

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/11 Passages

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read a wide range of material from a range of diverse sources – such as travel writing, memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, newspapers articles, blogs, advertisements – so that they can assess not only the conventions and language associated with different formats and genres, but also comment on the effects and qualities conveyed by specific words and phrases.
- Successful candidates will be able to comment on how a particular extract is structured in the way that it unfolds and develops in term of subject, mood and tone.
- Candidates should be able to explore the contrasts and differences between the sections of a given extract; they need to move beyond identifying essential aspects of language and style such as personification, alliteration, and punctuation, to consider such features in relation to their context and the extract as a whole.
- Candidates who write precisely and economically, maintaining a close focus upon style and tone, are those who tend to achieve best results.
- They also need to be able to adapt their own writing style to incorporate diverse directed tasks – for example, letters, voiceovers, articles, diaries – and demonstrate secure familiarity with their conventions and style.
- A secure degree of technical accuracy – especially in the use of spelling, punctuation, and tenses – is required at this level.

General comments

This paper consisted of three passages of a very different nature, but all offered a range of language features and markedly individual styles.

The contrasting purpose of the two elements of each question was generally understood and the rubric of the paper well observed. The commentaries would often have benefited from a more immediate engagement with the specific demands of the question. A significant number of responses began with a summary of the passage; few marks can be awarded for such sections of writing, and it is a far more effective use of time to focus on language points from the very beginning of a response.

Most candidates attempted to engage with features of language, and it is worthwhile to note that very few fell back on the formulaic response of pathos, logos and ethos. However, many candidates focused on the facts of punctuation and sentence structure without commenting on the effects of their use: for example, with the use of commas, some guidance about the use of asyndetic listing to build up to, for example, the notion of abundance; or with the use of an em dash some comment about the effect on tone or another relevant feature. Similarly, candidates needed to be aware that they should relate language features to their precise effects and how these contribute to the style, language, and purpose of the text. There is a tendency for some candidates to identify a language feature without discussing its effect or purpose.

Commentary writing in general would have benefited from a wider and more precisely used critical vocabulary. Terms such as 'negative/positive vocabulary' tend to contribute to very generalised and unspecific accounts of the passages.

For higher reward, a number of candidates needed to develop their consideration of the structure of a passage; this is an important consideration and can be crucial in determining authorial intention and how this

is achieved. An appreciation of the writer's use of structure has the added benefit of ensuring that the whole of the text is examined, rather than the opening of a passage receiving more developed consideration than the conclusion.

There was much engaged and purposeful directed writing devoted to each passage. Weaker responses still sometimes succumb to the temptation of lifting phrases or sentences directly from the original; this prevents candidates from demonstrating their understanding of the passage in their own words. Lifting even within quotations should be avoided for this reason. A common weakness in sentence construction involved the use of the gerund form of verbs. A significant number of responses did not observe the word guidance and candidates should be reminded that this is self-penalising.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates recognised the reflective nature of this passage and the use of first person to describe a personal experience; stronger responses commented that this established a direct connection with readers and evoked empathy.

Many also commented on the use of third person and the fact that the employer is not named, merely referred to as 'Her' and 'She'. They also noted the capitalisation of the pronoun and the more successful offered comments about the effect of this – showing perceived importance and superiority, but also perhaps that the employer did not deserve to be named. Some candidates referred to the employer as a God whose demands could not be refused; these generally went on to note that God was imprisoning Morrison in the job she was doing to teach her a lesson.

More successful responses were developed by exploring the contrast in social status between the employer and employee, suggested by the determiner/pronoun, and by the range of material possessions which make life easier and food which makes life wholesome which were 'common in Her neighbourhood, absent in mine'. Some candidates went on to comment on the lowly status of the speaker being symbolised in 'scrub floors on my knees', and the threat of poverty in 'I was afraid She would fire me'. These responses recognised the exploitation and fear engendered by 'Her'.

