evidence and the candidate consciously utilised an “extended vocabulary” for effect (CL 4).

Competence Level Strands 544      25 marks

## Section B: Reading to Access Non-Fiction and Media Texts

Four tasks: 50 minutes. Mark allocation: 63 marks

### Reading Non-fiction

**Tasks 2 and 3** are based on two extracts from a newspaper article about the health problems created by fizzy drinks.

**Task 2:** Spend **15 minutes** on this task.

**Read the text below. Explain how the writer has used language to share his concerns about fizzy drinks. Present evidence to support your comments.**

Once upon a time a sugary, fizzy drink was an occasional treat. Now, many of us think nothing of having at least one every day. Now, we use them as instant pick-me-ups and even as 'healthy' sports aids. Now, no trip to the cinema is complete without a supersize fizzy drink!

It's no surprise to learn, then, that our consumption of these drinks has more than doubled since 1985 and that, in the last year, we swallowed an astonishing 14,585 million litres! We've long suspected that this is not good for us – but could these 'innocent' treats be so dangerous that they should carry health warnings such as those printed on cigarette packets?

New medical studies have been throwing up very worrying results. Even moderate consumption – a can a day, or just two a week – causes us to pile on weight. These drinks also contribute to serious, long-term health problems such as heart disease, liver failure, high blood pressure and Type 2 Diabetes. We may like our fizzy drinks but the medical evidence is stacking up against them!

© *Having seen the evidence, I don't touch fizzy drinks any more. Frankly they're evil* by John Naish.  
Published by Daily Mail, 31 July 2012

## Student's response

*In the opening of this extract the writer uses the phrase “once upon a time” this cliché indicates the childlike nature of this topic and targets young people as they are the most in danger as a result of overconsumption of fizzy drinks. The writer is showing his concerns for young people.*

*secondly he makes use of the anaphora of ‘Now ... Now... Now ....’ The repetition of the word ‘Now’ builds up a sense of urgency in his tone. This is an issue that needs to be acted fast on and John Nash is expressing his concerns about this.*

*Furthermore the repetition of ‘I’ in each paragraph continually injects a tone of urgency and concern once more and he doesn’t let himself stray away from his main concern, which is the overconsumption of fizzy drinks.*

*In addition in the opening paragraph the writer uses short-sentence structure which adds emphasis on his urgency and has an impact on the reader as they begin to understand his urgency.*

*In the second paragraph John Nash makes use of detailed statistics such as ‘doubled since 1985’, ‘astonishing 14,585 million litres.’ The use of detailed statistics and also the use of a hyphen after ‘not good for us’ allow the reader to stop and think, to take in these ugly stats and think about the writers concern and whether or not they feel the same way too. The use of rhetorical question at the end of this paragraph also makes the reader think about this “.....cigarette packets?”*

*John Nash outlines the threats if this comes on “heart disease, liver failure, type 2 diabetes.” This use of triad scares the reader and the evaluate whether or not they want to sit back and do nothing. Throughout this extract he is encouraging the readers to pay attention and he uses language to persuade them into joining him on his quest to get rid his concern.*

## Examiner's comments

The candidate selected and commented on a series of valid examples of language from the text which conveyed the writer's concerns about fizzy drinks (CL 4). The candidate's interpretation of the writer's intentions is best described as “competent overall” (CL 3). Elements of the writer's craft such as the use of repetition, statistics and a hyphen were recognised and effectively commented on (CL 3). For example, “The repetition of the word ‘Now’ builds up a sense of urgency in his tone”/ “allow the reader to...take in these ugly stats and think about the writers concern and whether or not they feel the same way too”. It is worth noting that the mark of 16 awarded is the maximum mark available for this strand selection.

Competence Level Strands 433      16 marks

**Task 3:** Spend **10 minutes** on this task.

In this part of the article, the writer focuses on the harmful effects caused to children by fizzy drinks.

