

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/11
Paper 1

Key messages

- Pay particular attention to the key words in the question you respond to.
- Introductions should illustrate your point of view and stimulate the reader's interest.
- Conclusions should not repeat what has already been written.
- Thoughtful conclusions raise questions and acknowledge that there may well be more to be said.
- Essays are not a set of instructions telling the reader what to do, say, or think.
- Avoid ambiguity by clearly expressing your intended meaning.
- A misplaced conjunction or preposition can undermine meaning.
- Illustration and examples need to be developed to be meaningful.
- The question or topic that evokes vivid images in your mind is worth responding to.
- Where appropriate, always show awareness of the opposite point of view.
- It is good practice to structure an essay with an introduction, followed by the main body and then a conclusion.
- Avoid contradicting points made in earlier parts of the argument.
- Plan answers carefully before beginning the essay.
- Not all questions are looking for a two-sided argument.
- Do not list points, but try to develop a considered argument for each area covered.
- The ability to weigh and judge arguments, and not merely to state points, is a necessary skill
- Good essays present ideas and then dissect them with the approach 'if this happens then the result is this...; but alternatively, if this approach is taken it might be a worse/favourable outcome.'

General comments

Many essays were lucid, informative and well argued. Opinions were expressed, but only a small number of the essays were overly opinionated. Learners were generally well-informed on the topic or question chosen.

It was particularly pleasing that each of the 10 questions attracted a significant number of respondents.

Personal concerns and experiences were often used persuasively and these were never a substitute for wider discussion. Many candidates were aware of what the past as well as the present has to teach us.

There was some evidence of thoughtful planning, although a few candidates were in two minds about which question to attempt. Consequently a few essays were unfinished and significantly shorter than the suggested 600 – 700 words. Many followed the format of introductory paragraph, an exposition and discussion, followed by some concluding remarks. There were also several responses with no evidence of planning, often beginning with an assertion which was often contradicted later on, as the candidate changed their mind in the process of writing or moved from point to point with no sense of direction. Taking a few minutes to think through precisely what the question is asking and organising thoughts accordingly, before beginning writing, is time well spent and usually rewarded.

Examples were sometimes general rather than specific, and some essays did not contain any examples at all. Several candidates made a general point without taking time to consider the wider implications. Many argued general conclusions from just single examples or points. There were also occasional factual errors, suggesting that the writer lacked full control of the material being discussed. There were a good number of essays that did not show evidence of a range of appropriate knowledge. Several essays were focused on broad issues, relating to the topic of the question, perhaps the question they wish had been asked, without sufficient attention to the precise requirements of the questions as worded. For example, **Question 7** attracted many examples of generalised comments on the environment, writing at length about what

humankind ought to be doing, rather than concentrating – as the question demanded – on critical evaluation of the *impacts* of climate change.

Some candidates were unable to disentangle balance from contradiction. There were abrupt changes of direction in otherwise thoughtful essays. The simple method of using connectives such as ‘however’, ‘nevertheless’, introduces balance and recognition of other points of view, while retaining the overall thesis of an essay. Some candidates who offered a balanced set of views on both sides of an argument, did not always evaluate and discuss the limitations of the knowledge and information that they had presented. There was often a lack of analysis of material; which prevented access to Levels 1 and 2.

Some answers were inappropriately colloquial (‘off of’, ‘bunch of’, ‘gonna’, ‘wanna’, ‘kids’) and there were issues of agreement, especially between subject and pronoun or subject and verb, sequence of tenses, paragraphing, punctuation and sentence construction. Much language used lacked ambition, with repetition of hackneyed phrases (‘dawn of time’, ‘day and age’). Spelling was largely satisfactory or better, though there was an overall lack of ambition in the range of words selected. Some candidates attempted sophisticated metaphors and felicitous language, and elaborate metaphors. In some cases, there was a sense that these were pre-learned and therefore inappropriate in the context used. Weaknesses in grammar seemed to be largely connected with sentence demarcation, most commonly the use of the full stop. As a result, it was quite common to read a whole paragraph that consisted of one sentence with odd commas inserted to break up the line. Poor handwriting was sometimes an issue, especially for those who used capital letters randomly.

Most candidates matched tone, style and register to purpose. Many learners are clearly aiming for an academic style in their writing and, as a result, the informal, colloquial and conversational style was less evident this series, but is still occurring in too many essays. It is best to avoid unnecessary fillers such as ‘for starters’, ‘on top of’, ‘first off’, ‘back in the day’, ‘on the flip side’, ‘pros and cons’, ‘to add on’, ‘more so’, ‘in summation’, ‘recently now’. Tense agreement is still a major problem and ambiguity is becoming more prevalent – for example, ‘due to advanced technology the world has experienced new fatal diseases’.

It is better, for the sake of elegant expression, to make a choice between genders in order to avoid she/he. Candidates should also try to avoid the confusion of one/they in sentences. Candidates need to be direct – avoid phrases such as ‘in my opinion I believe’.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation in the justice system of YOUR country.

Many essays focused on the negative aspects of imprisonment and the high rate of reoffending in their country. Several candidates struggled with the word ‘rehabilitation’ and did not focus on the justice system of their own country which led to comments on rehabilitation in general without specific reference to the other key words in the question. The more successful responses originated from countries where the rehabilitation of prisoners in jail was a prominent issue in the public domain. It was possible to discern sympathy for poor conditions in prisons alongside a genuine humanitarian wish for offenders to be given a second chance. A common theme emerged that many offenders are not given that chance due to being kept in appalling conditions for long periods of time. Responses that evaluated the question effectively looked at the approaches of punishment and rehabilitation in a balanced way, using evidence from their own country, and sometimes others. Some candidates saw rehabilitation as recovery from illness and failed to see that the question was specifically aimed at examining the justice system. Some candidates argued that deterrence was important, and that crime reduction is only attainable with severe measures.

Question 2

‘There is more to being a good citizen than showing respect and consideration for others.’ Discuss with reference to YOUR country.