Candidates noted the contrast between then and now and Morrison's contrast between herself and 'the children in folktales' and that 'children are not needed in that way now'. Much was made of the pride that she felt in her work, 'the pleasure of being necessary', and her pride in paying her way rather than having to be looked after earning her a 'slow smile'. The more perceptive explored the concept of a working child and added that this meant that Morrison had no childhood at all and was perhaps pining to be an innocent child again and free. Only the responses with discriminating awareness commented on the effect of the ellipsis in 'and yet ...'.

Whilst some responses noted the use of direct speech, the more engaged noted the use of imperatives – 'Listen', 'Go to work', 'Get your money' – and saw that this captured the father's voice, providing a different perspective and giving Morrison the authority to stand up to her employer.

Some candidates misinterpreted the father's four point-list because they had missed the focus on this 'was what I heard', though they commented on other forms of listing such as in the first paragraph suggesting opulence and the list of items 'squandered', which seem mundane to the reader rather than luxuries. The most perceptive commentaries noted that this was a coming-of-age passage, and discussed the fact that the writer is reminiscing and her perspective is changing: 'I have worked for all sorts of people since then'. Whilst there was some uncertainty about the writer's attitude towards her younger self, these perceptive responses explored the use of a balanced approach throughout, such as with the title and the father's philosophical approach, what he said and Morrison's understanding of what she heard.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write the opening of a letter to Toni Morrison's father, thanking him for his daughter's work after her employment had ended, basing their response on the material of the original passage.

Most candidates read the rubric thoroughly and realised the need to write in the role of the employer to Toni Morrison's father. The letter format was generally understood, though many weaker responses would have been improved with the use of an appropriate opening salutation and a suitable register. Many candidates wrote an entire letter, often with an inappropriate valediction; it should be noted that when an opening is suggested, there is no compulsion to write a whole piece, as this can lead to underdeveloped writing. In addition, some candidates missed the indication in the question that the employment had ended, highlighting the need for candidates to read the question thoroughly before writing their response.

Many candidates confused Toni Morrison's gender as male (though the question referred to her as a 'daughter') and this hampered their writing. The most effective responses developed some of the features of the passage – 'not so good at housework when she first arrived but improved' and 'never refused my demands'.

Many responses needed further development in their discussion of the implications of 'Her' and 'She' references in the passage, so that the directed writing did not communicate 'Her' tone appropriately as one of arrogance and superiority. Discussion was also needed relating to the way in which 'She' exploited Morrison. Responses were sometimes rather tentative, perhaps because they were uncertain as to how unpleasant, if at all, the letter writer should be. These candidates found it difficult to make any convincing additions to the original, producing a range of letters mainly with an adequate sense of purpose and varying degrees of information. A few candidates wrote as if they were Morrison's father writing to the employer, again highlighting the need for candidates to read the question carefully.

The least successful responses often leaned too heavily upon the phrasing of the original and failed to find any sense of independent expression. Problems also arose from writing which conveyed a clear sense of engagement but had sacrificed accuracy of expression in doing so. Candidates should always be advised to leave sufficient time at the end of the examination to carefully check the accuracy of their directed writing.

Question 2

- (a) This text was often explored with much confidence. Most candidates recognised the theme of looking after our planet. Some responses would have been improved had they referred to the arrogance and hedonistic values of mankind conveyed in the passage.

More successful responses explored the effects and range of language features which emphasise Sagan's view and the momentous events:

- the use of metaphor – 'pale blue dot', 'a thin film of life', 'a mote of dust', 'cosmic arena' and 'rivers of blood' – to show the extent of destruction;
- the use of repetition such as 'not' in paragraph three, and listing, especially in paragraph five – 'everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you have ever heard of' and 'joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies' – to show variety and then anti-climax at the end to show the lack of importance;
- the use of colours – 'blue', 'yellow', 'red', 'brown', 'green' – and history to upset normal view of importance;
- and the use of imperatives, 'look', 'think', 'visit' as reinforcement.