**Read the text below. In your own words, explain two of the harmful effects highlighted by the writer: select one effect from each paragraph. Present two pieces of supporting evidence from the text for each effect.**

A study of children has found that giving them fizzy drinks encourages a harmful, life-time habit – craving fizzy drinks. Consuming fizzy drinks made the children want to drink more often, even when they were not actually thirsty. Also, what they wanted was more sugary, fizzy drinks. Children who were given water or fruit juice in the tests didn't show this unnecessary need to drink. The children also displayed addict-like responses, such as tantrums, restlessness and distress when their fizzy drink consumption was stopped.

Other research suggests fizzy drinks twist children's appetites so they hunger for junk food, putting them at risk of obesity in later life. This study found that children aged between three and five, when given fizzy drinks, avoided eating vegetables. Instead, they went for foods such as chips, burgers and crisps. This did not happen when the children were given water to drink. The researchers concluded that children who consume fizzy drinks are far more likely to develop a taste for high-calorie, high-salt food.

© *Having seen the evidence, I don't touch fizzy drinks any more. Frankly they're evil* by John Naish.  
Published by Daily Mail, 31 July 2012

**(a)** First harmful effect: [4]

### Student's response

*Children become addicted and suffer from symptoms that make them behave unusually and not normally whenever fizzy drink consumption has stopped.*

### Examiner's comments

This response evidences a straightforward explanation of a harmful effect caused by fizzy drinks to children from the first paragraph of the text. This summary also demonstrates a mainly valid attempt in the use of the candidate's own words.

2 marks

**(b)** Two pieces of supporting evidence: [2]

### Student's response

*'The children also displayed addict like responses'  
'tantrums, restlessness and distress when their fizzy drink consumption stopped.*

### Examiner's comments

Two pieces of valid evidence quoted from the first paragraph in support of the explanation offered in 3(a).

2 marks

**(c)** Second harmful effect: [4]

### Student's response

*Children are at a high risk of childhood obesity due to their crave for high calorie, high salt foods.*

### Examiner's comments

This response evidences a straightforward explanation of a harmful effect caused by fizzy drinks to children from the second paragraph of the text. This summary also demonstrates a mainly valid attempt in the use of the candidate's own words.

2 marks

**(d)** Two pieces of supporting evidence: [2]

### Student's response

*'avoided eating vegetables, instead they went for foods such as chips, burgers and crisps'  
'children who consume fizzy drinks are far more likely to develop a taste for high calorie, high salt foods'*

### Examiner's comments

Two pieces of valid evidence quoted from the second paragraph in support of the explanation offered in 3(c).

2 marks

## Reading Media Texts [20]

**Tasks 4 and 5** are based on advertising material for the Lyceum Theatre’s modern version of “Cinderella”. The aim of this advertising material is to promote this show as an enjoyable family experience.

**Task 4:** Spend **17 minutes** on this task.

Read the text below. **Explain how language has been used to promote this show.**

**Present evidence to support your comments.**

One day her prince will come...along with a TV crew and a personal stylist!

A new twist on a classic tale, this Cinderella is relocated to modern-day Paris where she lives with her father and longs for the love and glamour of a rather unique Prince. Her world is shattered by the arrival of the wonderfully hilarious and awful “new sisters” and their truly terrifying mother, Monique. Where is a Fairy Godmother when you need one?

Featuring original songs with magic, spells and lots of laughs, the Royal Lyceum Theatre will deliver another high-quality production to delight families this Christmas.

This new version of a much-loved fairy tale is by the well-known writer, director and performer, Johnny McKnight. We are delighted to bring the premiere of his version of *Cinderella* to the Lyceum Theatre. A 21st century tale of love and loss.