This question proved popular in some parts of the world where there seemed to be a sense of national pride and patriotism. In these essays, candidates examined ways in which people of all ages contributed to making their country great, as well as supporting those citizens who were less fortunate. This may have been due to their poverty or lack of good health. Many of the answers were refreshingly positive in their content. There were essays that focused on more everyday ways of being a good citizen like picking up litter and generally keeping towns tidy.

Several responses to this question invoked an idea of citizenship that includes our duty to vote, pay taxes and participate positively in matters of both local and national concern. A few responses successfully highlighted the danger of complacency if we regard ourselves as respectful and considerate. More able candidates employed some historical examples in order to give weight to their ideas including Rosa Parkes, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. Some argued that active participation in movements that aim to promote equality, justice, environmental responsibility, goes beyond mere respect and consideration. A number of candidates, however, provided long lists of virtues, without engaging in much discussion of the nature of citizenship.

Question 3

‘Knowledge of historical events does not help us to plan for the future.’ To what extent do you agree.

Thoughtful responses to this question considered a range of historical events from the personal to the international. The majority viewed ‘historical events’ as world changing or nation changing; world wars, wars of liberation and other liberation struggles, the emergence of autocratic regimes, significant discoveries and inventions, and the lives and teachings of individuals revered in the past, now, and most probably in the future. The experience of slavery and other forms of subjugation was referred to. Most of the essays recognised that historical events serve as a warning for the future and the more nuanced ones included references to past events that give hope for the future, citing as examples the Stonewall riot and the sixties’ counter revolution.

Some responses examined the idea of learning from past mistakes by looking at what had been done in the past without any evaluation. For example, we learn from the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima that we must not use nuclear weapons again. In this sense, many essays did not examine the idea of how historical events do not help future planning. Many essays unloaded a list of events and stated that they were either useful in plotting our future path or not. Several candidates demonstrated uncertain historical knowledge which led to some poor exemplification. A few simply asserted that knowledge of historical events did – or did not – have benefits, and several were guilty of broad generalisations based on single, limited instances. Better answers provided nuanced accounts of both strengths and weaknesses of being guided by historical events.

Question 4

To what extent has increased internet use caused problems for law enforcement agencies?

The phrasing of this question successfully deterred most candidates from writing about all they knew about the internet. Most of the responses focused on law enforcement and both positive and negative uses of the internet. A few candidates wrote exclusively about everything else that causes problems to law enforcement. Such answers were only partially relevant and these candidates would have been better advised to choose a different question. Ambiguity crept into a number of responses where the learner attributed agency to the internet and not the user, for example: ‘the internet has allowed people to create dangerous devices that explode’. However, most of the responses included references to cyber-crime, hacking, trolling, and the increased availability and misuse of personal data. There was evidence of candidates who produced more generalised essays on internet usage with little or no attention to law enforcement which was only partially relevant.

Question 5

‘Without good health it is still possible to lead a fulfilling life.’ To what extent do you agree?

Those candidates who understood the key word ‘fulfilling’ wrote thoughtful, considered responses. Relevant, but less successful responses produced a list of ailments and conditions that they felt would inhibit living life to the full, including old age. A significant number of candidates appreciated that poor physical health does not preclude mental and spiritual health. Stephen Hawking, many Paralympians and Franklin Delano Roosevelt were offered as examples of how, despite degenerative conditions, individuals can provide hope and inspiration to many. Personal family anecdotes played their part in illustrating how, for example, children suffering from a debilitating disease can bring joy and consolation to their families. Other compelling responses looked at situations in different parts of the world where health care is negligible or where deprivation and hunger is a daily reality. A number of candidates simply asserted a choice for or against the premise, without analysing the meaning of a fulfilled life. Some responses developed the elements of a healthy life without considering other ways to fulfilment.

Question 6

Evaluate what you consider to be the most significant future impacts of climate change.

To answer this question well the key phrase ‘the most significant future impacts’ had to be the main focus and not the mere cataloguing of environmental and climatic threats. Almost all the respondents to this question were able to define what climate change is. Knowledge of what is already happening was often sound, but evaluation of what the future might bring was often more implicit than explicit. A number of thoughtful responses looked beyond the present to consider how in the future governments and international agencies will have to respond to avoid calamity. There were some descriptive responses that did not evaluate. Areas commonly covered included the impacts of lack of water, too much heat, extreme weather events and how the change of climate is geographically impacting on the world (more deserts, less ice at the poles, the danger of coastal erosion and low-lying areas being covered by sea-water. Candidates who felt constrained to invent beneficial impacts wrote implausibly about escaping to other planets and the agricultural potential of harvesting crops at the North Pole. Centres would be well advised to suggest to their candidates that some questions demand realism rather than balance.

Question 7

‘The most important quality of a work of art is its appeal to the audience.’ To what extent do you agree?

Informed answers drew on a range of artistic expression: painting, sculpture, film, illustration, and related activities. Many argued vigorously for the maxim ‘art for art’s sake’, the delight and satisfaction in producing something personally worthwhile as opposed to something popular and financially lucrative. A few memorable essays contrasted the negative reception of works of art when first performed, shown or published to how they are received today. Examples such as Stravinsky’s ‘Rite of Spring’, Rothko’s paintings, Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’ were referred to in support of the idea that it’s the art that matters, not the audience. Other excellent essays suggested that artists need an income and therefore must seek popular acclaim. There was some good analysis of what was entailed in appealing to an audience by considering different possible audiences and how audiences might differ across time and place. Some responses failed to consider the audience and concentrated on the most important qualities of a work of art. Others provided a negative view to state that art was the property of the artist and the audience was not important. Some responses lacked balance and omitted to evidence the ideas presented with pertinent examples from the art world. It was good to see some candidate recognising that art is not simply paintings and drawings.

Question 8

‘Journalists should not interfere in the lives of celebrities.’ To what extent do you agree?

Many responses to this question recognised what might benefit both the celebrity and the journalist in their relationship; the financial benefits for both the newspaper and the celebrity, together with the increased participation of many of us in the good causes promoted by celebrities and publicised in the media. There were frequent relevant references to the consequences inflicted upon celebrities pursued by unscrupulous journalists, the fate of Princess Diana often being cited. There were many examples of how rock and rap celebrities have been pushed over the edge by sensation seeking paparazzi. Conversely, many candidates pointed out that journalists have the duty to expose any criminal wrongdoing perpetrated by a celebrity.