The most perceptive explored the structure of the passage, which balances the comparatively small Earth with the vast cosmos. These candidates drew attention to the fact that the lexical field and terminology becomes more precise as the passage progresses, producing a cumulative effect and building a case that 'humans are inconsequential'. They then pointed out the perspective given at the end – 'folly of human conceits', 'pale blue dot' – which gives Sagan's conclusion and the case he is making.

Weaker responses tended to be descriptive pieces about the meaninglessness of life. There was some recognition of the uses of first-person plural to give a sense that everyone is involved, and third person to convey the information in a detached and impersonal way. Some attempt was made to identify some metaphors. These responses needed to offer more development of the effects of these metaphors, and candidates found it difficult to identify the structure of the piece with its range of perspectives. Focus on the 'serious/detached' tone of the piece was not wholly appropriate.

Not all candidates completed the task, indicating either the need for time management or for an awareness of the thoroughness with which candidates need to respond at this level.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write a voiceover script for the opening scene of a documentary based on Carl Sagan's book. They were required to base their writing closely on the material of the original.

Most responses to this task were adequate rather than clear and informed.

The most effective writing employed contrast in perspective and created a third person narrative voice in addition to the use of first-person plural to engage an audience, the use of which had been clearly recognised in the commentaries on the passage. These successful responses paid attention to the requirements of 'the opening scene' and 'a documentary' as stipulated in the question; they did not assume prior knowledge and adopted an appropriate formal tone.

Weaker responses lifted material from the passage and offered very little development or original input. Candidates need to be aware of the difference between echoing and lifting. Some of the weakest responses showed very limited expression and accuracy. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of paying particularly close attention to the accuracy of spelling and punctuation in the 'B' sections of this paper. Again, not all candidates completed the task.

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates struggled to develop their response beyond noting the obvious language features and there was often generalisation and remarks about content.

Most responses commented on the use of third person and the contrast between Bakhtawara's familial responsibilities and her personal desires. They noted that she was accorded respect within the family and her status, 'head of the family'; she was offered food the first, she distributed it and she was allowed to rest. Such responses recognised the repeated use of Bakhtawara's name to keep the focus on her, whilst others were given their relationship to her in the family. There was some discussion of attitudes to male and female children with some candidates writing that this was an entirely female society, having missed that 'her young nephew brought water for the family'. There was also much discussion of poverty, many candidates not realising that eating on the ground is the cultural norm in many societies.

Successful responses noted the use of third person and observer's perspective at the beginning, together with the use of past tense and the detached tone of the writer. They commented on the use of direct speech to give a sense of the formality used to deal with the situation and that the background to Bakhtawara's circumstances is given in factual sentences with no evaluation or personal detail.

They also noted the impersonal nature of the term 'the children'. An aspect of respect was also noted in the way 'the women listened carefully' and that another aspect of Bakhtawara's role was community based since she resolved 'other people's problems'. She was therefore, to some, a kind of God-like figure, given that she played a central role in the lives of many people. These more engaged responses explored the contrast in Bakhtawara herself, with elements of male and female in a balanced way: her 'eyes felt like those of a woman', but she has the 'stoicism of a man', and the contrast between 'stroked her cheeks and lips' and her 'broad shoulders, stocky body'.

More perceptive responses noted that her emerging body when alone is a 'turning point' in the biographical account and that her femininity is partly revealed by the mirror. This was often linked with comment on the repetition of 'she wanted' to emphasise her desires and that her wishes seemingly reflect a fairy story, emphasised by the use of 'the dream world she had conjured up'. The effect of listing – 'put on mascara, yearned to decorate, dress her hair' – to show how women behave and the things women do was also recognised. These successful responses explored the tone shift and the passage's wistfulness at the end.

Candidates should be advised that their responses can be strengthened by developed attention to specific language examples.

- (b) Candidates were invited to imagine that Bakhtawara is able to record her experiences in a private journal, and to write a section of that journal. They were required to base their writing on the material of the original.