© Johnny McKnight (writer) with kind permission

## Student’s response

*In the opening line of this extract ellipsis is used to add mystery and surprise when it says “come ...along” This use of ellipsis attracts the reader because it begins with a feeling of uncertainty but then quickly changes into a tone of delight and warmth. This engages the reader and makes them read on, there is also use of an exclamation mark “stylist!” to inject a tone of excitement which appeals to the reader. It promotes the show from the start.*

*Secondly the use of metaphorical language “the world is shattered” and the contradicting description of the “hilarious and awful sisters in the second paragraph show that not on is right for Cinderella and that from the start things are bad for her, this use of language makes the reader have sympathy for her and the use of alliteration in the description of their mother “truly terrifying” promotes Cinderellas problems and therefore force the reader to have more sympathy for her. This makes them feel engaged and further interested in this show.*

*Furthermore the use of the ?? “magic spells and lots of laughs” present this show as very positive to the reader and they are assured that the Royal ?? theatre will deliver another high quality production. The use of the word “another” is significant because it ensures the reader that they have real quality before and thus will have quality once again thus making the reader assured and engaged as the shows has a sense that it is worth it. It promotes the theatre as very successful. Finally the ending leaves a dramatic touch on the reader. The strong use of the words “loss and love” appeal to the readers emotions and allow them to feel connected to this ?? and once again allow this show to be promoted to them.*

### **Examiner’s comments**

A succinct, focused response which offers a scrutiny of a “precise selection” of a series of language strategies used to promote the show (CL 5). The candidate’s interpretation and evaluation of these strategies, “competently demonstrates a valid understanding” (CL 4) and “A generally evaluative approach” (CL 4). This is evident in comments such as: “...there is also use of an exclamation mark ‘stylist!’ to inject a tone of excitement which appeals to the reader. It promotes the show from the start”/ “...the use of the triad ‘magic, spells and lots of laughs’ presents this show as very positive to the reader...assured...will deliver another high-quality production”.