Several essays contained general biographical information about celebrities rather than any depth of discussion about the way journalists operate and are, in some cases, forced to uncover the private lives of celebrities for their newspaper editors. Better essays saw candidates begin to examine the morality of the ways the media hound celebrities for unsolicited stories and balanced this against fairer journalism where their achievements were celebrated. Few noted the subtlety that reporting a conviction for attempted murder, an appearance in a divorce case or a prosecution for dangerous driving is not *interference* in someone's life, but merely reporting a public fact.

Question 9

'Film adaptations of books are rarely as successful as the original writing.' To what extent do you agree?

There were several interesting responses to this question, especially those that referred to the original writings as well as the films. However, even if there was scant knowledge of the original text, candidates were able to suggest that books leave room for the imagination, that books contain detail and aspects of characterisation that no film could fully incorporate. Armed with a few useful theoretical points, many respondents to this question were able to show that the films watched had inspired them to consider reading the books. 'Harry Potter' and 'The Hunger Games' were frequently mentioned and in these cases the original books had often been read and with few exceptions the books were preferred to the films. Thoughtful responses suggested that films tell a story but miss out on the intricacies of the original. A few candidates suggested that censorship is more common in the film version where sexuality and violence are concerned, referring to both Shakespeare and Jack London! Some judged success merely by box-office receipts, without giving thought to the relationship between a book and its screen adaptation. Some struggled because they lacked detail (or at times knowledge) of the books. Several expanded on the success of series such as the Harry Potter films while admitting to never having examined or read the books, undermining answers from the beginning. Some candidates attempted to answer the question without reference to any examples.

Question 10

'Melody is essential to music.' Discuss this view with reference to music you know well.

Those with specific knowledge of music tended to write more successfully, drawing on a range of material and reference to specific composers and works. A good number of candidates who attempted this question were able to write convincingly about the music they were acquainted with. Where they struggled was in being able to differentiate melody from other features of music. However, with some notion of what melody is, candidates often suggested what melodious or not genres of music appealed to them. Rap music, country, traditional forms, heavy metal and rock were often cited as instances where 'melody' may be absent and therefore not essential to enjoyment or appreciation. Recognising the focus of the question, candidates tried to show that melody is a characteristic of classical music, pop music, plain chant, and love songs. Several candidates were unfamiliar with the meaning of the word 'melody', leading to generalised essays on topics as varied as the genesis of rap, orchestral concerts in ancient Rome, the use of electronics in music and sad deaths of various musicians. A number appeared unaware that it was possible to have music without lyrics and/or melody. For many, the fusion of melody and lyrics to form a successful song was a reasonably successful approach leading to an essay of some worth. In less successful essays examples were mentioned but not exploited to support the thesis.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/12 Paper 1
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Key messages

- Keep the introduction relevant and focused.
- Address the key words of the question throughout the response.
- Organise and link points in a coherent structure.
- Develop each point with relevant examples.
- Analyse and evaluate instead of describing.
- Use the conclusion to evaluate and synthesise arguments rather than repeating them.
- Check carefully for errors in grammar, especially in agreement, tense, prepositions and plurals.
- Use precise vocabulary and idioms appropriate to the context.

General comments

Overall, the paper was accessible to candidates as there was a good spread of responses across the questions. There was also a wide range in the quality of the responses. Good essays were often characterised by clear and controlled language, developed argument that evaluated the issues raised and a range of thoughtfully chosen examples. Less successful answers often contained poorly controlled grammar and expression, arguments that lacked focus and few examples.

A focused introduction is essential for a successful start to an essay. Many introductions were of a sensible length, demonstrated understanding of the question and gave an idea the candidate's viewpoint, before discussing the issue in more detail in the following paragraphs. Long introductions that repeat the question and summarise the main arguments are less effective.

Nearly all the essays had a structure and were sensibly paragraphed. Linking words and phrases made arguments easier to follow and some candidates used the basic pattern where a point is explained, developed, exemplified and linked back to the question.

While it is vital to support ideas with examples, it is also important to provide examples that are relevant and specific. There were many cases where examples were vague, generalised and sometimes, implausible. Candidates often described instances and narrated scenarios which were largely related to the topic or made assertive claims with insufficient evidence. Some questions offer the scope for candidates to draw upon their personal experiences for illustration and this was quite effective when candidates put a limit on the number and length of their personal anecdotes. In the best essays, there was not only sound local and international knowledge but also clear demonstration of wide reading and careful selection of relevant illustrations.

Candidates appeared to manage their time efficiently as almost all essays were of a suitable length and had a conclusion. Better conclusions attempted to synthesise the points made earlier and offered evaluative comment and a wider perspective. Weaker conclusions reiterated points or made a simple statement in agreement or disagreement with the question.

On the whole, candidates communicated their ideas with clarity and there were few essays where meaning was lost due to a breakdown in language. Most candidates made an attempt to write in complex sentences and use some interesting vocabulary but were let down by grammatical errors such as incorrect subject-verb agreement and pluralisation issues. Misspellings of common words was frequently seen in weaker scripts as was the misuse of articles and poor punctuation. There were also a good number of strong responses which were grammatically accurate and employed a wide range of vocabulary and sophisticated structures.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Responses to this question were focused and showed understanding of issues related to welfare such as education, health and social benefits. Many examples were provided which showed good knowledge of the local context. Candidates tended to constrain themselves to describing details of how the government did or did not look after its people's welfare instead of relating these examples to the question of effectiveness. Better answers attempted some evaluation and even where credit was given to the government's welfare initiatives, considered their impact, effectiveness and sustainability.

Question 2

There were many responses to this question and most of these were about sporting activities and physical education. Candidates were able to offer a range of reasons for and against the inclusion of physical activities in schools and draw upon their own experiences. Better responses supported points with actual examples of sporting or other physical activities while less successful responses either provided minimal exemplification or concentrated instead on the exaggerated or unsubstantiated benefits of sports. Not many candidates evaluated the extent to which physical activities are essential to education and responses remained generally descriptive.