Most responses were able to follow the sympathetic rendering of the protagonist. This was a familiar genre, so most candidates were able to write in the journal form. Sympathetic and perceptive responses delved into the character's response to her lifestyle. Many weaker responses missed the significance of 'private' and did not capture the voice of Bakhtawara sufficiently well; the journal form was recognised and the need to employ first person, but the tendency was to repeat the events of the passage in a list-like way rather than to engage with the private thoughts and feelings of the character.

More informed writing focused well on the character's feelings and suggested the dilemma of Bakhtawara's public and private identity: her sense of obligation to her father and family and the 'masculine' role she must endure versus her private desires as a woman when 'my imagination flies and I invent a whole new life for myself', as one candidate succinctly wrote.

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General comments

All three passages on the paper were found to be generally accessible and engaging. Most candidates demonstrated a clear sense of purpose in approaching both the commentaries and directed writing and there was a general sense that the commentaries were more fully developed than is sometimes the case. This series showed a marked improvement in the relevance of opening paragraphs, with fewer candidates simply repeating the question or summarising the contents of the passage. A corresponding improvement in the closing paragraphs is yet to be seen, with many simply repeating points made earlier rather than developing them. These conclusions sometimes represented a sizeable percentage of the answer but offered only a minimal amount of information which could be credited.

Most candidates seemed to understand that language features need to be related to their effects within the passage, but these effects were often generally stated and needed more specific application. The evaluation of effects continues to be an area where improvements can be made to allow candidates to be able to engage with the text rather than just list language features or to write descriptively. There was a similar tendency to generalise when referring to the use of imagery in the texts. Where the author's use of imagery was identified – specifically in **Question 1 (a)** – for higher reward, candidates needed to specify the nature of the imagery or the effect created.

Punctuation and sentence lengths were sometimes credited with the capacity to affect reading speed, but genuinely purposeful examination of the effects of punctuation was rare.

There were some vibrant and perceptive responses in the directed writing, though candidates needed to be aware of the necessity to check the accuracy of their work, which sometimes seemed to suffer in the imaginative involvement of the exercise. There were relatively few significant cases of candidates significantly exceeding the word limit; there was some evidence of unintentional underwriting, which is no

more acceptable than exceeding the specification. The stated parameters are always 120–150 words, and it is between these two boundaries that candidates should aim to complete their response if they are to meet the marking criteria.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This passage offered enough language features to ensure some confident and well-developed responses, though there was a tendency to answer at length concerning the opening scenes and then skip over the description of the city. Weaker responses needed to develop beyond recognising some of the supposed ‘persuasive’ techniques employed. A significant minority of responses attempted to identify features, but did so inaccurately and needed to explain the effects created. Otherwise, there was generally good understanding of the language features employed: the use of contrasts such as the fever of the taxi driver being thwarted by the traffic; the bank employee with Ramon who is ‘polite and cheery in a workmanlike way’; the use of similes such as ‘like a demented chimp’, ‘like a spaceship at take-off’, ‘like a fat man clearing his throat’; the use of diction such as the use of the verb ‘curdling’ to describe the rising sounds of the city; and the use of superlatives such as ‘most economical’, ‘cheapest’.

Visual imagery was, initially, addressed in respect of ‘the dusty arrivals hall’ and ‘the pretty flight attendant’ who was checking ‘her nails’. Candidates referred to the lack of care taken and/or that the airport was dirty. Some more successful candidates attempted to develop points about the imagery of the arrival by remarking on the writer’s use of ‘towering billboards’ that ‘showed caramel-skinned women’ being displayed in a ‘decorative’ way.

Middle-band responses made comments about the writer’s focus on sensual imagery, notably the ‘scent of coffee, hair cream and strong tobacco’; these tended to focus on the harm of cigarette smoking and then continued with ‘the man behind the glass’ who was breaking the ‘Royal Decree’; similar distaste was expressed for those in the café who ‘breakfasted on cigarettes and anis’; for many, these were simply stereotypes of lawlessness and went hand in hand with Madrid being ‘full of bad types’. The most perceptive responses mentioned the implicit masculinity of the culture, suggested by ‘businessmen [who] breakfasted’ and the fact that the passage was supposed to be about ‘the world of bullfighting’.