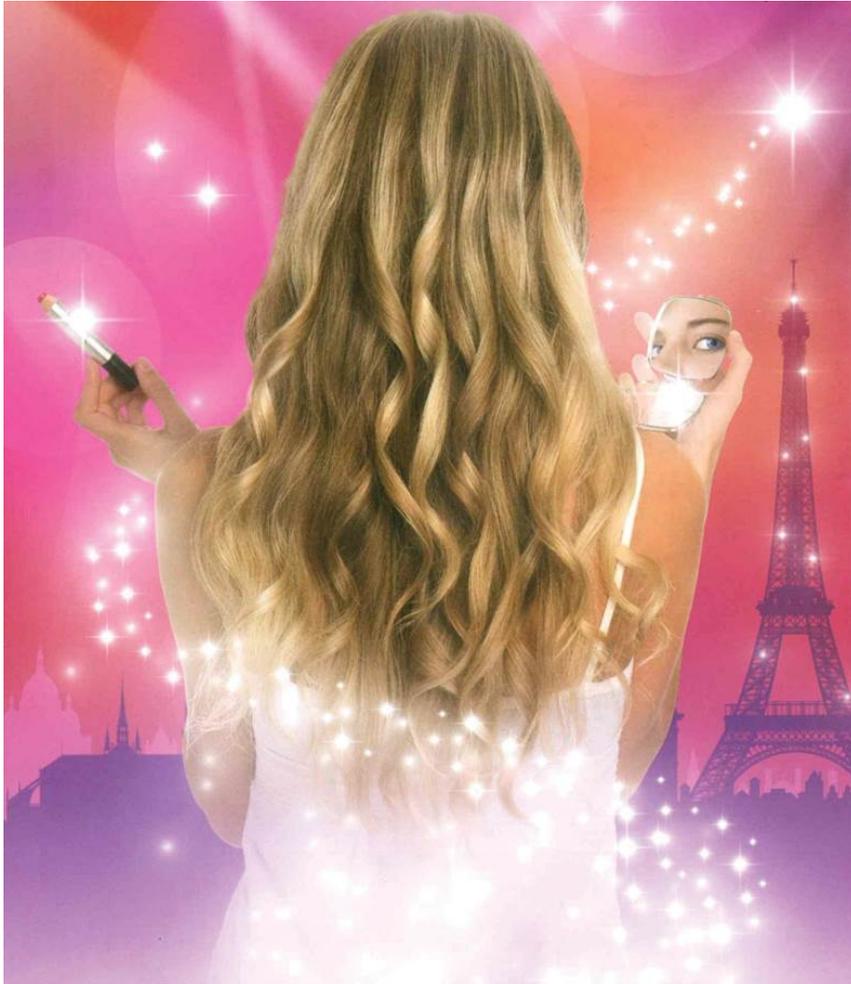
Competence Level strands 544

18 marks

**Task 5:** Spend **8 minutes** on this task.

The image below is taken from the promotional material for the show “Cinderella”.

**Select two presentational features** used to promote this show as an exciting, modern version of “Cinderella”. **Explain the intended effect** of these two presentational features on the reader.



© Johnny McKnight (writer) with kind permission

**(a)** First presentational feature: [1]

### Student's response

*Colour (pink)*

### Examiner's comments

A valid presentational device was correctly identified.  
1 mark

**(b)** Intended effect on the reader: [4]

### Student's response

*The colour pink is the main colour in this poster. It has an effect on the reader because pink is a very well-known colour. It is the favourite colour to most girls in the world. It represents beauty, love and is drawn to the feminine eye. It attracts women of all ages and is appealing to them thus drawing them in to watch this show.*

### Examiner's comments

This response, overall, offers a competent explanation of the intended effects of the use of the colour pink in the promotion of the show, "Cinderella". For example, the candidate has identified that it is "the main colour" used and offers some valid comment on its overall appeal to a female audience.

**(c)** Second presentational feature: [1]

### Student's response

*Layout of the stars/sparkle.*

### Examiner's comments

A valid presentational device was correctly identified.

1 mark

**(d)** Intended effect on the reader: [4]

### Student's response

*The stars and sparkles indicate a sense of magic and mystery. This is appealing to the reader as they can expect something wonderful or unnatural to happen but they don't know what it will be. The significance of the stars surrounding this girl show that whatever happens will happen or affect her and therefore drawing the reader in and make them interested with this show.*

### Examiner's comments

This response, overall, offers a competent explanation of the intended effects of the use of the stars/sparkle in the promotion of the show, "Cinderella". This is evident in some valid commentary about how the stars/sparkles "indicate a sense of magic and mystery" and how the audience "can expect something wonderful...to happen..."

3 marks

Paper Total: 122 marks

## **GCSE: English Language**

### **Unit 4: Personal or Creative Writing and Reading Literary and Non-fiction Texts**

**Grade: A Exemplar**



## Section A: Personal or Creative Writing

**One Task: 55 minutes. Mark Allocation: 88 marks**

Up to **58 marks** are available for an **organised** piece of personal or creative writing that matches **form with purpose to engage the specified audience**.

Up to **30 marks** are available for the use of a **range of sentence structures** and **accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar**.

Complete only one task.

Either

**(a) Personal writing: Write a personal essay for the examiner about what you consider to be one of the proudest moments in your life.**

Or

**(b) Creative writing: Write your entry for a creative essay writing competition. The audience is teenagers. The picture below is to be the basis for your competition entry. You may provide your own title.**

**You are advised to spend:**

- **15 minutes** thinking and planning your response
- **30 minutes** writing the response
- **10 minutes** checking your writing

**Planning Space**

Complete only one task in this section. Either Task (a) or Task (b)

### Task (a)

Personal writing: Write a personal essay for the examiner about what you consider to be one of the proudest moments in your life. [88]

### Student's response

**Task not selected by candidate.**

### Task (b)

Creative writing: Write your entry for a creative essay writing competition. The audience is teenagers. The picture is to be the basis for your competition entry. You may provide your own title. [88]

**The picture for Task (b) is not available, as copyright permission could not be obtained.**

### Student's response

*It was said that it was low tide on the beach when they disappeared. There were few waves, but the little number of them that there was turned much of sea in sight to foam. The golden sand had changed to brown by the sea line, with the constant battering of the water against turning turning it to mush. "Maybe they were caught by a wave and pulled out to sea? No, that couldn't have been it," pondered the detective to himself, "the boy was an excellent swimmer."*