Question 3

Responses tended to address gender inequality and racism and often provided relevant information about historical and current situations. Better answers discussed the 'struggle', recognising that equal rights have been fought for in many areas, acknowledging successes but also arguing that much still needed to be done. These responses compared and contrasted situations from different time periods, communities and countries to good effect. Many candidates were clearly passionate about the topic though not all were able to concentrate on discussion instead of description.

Question 4

Strong answers to this question were those where the dual aspects of self-interest and responsibility for others were continually assessed against each other. These aspects were considered in personal, political, environmental and socio-economic contexts. Nuanced responses argued that it was possible to balance both motivations or that one could serve the other. A few evaluative answers assessed the 'old' values of traditional societies alongside the modern values that are driven by social media and liberalism. Weaker responses described the ways in which people are self-interested without linking this to the question.

Question 5

Good responses to this question often possessed a depth of understanding of scientific practice and a keen awareness of ethical issues stemming from religious and humanitarian concerns. Many answers did not go beyond the use of animals in research but nonetheless, were competent, if somewhat narrow, responses. Less successful answers were generally about areas of medical practice such as doctors' behaviour or costs of medical treatment and made limited reference to specific developments in medicine or ethics. Some candidates addressed the ethical issues of less recent developments such as abortion or euthanasia.

Question 6

Good responses to this question usually demonstrated a sound knowledge of the field of statistics and the benefits and restrictions of an over-reliance on statistical modelling. Weaker responses tended to be less informed about specific uses of data and were sometimes contradictory about the risks of only using statistics. Many candidates narrowed their answers to showing how the collection and use of data might ignore the human element such as cultural sensitivities and exceptions to the rule or the use of statistics in the media and neglected to address the question.

Question 7

Responses were generally quite successful as candidates were easily able to think of local and international examples to support their ideas. The pandemic was uppermost in the minds of many and candidates demonstrated good understanding of the latest developments. Many candidates were well-informed about historic and recent catastrophes such as tsunamis, earthquakes, droughts and fires. The best answers

considered humans' ability both to predict these responses and to mitigate potential damage. These answers looked at factors such as the economic position of countries, international aid, the importance of preparation and technological developments. Less successful answers simply asserted humanity's helplessness and described the damage to infrastructure and death tolls.

Question 8

This was not a popular question and candidates with experience of multi-lingualism had more to say on the matter. Those who attempted the question tended to be aware of the difficulties in communication within their own countries because of different dialects or languages and how these challenges are magnified across national boundaries. Some responses considered English as a lingua franca in promoting cooperation in trade and politics whilst others highlighted the role of translators and translation software.

Question 9

Candidates generally did not respond well to this question and largely concentrated on the differences between pictures and words with little focus on the 'power' element of the question. Some answers maintained focus for part of the answer but often drifted into other areas with minimal relevance to the question. A number of responses attempted to answer the question without examples and this significantly hindered development. Good answers were thoughtful and evaluative with a wide range of examples from art, advertising, books, speeches and mass media.

Question 10

Responses to this question showed enthusiasm for the topic and the better answers consistently addressed both aspects of music being memorable and its links to story-telling. Too many answers were concerned with describing the stories in songs or music that they enjoyed and many examples were provided but did not do much to progress the argument. Better answers were able to see that music could be memorable in other ways without stories for instance when linked to visual images like videos, as reminders of important personal events, because of its cultural importance, or because of other musical features like rhythm, instrumentation, vocal quality and so on.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/13
Paper 1

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/21
Paper 2

Key messages

- The standard of written English in **1(b)** was good as many responses matched the criteria found in the top two levels. Connectives and conjunctions, such as 'so', 'thus', 'since', 'while' and 'if', were incorporated into responses to good effect by many candidates, so that their answers were structured and flowed well. In **1(a)**, **1(b)**, **1(e)(i)** and **1(e)(ii)**, some candidates showed a very good knowledge of idiom, and used interesting vocabulary and appropriate colloquial language (e.g. 'would be a way of taking her brother's opinion on board', film updates 'go viral...' and films can be 'a figment of someone's imagination'). Many candidates incorporated discursive expressions into their responses and used an appropriate register (e.g. 'might be a push factor...', 'a comedy such as the one in question...', 'a film critic claimed that...' and 'One cannot fully agree with this statement because...'). A few candidates offered either generalised or assertive answers. However, many candidates gave nuanced responses, gaining credit by using modal verbs (e.g. 'may', 'might' and 'could'), other verbal constructions (e.g. 'Lexa seems to be...') and words such as 'maybe', 'perhaps' or 'likely'.
- In **2(f)(i)** and **2(f)(ii)**, some candidates copied words and phrases from the passages and placed this material in quotation marks. However, when responding to questions requiring the use of the candidate's own words, words and phrases that are copied from the passage cannot be credited even when the candidate acknowledges and attributes them by placing them in quote marks.
- Some candidates wrote more than was permitted in questions with word limits (**2(d)** and **2(g)**). One of the key skills examined on this paper is the ability to compose succinct responses, resulting in material appearing after the word limit not gaining credit. It is highly recommended that candidates do not include an introduction, which is not required, or repeat the question in their answer.
- It is essential to read the question carefully and to respond to that question asked rather than to the perceived one. For example, in **1(a)**, candidates gaining most credit discussed Lexa considering going to see *Road Trip to Nowheresville* as directed. However, there were a few candidates who would have gained more credit if they had not analysed just the film itself or made reference to *Voyage to Jupiter's Moons*.
- It is important that candidates note the section of material that they have been directed to by the question, either by line references (e.g. in **2(f)**) or from key ideas in the material (e.g. in **2(d)**, 'especially fascinating' in the question leading to '*particularly intriguing*' in the material), and restrict their responses to that section.