The imagery of the cab ride was addressed by most candidates and this was often reduced to comments about the cab driver’s ‘madness’, together with the writer’s views of the buildings, the lift at the Hostel Playa and the view from the writer’s window, which was seen as suggesting his boredom. Most candidates referred to the negative impressions suggested by the text, especially in the writer’s use of onomatopoeia, for example, ‘a steadily swelling cacophony of clanging, banging and cursing’. The more successful addressed the writer’s ambivalence and changes in tone, whilst the majority of responses identified mixed emotions from ‘I felt excited and fatigued, exhausted but elated.’ There was some engagement in the writer’s use of Spanish and the use of fact and opinion; very few candidates addressed the fact that the writer’s opinion is, largely, suggested rather than stated.

More successful responses gave some consideration to the structure of the passage in addition to imagery, tone, use of third and first person, changes in tense and the use of contrast. Very few recognised the time of day of the passage or the season and that this was a City – and indeed a writer – ‘waking up’, although the more perceptive did address the latter in terms of appearance and reality. One candidate offered some interesting comments about the writer’s preoccupation with ‘control’ or the lack of it, suggested by the cab driver ‘muttering to himself and humming’, the architecture being a ‘blend of baroque and art deco’, the ‘smartly dressed’ who ‘scampered’, and the ‘swelling cacophony’ of noises. The most consistent engagement came from candidates who discussed the writer’s use of irony throughout the passage, suggested to them by ‘puffing away regardless’ of the ‘Royal Decree’, ‘the festively named Hostel Playa’ being ‘400 kilometres from the nearest beach’, the ‘flourishing’ of the desk boy’s hand to showcase ‘the shared toilet’, and the ‘busier the city got [...] the lonelier I felt’. These responses also addressed the disappointment and sense of alienation of the ending.

- (b) Candidates were invited to imagine that the same writer visits their country and to write the opening description of his arrival.

This question gave rise to some beautifully evocative responses, bringing countries to life effectively, and the sense of place was, at times, enthralling. Many responses reiterated content, often resorting to copying the content so closely that the answers fell short of achieving the purpose required – focusing upon the style and features of the original. This meant that the smell of coffee, hair cream and tobacco was reproduced with only slight modification, as was the cab ride. A good many also forgot to specify the location of their answer and few attempted to adapt the shape of the passage. Many also missed the opportunity to consider other forms of transport and were hampered furthermore by lack of engagement with the prevailing tense of the original. The weakest responses were written in the third person.

The most effective writing paid attention to style and features whilst giving ‘a flavour’ of the writer’s arrival in a new place. One memorable piece began: ‘Humid air carried the heat of the afternoon sun and the foreign chatter of fishermen lounging by the docks.’

Question 2

- (a) This text was generally handled with confidence, and some features – such as the use of personification and bold headings – were regularly noted. There was also understanding of the persuasive techniques employed, as well as the conscious attempt to reach as wide an audience as possible. Although most candidates recognised the ‘sales patter’ and the sales pitch of the Hilton Dubai, some tended to fall for the pitch and lost focus on the technicalities by discussing how exciting the text was for the reader, even concluding that they would be booking their flight at the earliest opportunity if they were able to.

Responses identified a range of features in varying degrees, including the rhetorical opening, with the most sensitive responses recognising the element of predetermination in the question. Most responses noted that structurally, the passage was divided into sections under clear headings; the more perceptive commented that, ironically, the longer ‘seven days’ was given the shortest section in the passage; the personification in ‘rub shoulders’ was often mentioned by these responses. Candidates also commented on the use of direct address and of exaggeration and/or superlatives such as ‘best beach’, ‘oldest building’, ‘world’s biggest’/‘tallest’/‘highest’. Some explored the writer’s use of contrasts: ‘heritage’ collides with ‘futuristic’ elements, and mosques and older buildings are described alongside ‘cutting edge’ bars, shopping malls and tall towers. There were various developments on the theme of the new vs. the archaic and the young vs. the old/aged to engage the audience. The use of imperatives, such as ‘Book your stay’, ‘Visit’ and ‘head to’, appropriate to the purpose was often noted.