*He glared at the board in front of him. On the board, everything was laid out, pictures of the scene, a map of the beach and the local area, photos of the children, all connected up with red string. The more he stared at the board the less it made sense, and he felt more mad. He smirked to himself, for if anyone was to see him right now, they would surely think that he had actually gone mad, or that he was pretending to be a character from a movie, a conspiracy theorist who was written by an incompetent and so the only way to tell he was insane by linking newspaper clippings on a cork board with red twine. With a return to clarity he shuddered from shame, now's no time for smiling, three children are missing, he thought to himself.*

*This had to be the most bizzare case he had worked, the more the investigators found out, the further they got from reaching an explanation. They couldn't have drowned, as the boy was a good swimmer. They didn't run of, for a very thorough search of the area found not a single sign of them, and no one who lived in the local area saw them. There were no reports of anyone behaving strangely, nowadays everyone is rightfully looking out for that, so a kidnapping was unlikely.*

*The ring of a phone pulled the detective out of his daze. A lead had appeared. Someone saw the children, the only problem was that they were seen hundreds of miles from where the mother last saw them. But he had heard too many stories of police not following up on a lead, that turned out to lead to the killer, because they assumed it to be a false or a joke.*

*The sun had begun to set by the time he arrived at the house. Rays of light peeked out from behind the tall trees that formed the forest. The house was nice, two stories, all of wonderful brown oak. In front of the house was a garden. On one side was a patch of dirt with various sticks poking out, with stalks clinging to them. On the other was a pure white bench, a pain to wash, the detective thought to himself. The bench was surrounded by bushes and flowers of a myriad of different colours, blue, red, yellow, pink, orange, among many others. And at the centre of the garden, a gravel path, leading to some steps, which in turn led to a red door.*

*He knocked on it, and knew he had arrived at the right place, for the man who opened was the man whose picture he had seen, "Hello," the detective began, "I'm Sergeant Booker, with the police. There's been a series of break-ins in the area, I'd like to inspect your house to make sure you're safe, if that's okay with you?" The man swallowed hard the instance he heard the mention of police, but he replied, "That's alright", anything short of that would be more suspicious. "Kids, go upstairs. I have a guest," he spoke kindly to the children, too kindly though, the detective thought to himself.*

*"Booker" only got a short glimpse at them, but it was certainly them. The detective made a short round of the ground floor of the house, staring at the doors and windows for a minute, pretending to know anything on the topic of home security, before declaring it "secure" and moving on to the next. He rejected the offer of tea and coffee, "Booker" apparently had other houses to inspect as well. He got back into his car and drove a bit down the path just enough to be out of sight from the house. On the radio he confirmed, "He has the children," but regretted it instantly.*

*He couldn't bear to leave his car as he watched the man be carted off to the police car in tears, for the crime of loving his children so, that he "kidnapped" them, with their consent, so that he could spend some time with them. The detective comforted himself simply; "the law is the law, if he wanted to see them there were proper procedures. He drove off quickly before the sight drove him to tears.*

## Examiner's comments

The storyline for the essay makes it clear that the picture of the three children sitting on a beach was clearly used as the basis for the response. The development and style of the story is best described as “increasingly competent” and “closely aligned to purpose” (CL 4). The plot and overall handling of the task create enough interest to sustain the engagement of the specified audience throughout the task (CL 4). “Proficient structuring” and the “positive use of structural and linguistic devices” (CL 4) also play their part in engaging the imagination of the reader. For example, an intriguing opening and descriptive writing to set the scene are clearly intended to capture interest from the beginning. This interest is fostered in the body of the response with techniques such as creating imagery, internal monologue, character development and a poignant ending. This response demonstrates an “increasingly convincing sense of purpose and audience” in terms of creating a convincing narrative through “the conscious tailoring of suitable language” (CL 4) to connect with the audience.