General comments

- It is recommended that if a question does not require a response in the candidate's own words or does not have a word limit testing a candidate's ability to write succinctly, candidates quote the relevant information from the material. Responses in own words are often not precise enough to gain credit.
- A few candidates did not answer all the sub-questions. It is highly recommended that a candidate attempts every part of a question as they might gain some credit.
- It is recommended that candidates indicate clearly if their answer to an individual question is not in the correct response area for that question but is to be found elsewhere, and that candidates refrain from writing their answers sideways in the margin.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates followed the instructions to refer only to the factors making Lexa consider going to *Road Trip to Nowheresville*. Candidates gaining the most credit showed the ability to interpret the

evidence offered in the material and read between the lines to show understanding of Lexa's situation and her requirements. Such responses also offered nuanced answers. For example, Lexa knows Hansi is having a hard time at work 'because his mother told her so, so maybe Lexa would want her friend to feel better and she would go and watch the movie.' Candidates attaining high marks gave factors that were fully developed, sometimes by an explanation (e.g. Lexa's brother told her she needed to lighten up, so 'maybe a funny film will help her to be less tense and to laugh'), sometimes by linking disparate relevant pieces of information (e.g. by connecting Lexa's comment during the conversation about the lack of dialogue in the last film to the cinemagoer's remark about the comedy containing some clever dialogue which might convince her to go).

Many insightful responses were seen, highlighting candidates' emotional intelligence: 'Lexa seems to be the opposite of assertive and would have a hard time saying no to Hansi...' and 'Lexa could see this as an opportunity to change her usual behaviour...to prove to her brother that she can lighten up.'

Valid points beyond the mark scheme were noted: for example, as they had seen a film together before, the fact that the next instalment of this franchise was going to be released the following year would give them the opportunity to make it an on-going tradition and as the film had two heroes who were friends, it might make Lexa and Hansi feel closer as they could relate to the two protagonists' friendship.

Weaker responses were characterised by the repetition of factors. For example, a few candidates repeated the comedy idea for most or all of the four factors required, itemising the physical humour, the memorable punchlines and the funniest ending, et cetera.

Misunderstandings noted in this question included the following: *Road Trip to Nowheresville* contained the latest film techniques, it was Lexa who talked about having a good laugh and that half-price Wednesdays was a factor (the last point being seen in **1(b)** too). Some candidates misunderstood point 4 in the Additional Information, thinking that it would mean, for example, that she would not be busy as she had finished the training or that she would enjoy the comedy because of the training.

In both **1(a)** and **1(b)**, higher marks could also have been achieved if some responses had been more detailed. Generalised or vague statements about the fact that the film had positive reviews, people said that it was worth seeing, Hansi loved to keep up with the latest films and they would have a lovely time together required more precise information to be creditworthy as these comments are true about both films. In addition, some candidates selected random facts from the material, then cited them in their answers without any development, so that their responses were more of a narrative than an analysis.

- (b) Most candidates, as directed, referred only to the factors making Hansi consider going to *Voyage to Jupiter's Moons*. Candidates attaining Level 4 showed both excellent organisational skills (using connectives, conjunctions and/or paragraphs to signpost clearly the factors and their explanations) and the ability to remain focused on a range of relevant factors, explaining them fully. Higher level responses exhibited the ability to interpret the evidence offered in the material and read between the lines to show understanding of the various aspects of the situation Hansi found himself in, as well as how his interests might impact his decision-making. In addition, such responses showed an understanding that the most convincing answers are nuanced – for example, 'Hansi may want to make it up to her this year by watching the movie she mentioned...'. Candidates gaining high marks offered factors that had been developed fully – whether by explanation (for example, citing the fact that it was the film suggested by Lexa, so he might consider going to it as he had not seen her for a long time because she had such a busy schedule and he would want to show his appreciation that she had made time to catch up with him), or by linking the factor offered to another piece of information elsewhere in the material (for example, connecting Hansi's interest in keeping up to date with the latest film techniques with the positive comment about the production values in the film critic's review) – thus highlighting the ability to present sustained and relevant analysis of the reasons why Hansi might go and see this film.

Other valid points were seen, such as Lexa had had some training in assertiveness so, as she wanted to see this film, she might use her new-found skills on Hansi to make him more inclined to go and see it, and the film was about characters overcoming challenging situations which might give Hansi the encouragement he needed to power through those difficult times he was having at work.

In addition, some responses would have gained credit if they had been based on evidence from the material rather than speculation and/or using the wrong focus, such as Hansi loves sci-fi films and Hansi should go to get out of his comfort zone/try a new genre.

Weaker responses were characterised by the repetition of factors and/or a factor and its development being separated from each other in the answer, thereby impacting upon the overall clarity and fluency of the response.

Some candidates appeared to misunderstand point 4 in the Additional Information by, for example, citing celebrating Lexa having finished her assertiveness training as a factor pushing Hansi to go and see this film.

- (c) Many candidates engaged well with this sub- question, offering two different contradictions for each film as directed. Weaker responses were characterised by candidates mixing up the films; confusing the press releases with the reviews; giving random details about the plot; offering vague answers, such as '*made me laugh*' without '*on occasion*', or using ellipsis so that answers were too vague, such as '*not...standards*'.
- (d) Some candidates had noted the friends' conversation and correctly selected point 5. A common misunderstanding was to cite point 4 as some candidates did not understand the meaning of assertiveness. Weaker responses infringed the rubric by offering information from elsewhere in the material, instead of a point from the Additional Information.
- (e) Many candidates engaged well with these sub-questions. In (i), insightful responses included references to technology allowing us the ability to stream films, the technology to watch films not being available everywhere, subtitles and language options letting us watch foreign films, not all films being subtitled, some people being unable to afford to go and the existence of censorship. Some took a broader interpretation, talking about the amount of choice available, and the ability of films to open one's mind to other cultures, countries and situations, making the viewer able to relate better to others. Some candidates developed their point using exemplification, by citing film-making centres around the world, such as Bollywood, mentioning specific films that had crossed boundaries, such as Mr Bean, Frozen and Black Panther, or specifying countries that do not have cinemas. Weaker responses simply recast the question in the candidate's own words without adding any new information. In (ii), candidates showed themselves to be knowledgeable about how to manipulate both photographs and films, referencing editing, photoshopping, CGI, special effects and computer-generated graphics, explaining that, for example, 'almost nothing is as it seems in movies and photos' and 'people look better than they are in reality'. References to films being based on works of fiction, with scripts and actors playing roles, and directors showing us 'what they want us to see' were seen, as well as comments about bias to suit an agenda and the potential for propaganda. Common misunderstandings included literal interpretations, such as films do not need passports in (i) and it would be impossible to view the film as 24 times per second are not enough frames in (ii).