The most engaged responses recognised the clichéd sales patter such as ‘get high in the afternoon’ and ‘with a spot of dune bashing’. A perceptive few were humorously cynical about the whole passage and its suggestion of affordability for everyone; the most astute suggested that there would be nothing to do by day 7 but relax and look back on it all in sheer exhaustion.

Weaker responses tended to describe the opportunities available. Some identified language features; for higher reward, candidates needed to explain the effect of the features rather than simply explaining the features themselves. Likewise, where these responses stated generally that the writer used ‘promotional language’, they needed to specify the specific features concerned.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write a section for an advertisement that might have been produced by the same hotel chain for a tourist destination that they had visited and, in so doing, to follow closely the style and features of the original.

There was some assured writing on this topic. Many weaker responses were often in need of greater attention to accurate expression. There was much lifting of the opening and the subheadings of the original, and these responses would be much improved if candidates had used their own language and ideas, with echoes of the passage.

For the most part, candidates recognised the need to conduct a holiday sales pitch on behalf of the same hotel chain, employing present tense and direct address. Many responses were able to bring their chosen destination to life. Destinations included the Maldives, the Bahamas, Cape Town, Copenhagen, London and even Portsmouth in the UK; there were some particularly confident

responses about Victoria Falls. The use of the imperative voice was quite effective in much of the writing. Candidates, generally, understood the need to sell some unique features to tourists. For example, one memorable piece invoked 'The Queen' as an instance of cultural heritage: 'You might even see the queen as she gently shuffles past a window.' The most successful pieces attempted to combine futuristic elements (usually regarding architecture) with heritage sites and physical activities.

Question 3

- (a) This text was less well handled by those who attempted it; weaker responses merely repeated the passage, lapsing into description. Most candidates commented on the graphological features of the text, noting that it was clearly divided, organised and structured with headings and lettered points in the last section to convey information clearly. The usual features for comment included the use of first person and direct address to engage the reader and make the text more appealing to a wider audience. Most candidates also noted the use of the colloquial phrases such as 'rookie', 'crank up', 'check out', 'way too seriously' to assume a friendly, helpful style. Many noted the rhetorical question, 'can you afford to avoid taking risks?'

There was some focus on high- and low-frequency lexis to reinforce the expert advice and to provide friendly encouragement. However, there was little acknowledgement of the use of negatives, even in the headings: 'NOT PREPARING ENOUGH'.

Successful responses explored the use of triads – 'uninvolved, uninteresting, unenthusiastic' and 'driving, shopping or running' – and the use of anecdotal elements – '80–90 per cent of the presenters that I observe', 'I often come up with great ideas', 'As I often say to clients', 'As my mentor and co-founder [...] said', 'I've heard of speakers who'. They also noted that the advice is given in contrastingly colloquial/elevated language, for example, 'succinct and cogent' and 'exacerbates'. The most successful commented on the passage as a whole, discussing specific examples of language use, techniques and structure which were often replicated in the individual sections. More engaged responses considered how the writer subtly enforces the message of each extract through providing a concrete example, such as 'Crank up the energy level!', where the imperative voice enforces the message about 'SPEAKING WITH LOW ENERGY'.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write a post to the blog as an inexperienced speaker, commenting on whether the advice given was useful, and in doing so to base their writing closely on the style and language the original blog.

Most candidates handled this form successfully; responses were, generally, straightforward with information about how the blog had helped. Candidates recognised the need to write in first and second person. Responses offered a variety of formats and not all responses were written as a blog post in the style and language of the original as stipulated in the question; many adopted the layout of the blog itself when organising their post. More informed writing adapted the colloquial and enthusiastic style of the original passage to provide a friendly opening; 'Hey there. Rookie speaker here' was one such example and one candidate added humour, commenting that they had found practising beneficial 'in front of my chihuahua, Mr Kit'.