Competence Level Strands 444      45 marks

The candidate exercises control of a variety of sentence types and structuring (CL 4) and, where appropriate, these are “deliberately manipulated for effect” (CL 4) which helps to involve the reader in the progression of the narrative. For example: “On the board, everything was laid out, pictures of the scene, a map of the beach and the local area, photos of the children, all connected up with red string”. / “And at the centre of the garden, a gravel path, leading to some steps, which in turn led to a red door”. Despite a few lapses, this response demonstrates a “proficient use of a range of punctuation and grammar” in sustaining clarity of meaning and actively engaging the audience (CL 4). Spelling errors were “limited to one-off mistakes” (CL 5) and there was clear evidence of an “extended, apposite vocabulary consciously used for effect” (CL 5). It is worth noting that the mark of 25 is in the lower of the two available marks for this strand selection.

Competence Level Strands 445      25 marks

**Section B: Reading Literary and Non-Fiction Texts**  
**Three tasks: 50 minutes. Mark allocation: 62 marks**

**Reading Literary Texts**

**Task 2:** Spend **26 minutes** reading **both texts (see below)** and responding to this task.

**Text A**

*After an argument with her boyfriend on a night out, Andrea left him behind and walked off alone.*

The pavement glittered in the moonlight as Andrea Douglas hurried up the deserted street, her high heels click-clacking noisily in the quiet. The January air was sharp, and her bare legs stung with the cold. Christmas and New Year had been and gone leaving a cold, dreary emptiness. Shop windows slid past, bathed in darkness, broken only by a grimy newsagent's under a flickering street light.

Andrea was so fuelled by anger that she only questioned where she was going when the shop windows were replaced by large houses set back from the pavement, tucked behind tall hedges and iron gates. A skeleton of elm tree branches stretched above, vanishing into the starless sky. She stopped and leant against a wall to catch her breath; the icy air burned as she pulled it into her lungs.

Looking back, she realised she'd come quite far, and was half-way up the hill. Panic climbed in Andrea's chest as she looked around. The road stretched away behind, like a slick of treacle with the train station at its base. It was shuttered in darkness. The silence and cold pressed down on her but she had no choice. She buttoned up her thin leather jacket and set off up the hill into the shadows ahead.

© *The Girl in the Ice* by Robert Bryndza. ISBN 9781910751763. Published by Bookouture, an imprint of Storyfire Ltd.

Mark allocation: 32 marks

## **Text B**

*A young couple, Daniel and Laura, are backpacking around Eastern Europe. They are about to get on an overnight train from Budapest to Romania.*

The station was quiet and unwelcoming; bars and shops shut for the night, figures lurking in the shadows around the edge of the building. Armed police strolled about in pairs, eyeing us suspiciously as they passed by.

So, we were relieved when the train finally pulled into the platform. We hauled our backpacks onto the train and chose a pair of seats at the far end of an empty carriage. I sat by the window. The train shuddered and lurched into motion.

An announcement crackled over the speaker system and we were off.

As the train made its way out of the city, another passenger came into the carriage. He was about forty, stocky, with cropped hair and an acne-scarred face. He had no luggage. Even though the rest of the carriage was empty, he sat diagonally opposite Laura and me. He scowled at us as if he didn't like what he saw. Slowly, with a humourless smile on his lips, he closed his eyes and fanned himself with a newspaper.

Laura and I exchanged uneasy glances. I turned to watch Budapest go by, the lights of the city blinking out as the journey progressed. Eventually, the train window became black, the darkness broken only by the occasional glimpse of lights in the distance. I glanced at my reflection, my face

stretched like melted plastic by some kink in the glass. It was creepy. I looked away, horrified. The night ahead felt endless.