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates gained this mark. However, a few candidates offered only a generalised response about the air of sanctity.
- (b) Candidates gaining the most credit noted that the description of the location continued on into the third paragraph and copied out sufficient detail from the material. Some candidates chose to put the relevant phrases in their own words, but did not always gain credit as not all the required information had been conveyed. Vague references, such as there was a rocky bluff or a rocky plateau, did not gain credit.
- (c) In (i), candidates who noted that they had to describe the processes and then quoted the relevant information from the material scored very well. Some candidates, though, described the temple rather than the processes. In (ii), most candidates gained this mark. However, a few candidates offered only '*the cycle of life*'. In both (i) and (ii), responses in the candidate's own words were sometimes too vague to score, such as 'diminishing' for '*they eventually crumble back into the earth.*'

- (d) Many candidates engaged well with this sub-question, scoring highly by locating the relevant material and conveying all the necessary details within the word limit. Some candidates would have gained credit if their responses had not been assertive or too vague (e.g. writing that the temples were not known to anyone or saying only that they exuded serenity).
- (e) Most candidates found this sub-question very accessible. Candidates attaining the most credit carefully copied the relevant information from the material. Some candidates answered using their own words, but did not always gain credit as, for example, they did not understand the meaning of '*benign*' and offered an incorrect synonym, or they interpreted '*executes*' literally, writing about Karuppu killing people. A few candidates mixed up Ayyanar and Karuppu.
- (f) In (i), candidates gaining credit offered excellent synonyms: '*created using concrete*' for '*made out of concrete*', '*pretty accurate representations of the deity*' for '*quite realistic*', '*intricate designs*' for '*ornate*', '*vibrant colours*' for '*brightly painted*' and '*...not mounted on them*' for '*rarely riding them*' were some examples seen. Weaker responses would have gained higher marks if key words and phrases had not been copied from the material. Some candidates did answer using their own words, but did not gain much credit for the content of their responses because all the required information had not been included.
- (ii) This sub-question proved to be the most challenging for candidates. Responses with creditworthy material employed synonyms such as '*scorching weather*' for '*the hot season*', '*there is no more labour to be done*' for '*work has stopped*', '*the cows are dehydrated*' for '*the cattle are thirsty*' and '*the intercession of a deity becomes necessary*' for '*divine assistance is needed*.' Weaker responses copied key words and phrases from the material, gave answers written in their own words which did not contain all the necessary material, or offered irrelevant material from lines 48 to 50.
- (g) Some candidates engaged well with this sub-question, scoring highly by correctly locating the relevant material and conveying all the necessary details within the word limit. However, some candidates would have gained higher marks if they had adhered to the word limit as creditworthy material was seen beyond the word limit. Some candidates would have attained more marks if they had not included irrelevant material, such as an introduction, a repetition of the question and/or a description of the temples during festival time – using up some of the word count but not gaining any credit. Some weaker responses would have gained more credit if they had not omitted key elements of the responses required.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/22 Paper 2

Key messages

It is good practice for candidates to check the requirements of each question carefully; for example if a specific number of points is sought, or there are restrictions such as use of own words to demonstrate understanding, or word limits testing brevity and concision.

Questions which ask for use of own words (**Section B** only) are testing understanding of the material, so copying directly from the material will not score high marks. Technical terms and individual vocabulary items may be used, if the context is altered sufficiently to demonstrate comprehension. However, in general, some manipulation and/or substitution of the language (synonyms) will be required to gain marks on such questions.

Word counts, when specified, should always be observed strictly. Candidates are reminded that, in the interests of fairness, material which exceeds the stated limits will not be considered.

When questions seek vocabulary items or phrases to replace other terms, whether from the text or from candidates' own knowledge, these need to be rendered in the same grammatical form as the original, for example an infinitive, an adjective, or a noun.

General comments

Most candidates seemed to engage well with the material in both **Section A** and **Section B**. Differentiation in performance was most frequently evident in the level of detail and precision understood and/or clearly expressed, for example in **1a** and **1b**, and in **2a**, **2eii** and **2fii**.

There were relatively few instances of response areas being left blank. When this did occur, this was most often towards the end of a script, when perhaps time was short, although it may also have been because these (**2hi** and **2hii**) were among the most testing questions.

On some scripts there was a noticeable difference in the successful conveying of points in written English between those questions requiring close reference to the material and those asking for a candidate's own ideas. In some instances, the latter answers lacked sufficient clarity or precision to gain any credit.

As instructed by the rubric, the vast majority of candidates managed to avoid making reference to the other television show, i.e. the one other than that specified, in **Questions 1a** and **1b**. As both questions sought only advantages, there was therefore minimal scope for repetition and/or reversal of the same points.

Nuance was sometime an issue in **1a** and **1b**, for example making too absolute and assertive a claim, for instance that 'Juno *will* be able to star in high-profile theatre shows'. Such an answer does not recognise that this opportunity had been granted to previous *winners* of the show *Dancing Heaven* and was not, therefore, in any way guaranteed simply by Juno's participation. A better point, in this case, would have been to say, for example 'Juno *might* get the chance to perform on a Broadway or West End stage *if she won* the dancing competition'.

Copying ('lifting') of material was the most common reason for marks not being awarded in **Questions 2a**, **2fi**, and **2g**. In questions which specify use of own words, little to no credit can be gained in this way. It is recognised that certain vocabulary items have few likely synonyms. In such cases, the original term can be used but then needs a context of the candidate's own, in order to show understanding and thus gain marks. Most often, this will require altering the verb, at least. Some of the attempts to change or link the material

were inaccurate and/or had rather contrived or contradictory links, demonstrating that what had been copied had not been (fully) understood.

There was some tendency to offer too many words in those questions with specified word counts. For example, an unnecessary rewording of the question stem or a section from the material which introduced or surrounded the correct answer(s) meant that later points, which might have received credit if falling within the word limit, could not be considered.

In the vocabulary **Question (2hi)**, the meaning provided must match the grammatical form of the original. This is equally true in the corresponding sentences produced (**2hii**), where it is also necessary for the precise meaning of the terms to be clearly expressed. For example, the opposite term should not be able to be substituted in the sentence and still make sense.