Some weaker responses showed uneven purpose by offering advice themselves rather than commenting on whether the advice in the original blog was useful. Lifted material was prevalent here due to the limited semantic field of public speaking, with the hyphenated 'S-l-o-w d-o-w-n!' being the most used.

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- They also need to be able to adapt their own writing style to incorporate diverse directed tasks – for example, letters, voiceovers, articles, diaries – and demonstrate secure familiarity with their conventions and style.
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General comments

The passages selected for this component offered a wide and diverse range of styles and linguistic features and there were many perceptive and purposeful responses.

Most candidates seemed to manage the organisation of exam time very well. There were very few unfinished papers and there was little evidence of rushed conclusions. Relatively few responses wasted time by offering opening paragraphs that summarised the events of the passage, though some candidates gave undue consideration to the nature of the audience when this had little useful bearing on the demands of the question.

Candidates seem increasingly aware of the need to relate language features to their effects within the whole passage and of the value of providing clearly defined language examples. There also seemed to be an encouraging development in the range of the critical vocabulary used in the commentaries. The stronger responses, in the case of all three passages, were often characterised by the use of succinct and precise examination of language effects.

There was some confident and imaginative directed writing in all three exercises. There is still a need for greater attention to accuracy of expression, which is sometimes lost as candidates strive to achieve effects of style and language.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most responses noted that this passage was an autobiography and commented on the inclusive language of first-person plural narrative voice and its limited, detached personal view offering a series of informed assertions, including botanical facts and opinions. Candidates understood that the text was informative and persuasive, particularly in relation to the to-do list offered. In general, candidates missed the opportunity to consider the paragraphing of the conclusion

Almost all commented on the 'wood wide web', adapted from the better known 'world wide web' to describe the global digital network, and noted that the alliterative phrase introduces the parallel world of plant activity. Most commented on the humanisation of the social bonds displayed by plants, the personification of plants, the sustained metaphor of 'each gene is a word' and the pun 'plant our future'. The more aware responses gave developed comments about the sustained analogy of plants as community nurturers, with a lexical field of care – 'care', 'donor', 'mature trees', 'younger saplings' – which emphasised humanity and selflessness.

Figurative language was identified and, in particular, the ways in which plants were compared to humans in terms of their attributes: 'mature trees support seedlings'. The most engaged responses went on to suggest the emotive content of this and how its purpose was to instil guilt in the audience, reinforced by, 'humanity behaves like a headless chicken'. The more engaged responses noted that the informative tone of plant powers shifts to an emotive warning of the impact of plants' destruction by humans, exemplified by a sustained analogy/extended metaphor of books and libraries and their burning. Book burning is seen as barbaric and uncivilised and hence, by association, so is human behaviour towards plants, suggesting the attitude of the writer that most people 'mistakenly' care more for books than for plants, 'if a plant species becomes extinct, one book is lost'. The most perceptive noted that the integration of every plant with the whole biosphere is explained through this analogy.

Some responses explored the use of dramatisation and examples of aggressive plants with their destructive, warlike behaviour ('chemical warfare', 'toxic barrier'), showing the strength of their natural defences with a gardening metaphor, 'they are nature's weed killers'. Short, impactful sentences were also recognised. A range of adjectives and the rhetorical question were addressed. Some attention was paid to the hortatory conjunction, 'let's turn things around', with several recognising that this was a call to action.

The most engaged responses identified the religious connotations of this text, suggested by 'Messiah', an all-powerful religious leader, seemingly come to save the world from its poor state; in this case, the destruction of the earth's plants. The more engaged explored the effect of 'Amen' which revisits the religious connotation of the 'Messiah', sustaining the notion of a revered biblical tract. The most perceptive identified the assumption contained in the emphatic agreement. These more successful responses identified the voice of the zealot (with the preaching tone and the reference to the 'apocalypse') with several moving towards this in discussing the writer's passion for plant life.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write the opening section of a leaflet which would be used to launch a campaign, started by themselves and a group of friends, to promote nature preservation and conservation in their local area. They were required to base their writing on the original material of the extract.