*"Excerpt from FOLLOW YOU HOME by Mark Edwards, reprinted under license arrangement, originating with Amazon publishing [www.apub.com](http://www.apub.com)"*

**Compare and contrast how the writers of Texts A and B have created a tense atmosphere. Present supporting evidence from both texts.**

### Student's response

*The writers of both texts create a tense atmosphere by presenting the environment around the characters as hostile. In Text A, the cold “stung” at the characters legs. This metaphor makes it seem as if the cold is attacking Andrea. The large houses were tucked behind “irongates”. This makes it seem as if Andrea is unwelcome, as iron gates tend to be used in more negative places, such as prisons for the doors to cells. The elm tree was a “skeleton”, skeletons tend to be used in popular culture to portray evil, so this makes the tree itself give off a sense that it is evil. “The icy air burned” is an oxymoron that, again makes it seem as if the cold air is attacking Andrea. In Text B, the writer makes reference to “armed police”, this itself creates an atmosphere of hostility but the writer also mentions that the police “eyed” them “suspiciously”. This expands on the previously established hostility, as it seems like the police might actually want to do something to the characters. Both writers also increase the intensity through the use of imagery of darkness; in Text A the shop windows were “bathed in darkness”, “shattered in darkness”, and so on, and in Text B, “Figures lurking in the shadows,” “the train window became black.” This increases the intensity as it is impossible to predict what is in the darkness. Only text A however, makes reference to cold “stung with the cold”, “cold dreary emptiness”, icy air.” This makes the character be out of their comfort zone, as no one enjoys being too cold.*

### Examiner's comments

A succinct, purposeful response which offers a “focused comparative analysis” of a “precise selection” of material from both literary texts illustrating how the writers created a tense atmosphere (CL 5). The candidate’s interpretation of the writers’ intentions is best described as “Mainly accurate” and “evaluative” in approach (CL 4). It is evident that there is a “clear understanding” of how the writers used language in different ways to convey a hostile environment for their main characters. The purpose of references to darkness in each text in terms of creating tension is also well understood and appropriately exemplified (CL 4). Elements of the writers’ craft such as: the use of metaphorical language, oxymoron and imagery were identified and “appropriate explanations” offered as to their intended effects (CL 4).

Competence Level strands 544

26 marks

## Reading Non-Fiction

Tasks 3 and 4 are based on two extracts from a newspaper article:  
“SELFIE GENERATION LEAVES A BAD TASTE IN MY MOUTH”.

**Task 3:** Spend **12 minutes** on this task. Mark allocation: 15 marks

The text below is the beginning of the article.

**Explain how the writer has gained and held the interest of the reader.**

### SELFIE GENERATION LEAVES A BAD TASTE IN MY MOUTH

I've just realised we have entered a new age, one that has changed behaviour, reshaped social structure and – if it goes much further – could threaten the very future of the human race...Welcome to the Selfie Age.

I was out for dinner last weekend. Sitting in a Glasgow restaurant, properly excited at my first night out in an eternity, the scene at the next table caught my eye. Four women were all taking photos of their newly-served meals, and then they stared at their phones for the next 10 minutes, presumably uploading the images then checking who'd "liked" their macaroni cheese. However, a quick scan of the room revealed the ladies weren't the only ones plugged into technology.

I admit I'm biased. I can't stand the whole selfie craze. I know exactly what I look like, so I've no need to take 3,425 pics of myself every day!

© Selfie generation leaves a bad taste in my mouth by Shari Low. Published by Daily Record, 12 November 2016. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/lifestyle/selfie-generation-leaves-bad-taste-9231358>

## Student's response

*The elipsis used at the end of the first paragraph creates a sense of anticipation in the reader, as they want to know what it is that deserves such a pause before being announced. The writer also uses an anecdote in the article, which holds the readers attention as people tend to like to listen to stories. Close to the beginning of the second paragraph, the writer exaggerates that they haven't been on a night out in an "eternity." This conveys to the reader that it has been a longtime, which encourages the reader to read on in order find out, possibly, why they haven't been on a night out in a long time, how it was or something like that. The writer utilises humour further on in the paragraph in the phrase "checking who'd "liked" their macaroni cheese. This creates humour as it is actually something many people do, post pictures of food on social media, but when you point it out like this it seems like a rather strange thing to do. In the third paragraph, the writer delivers their opinion on the issue, which the reader would most likely like to hear after the anecdote, the writers perspective on the topic.*