Some examples of more complex or idiomatic phrasing:

1a *If Juno won Dancing Heaven, there is a chance she could reboot her fading career with appearances in theatre shows.*

(Juno) might be able to settle old scores with her rival and former friend Davida if she outperformed her in the dancing.

Laya is supportive of Juno, suggesting they are close as sisters, so Juno may agree to Dancing Heaven to enable her sister to fulfil her dream of being among the studio audience.

Looking to make a comeback, Juno has a penchant for dancing and believes she could do well, showcasing her new skill in a glamorous setting.

1b *Viewers will see another side to (Juno), detached from being just a soap actress, and appreciate her versatility.*

Considering that Juno has been short of projects lately, the higher-paying Help Me! could be the answer to her prayers and see her back on her feet.

To repay Ingrid's faith in her, Juno might agree to Help Me! so her agent could do her longed-for camel trek in the desert.

Previous winners have bagged slots on daytime TV shows.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The most common misunderstandings relating to the material for **Section A** were in the details, for example the number of viewers (Ingrid's claim, that this was the highest in television, being accepted as fact). Audience figures per main show might well have been higher for Help Me! but Juno's appearance was guaranteed for no more than one show. In comparison, Dancing Heaven had slightly lower weekly figures but all participants would appear throughout, including in the final, which itself had more viewers anyway. Thus, her increased exposure to an audience was far *more* likely on Dancing Heaven.

Her husband's praise of her dancing skills was accepted uncritically by some in **1a**, despite the probing of his possible motivations in **1ciii**. Similar comments apply to Ingrid's persuasion for Help Me! in **1b** and **1cii** respectively.

Question 1

- (a) The layout of the answer space was designed to help candidates identify clearly which were their chosen advantages and corresponding explanations and these were clear in most cases. However, some candidates did not present linked points in each area. Such responses either received some credit for both, as if they were individual, undeveloped points, or no credit at all because they were simply presenting points from the material. To score well, the ideas needed a clear indication as to why these might be advantageous to Juno, for example the presence of the excellent *dress designers, make-up artists and hairdressers* being linked to her pursuit of her former glamorous

lifestyle, or making her look her best and thus more likely to be spotted for other opportunities, when she has not worked in some time. The 'Background' part of the material was particularly useful for this question but was sometimes apparently ignored.

The most common correct points identified were those relating to her likely success in dancing given her skills and interests, perceived or otherwise; the dance show's more obvious links to her former lifestyle; the timing of the show being advantageous both for her family Christmas time and the Hollywood audition, and the opportunity, if she were successful, for future projects on stage. There was reference to her former friend Davida in the context both of rekindling an old friendship or in *showing her rival how it's done*, with one or two astute candidates recognising that this *hype would be welcomed by the producers* as it would entice viewers and get them talking about the show on social media.

Laya's dream to be in the studio audience could be made relevant if the focus were on *Juno's* motivation, the focus of the question. It was acceptable to say, for example, that participation in Dancing Heaven would allow her to make her sister's wish come true, rather than presenting the point solely from Laya's perspective (see **1ci**). There were some incorrect responses, such as *earning a lot of money*, as it was evident that the alternative show would pay (much) more and thus be the more obvious choice in this regard. No credit could be gained for incomplete ideas, such as the rather vague *learn new skills* or *be in her comfort zone* or *be more her thing*. Please also see the general comments above regarding assertion and nuance here.

- (b) The limit of 80 words was observed reasonably strictly by most candidates but some offered introductions which 'used up' words unnecessarily, or explained or described points at too great a length, usually the wealthy sponsor or the range of tasks explaining the higher fee payable. Candidates needed here to state and develop clear advantages, either by explaining them or by making connections with other sections of the material. The most common correct points identified were those relating to Juno's being able to show a different side to her ability and personality, for the benefit of viewers and directors; gaining more money when she had not worked for some time and her agent was desperate; the shorter time commitment potentially being of benefit for her family, and the possibility of future work in television.

As with Laya in **1a**, Ingrid's dream to go camel trekking in the desert (filming in the Sahara) could be made relevant to this question, if the focus were on Juno's motivation. It was possible to state, for example, that participating in Help Me! would enable her to repay her agent's efforts and long-standing support, rather than the same information being presented solely from Ingrid's perspective (see **1cii**). There were some incorrect responses, such as more exposure/highest viewer numbers without explanation, although some credit was given for the citing of the higher regular viewing figures. Once again, nuance mattered, in terms of Juno's likely future job opportunities. Previous winners having gone on to present daytime television shows made this only a possibility, rather than any sort of guarantee, especially as Juno might be voted off after only one show, never to be seen again. There were occasional references to next year's filming taking place in the Amazon, which was irrelevant as there was no question, at this stage, of her involvement. Similarly, the possibility of Christmas at home and/or the Hollywood audition, if she were voted out early, were unconvincing, as these were certain with Dancing Heaven. Reference to Davida was not relevant either in this question, for example *not having to come up against her* or similar, as that was simply a reversal of a point from **1a**.

- (c) (i) Most candidates were able to pick up the point about Laya's dream to be in the audience of Dancing Heaven, so would be persuasively in favour of that show. It was also possible to score two marks with separate points, the most common being her envy of her sister. In all three sub-questions in **1c**, some candidates did exceed the 20-word limit, usually by repeating the question stem, and this limited their chances of success.
- (ii) Ingrid's wish to go camel trekking was often successfully linked with the location of filming for Help Me! The greater earning potential of that show, given the fee and Ingrid's 20 per cent cut, was another point successfully conveyed and developed for two marks.
- (iii) Of these three **1c** sub-questions, this was least often awarded two marks. The husband's support alone was not a clear reason not to trust him or his judgement, while his lack of criticism of Juno was, but needed to be explained for a second mark. The most common way of gaining two marks was by developing the *good dancer* claim, either by linking that back to the lack of criticism and thus being unreliable, or by picking up that that was a long time ago and may no longer be true.

The family time being cherished at Christmas was also relevant here, and could be easily linked to the Dancing Heaven schedule for a second mark.

- (d) Candidates needed to bring their own ideas and knowledge to this question, either by agreeing or disagreeing with the idea of agents' fees, or offering a balanced view. Reasons were needed to gain marks and some responses were rather vague or descriptive, simply stating what an agent does, rather than whether these activities merited a percentage-based fee. Most candidates were able to say something along the lines of agents being the ones to have discovered the talent and who procure them their roles and subsequent exposure and fame, using their contacts and negotiation skills which actors etc. may not have or want to be bothered with. On the other hand, it was felt that the agents were not the ones doing the work or with the talent. Most candidates found more to say if they agreed with the fee, rather than arguing against it. Some candidates engaged specifically with the 20 per cent fee and either argued that this was too much, for example for those struggling at the start of an artistic career, or that it was not representative of the effort and time required, as those commanding the biggest salaries would be the most easily placed anyway. These were perceptive comments.

Section B

There was evidence to suggest that some candidates found the material quite challenging, especially where 'own words' were required to show understanding of the sense and precision of sections of text (2a, 2eii and 2g).

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates found this question difficult and the only point scored with any degree of certainty or frequency was the rewording of *tiny bits* of plastic, usually with *small pieces*, *fragments* or similar, with the other points sought being more elusive or only partially conveyed with accuracy or sufficiently in own words. Some candidates did not refer to the right part of the material to answer the question, or did not pick up that 'own words' implied that the answer would be found within the material, and gave their own reasons only. These could not gain credit.
- (b) This was among the most straightforward of the questions to answer for a single mark and the vast majority did so successfully. Where the mark was not scored, it was usually because the reference to *sailing* or *a boat* or similar had been omitted.
- (c) Unless exceeding the limit of 20 words, which was less common here than in other similar questions, most candidates scored both available marks here. Indeed, it was not uncommon for three of the creditworthy points to be made within the word count. There were, however, some misunderstandings as to where the gyres were found and how the water is caused to move.
- (d) Most candidates were able to gain the available single mark here but there was some misunderstanding and a few candidates simply named other oceans, which was insufficient to imply that these would also have gyres and/or garbage patches. There were also responses which suggested that the Pacific gyre was the cause of others, or that currents or pollution fed into or from other oceans.
- (e) (i) This was commonly correct for the single mark. It was necessary to have the precision of where the nets were and/or what was being done with them, but this seemed not to pose any great difficulty to most candidates.
- (ii) There were four possible points to be made here for the three available marks and most candidates were able to score two or three. The most common omission was the idea of *majority* or *most* with the tiny pieces observed by White's team, unless the exact percentage was offered. Occasionally the ratio point was reversed or stated vaguely, for example saying only that Moore recorded or noticed a ratio, with no sense of scale or what was being compared. There was also fairly frequent superfluous information regarding the composition of the plastic Moore had observed.
- (f) (i) Most candidates found this 'own words' question challenging and it was not common to award both marks. The most frequent omission here was the size of the plastic concerned in the first two main points but the finding of appropriate synonyms was also clearly difficult for many candidates. A mark was often gained for some ability to explain the concept *they can die*, for example, (plastic) *can kill them/lead to their death(s)*. The other points often proved much more elusive, particularly

the terms *strangle*, *harm (from the inside)* and *accumulates*. There was some overlap of content which should have appeared in **2fii** here, for example the presence of the toxins.

- (ii) Unless the word count was exceeded by means of copying the question stem or offering an unnecessary introduction, most candidates found this question straightforward, as it only really required them to locate the correct information, rather than to render it in their own words. A few weaker responses had misunderstood the question and wrote, from their own knowledge, about why fish and seafood are popular, or described the fishing industry. There was occasional misunderstanding, including confusion over whether it was plastic or toxins that were indigestible and building up in the fish or marine organism. Furthermore, the plastic being consumed because it was mistaken for plankton was not frequently identified, nor was the transparency of the small plastics in the water column. The human beings/consumers point needed to be clear that we are the top of the food chain, and eat these toxins *in turn/eventually*, and not simply that we consume fish, which was stated in the question already. However, there were ample available points and many candidates managed to score four, five or all six marks without too much difficulty. A number of responses included more than the maximum of six points, within the word count.
- (g) Once more it was the requirement for 'own words' which candidates found challenging in this question, as the terms *reducing* and *recycling* at least needed a different verb form to gain credit. There were a number of ideas offered from their own knowledge which, as noted above for **2a** in particular, suggested that the 'own words' requirement had not sufficiently signalled to candidates that the required responses were to be found within the material. Most candidates were able to gain a single mark if they used a different form of *recycling*, even *we should recycle*, but the points about *decreasing plastic disposed of*, and *selecting more thoughtfully the things we buy*, again proved somewhat elusive.
- (h)(i) More correct answers were seen as synonyms for *flimsy* than for *to debunk*. The most commonly seen of these were *light*, *weak*, *fragile* and *frail*. A number of candidates did not gain the mark for the second term because they did not produce an infinitive (*to ...*). The most common correct rendering of *to debunk* was *to disprove*, although a common error was *to prove*. A small number of candidates negated a correct response by adding second or even third attempts but generally when this occurred, none was completely accurate.
- (ii) There were several reasons for marks not being credited in this question. One was ignoring the instruction not to use the same context as that of the material (*plastic bags* and *myths*, respectively), for example *It was their job as the 'Ghostbusters' to debunk any ghost myth*. Secondly, it should not be feasible to substitute a word with the opposite meaning and for the sentence still to make sense (*sturdy* for *flimsy*, for example, or *to prove* for *to debunk*). Furthermore, some attempts simply were not precise enough to show that the meaning had been understood, for example *My mother bought me a flimsy shirt* or *The flimsy dress was fluttering in the breeze*, and *They did research to try to debunk the view that ...*. There were some good responses offered here, however, including some quite inventive ones with idiomatic use of the terms, such as *a flimsy defence (in court)* and *to debunk a conspiracy theory*. Some excellent responses used real-life examples, often from science, which helped to make the sense clear. One such example was *Stephen Hawking's wish as a teenage boy was to debunk the research paper on the theory of black matter published by South Amber University*.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8021/23 Paper 2
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There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.