## Examiner's comments

In this response the candidate has selected “Some appropriate examples from the text” (CL 3) which demonstrates an understanding of how the writer has used language to gain and hold the reader’s interest at the start of her newspaper article. “An overall explanation” and “some straightforward appreciation” of the writer’s intentions is evident (CL 2) in comments such as: “...uses an anecdote...holds the reader’s attention as people like to listen to stories”/ “...which encourages the reader to read on in order to find out why they haven’t been on a night out in a long time...”. Elements of the writer’s craft such as the use of ellipsis, anecdote, exaggeration and humour were appropriately identified. Overall, the explanation and evaluation of these is best described as “generally purposeful” (C L 3) and there was evidence of some effective commentary (CL 3) on some of the writer’s linguistic strategies. For example, “The ellipsis...creates a sense of anticipation...want to know what it is that deserves such a pause before being announced” and the attempt to evaluate the use of humour in the phrase “checking who’d ‘liked’ their macaroni cheese”.

Competence Levels 323

8 marks.

**Task 4:** Spend **12 minutes** on this task. Mark allocation: 15 marks

The text below is the final four paragraphs from the same article.

**Explain how the writer has created a negative view of the ‘selfie’.**

In the corner, a guy was going around his table, crouching down next to each person in turn, phone in the air to capture the moment. He was hypnotised by the screen for the rest of the night, missing the real-life conversations with real-life people happening in the real-life restaurant.

Across the room, a modern-day romance was in full swing. A beautiful girl snapped herself next to her handsome partner, then the two of them spent their starter, main course and dessert on their phones, barely lifting their heads to utter a word to the love of their lives!

But the most shocking ‘selfie’ fact this week? A new report claims people are having cosmetic surgery to look better in their images – for “likes”!

Chums, it has to stop! Leave the cameras in the bags and pockets. Stop with the self-obsessed photography of pouty faces.

© *Selfie generation leaves a bad taste in my mouth* by Shari Low. Published by Daily Record, 12 November 2016. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/lifestyle/selfie-generation-leaves-bad-taste-9231358>

## Student's response

*The writer creates a negative view of the “selfie” by pointing out that they distract people from their every day life. The writer achieves this by repeating the phrase “real-life” when introducing what you miss out on when using phones. This repetition really drills home the idea that these things are much more valuable in real life than their virtual, online counterparts. The writer also calls specific attention to a couple who spent the whole time on their phones. The writer, portrays this as bad by saying that they “barely” spoke. The word “barely” specifically does this as it is most often used in the context of something that wasn’t done alot, even though it should have been done more. It is also emphasised by the exclamation mark, which portrays the writers shock at this happening. The use of the parentheses in the third paragraph serves to show the writers disbelief that the statistic can be true, which is further emphasised by the exclamation mark. The writer uses imperatives in the final paragraph to show that they believe the problem is severe enough that it requires direct action immediately to stop it from getting worse.*

## Examiner's comments

In this response some appropriate examples are selected from the text (CL 3). These examples are each “linked to valid insights/explanations” (CL3) which demonstrate an understanding of how the writer has used language to create a negative view of the “selfie”. For example, “This repetition really drills home the idea that that these things are much more valuable in real life than their virtual, online counterparts”. The response offers a “competent overall interpretation” of how “some of the writer’s intentions” are made clear through her use of language (CL 3). For example, “The writer, portrays this as bad by saying that they barely spoke...It is also emphasised by the exclamation mark, which portrays the writer’s shock at this happening”. Overall, some language and linguistic devices used by the writer were recognised and these were presented in an “uncomplicated review” (CL 2).

Competence Level Strands 332      8 marks

Paper Total: 112 marks



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