Many candidates were able to utilise the concepts from the passage to develop a response. Many candidates encountered difficulties with the form of a campaign leaflet: where they were aware of the concept of a group of friends starting a task together, they merely produced a series of uncontrolled declamatory statements.

The call-to-action theme was addressed by those candidates who recognised it in the passage. Many candidates understood that an appeal was required; a few managed to master the use of the imperative voice to carry their appeal off effectively, recognising the immediacy of the apocalyptic vision created by the writer. One successful response entitled their piece 'Green Up' to give a sense of immediacy and then used a range of voices, as suggested by the text, to engage an audience effectively.

While there were some strong responses, some missed the necessity of making an eye-catching opening for the leaflet, or struggled with appropriate use of specialised lexis.

The need for careful reading of the question was brought to light by the significant number of responses which seemed not to have noted the instructions relating to 'you and a group of friends' or 'your local area'.

Question 2

- (a) Candidates tried very hard to engage with this editorial piece that gave a summary of a new lifestyle which may be familiar to some. Some noted that the tone of the business magazine is a measured consideration with authority, through a series of opinions and facts relating to the changes being brought about by the digital world.

Most responses commented on the structure: the title and subheadings and that the passage was split into three sections. Some made comments on the headings specifically, such as that 'Office of the future' delimits the subject but then proceeds to upend the generally understood term 'office' through a series of behaviours. Many identified the seemingly sentimental posture in remembering 'those comfy days'. The main features commented upon included: contrasts between 'everyday' things and 'smart' things; the use of listing – 'intelligent devices, 3D printing, and the IoT', 'functional, stylish, not boring'; rhetorical questions; the use of statistics which reinforce statements – '62 per cent of Millennials work from more than one location'; the use of hyperbolic facts and assertions of the vast changes brought by digital appliances – 'tens of billions of everyday things'; the use of incomplete clauses, repetition and exaggeration.

The more perceptive noted that new language phrases are given 'OneLife' and that the compounding of the phrase reinforces language change to accommodate the new conditions and is delivered by a lexical field of the digital world. These responses explored the extended parallels with an ecosystem, which reinforce the interconnectedness of the digital world. A very few candidates commented insightfully that the revolutionary nature of the digital world ends with a case study of delivering education, merging the traditional skills of teaching with the online world.

Some features were not as well understood as one might have expected. The effect of short sentences and flashes of humour ('so 20th century') might have had more attention. There also might have been more attention to the crusading tone of the passage.

A few responses recognised the subtle sales pitch in this passage, perhaps because it appears late in the text: 'like our sleek smartphone device that fits in a pocket'. Candidates should be reminded of the need to give attention to all parts of the passage and not just concentrate on the opening few paragraphs.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write the opening of a letter to persuade their Head Teacher to adopt the OneLife concept, outlining the benefits this would bring. They were required to base their writing closely on the material of the original text.

The letter format was generally understood. Candidates should be able to select and employ an appropriate opening salutation and to write according to the standard letter format (for example, starting the main body of the letter one or two lines below the salutation rather than continuing on the same line). A significant minority were informal in their approach to the Head Teacher, however the need to write in an appropriate formal register was correctly understood by most. Many candidates wrote an entire letter; it should be noted that when an opening is suggested, it is advisable to avoid writing a whole piece as this can lead to underdeveloped writing.

Candidates understood, for the most part, that they needed to explain the 'OneLife' concept succinctly. Where this was not wholly understood, purpose and context were hampered. Candidates were also aware of the need to outline some benefits that this would bring to the school and its students. There was less confidence in employing persuasive strategies to support their advocacy of adopting this concept, such as by adopting an appropriate voice and other rhetorical features. There was often also evidence that candidates were unclear on the fact that they were actually selling a mobile smartphone.

Question 3

- (a) Responses explored a range of features in this text together with some accurate discussion of relevant features of spoken discourse. They noted the frenzied confusion and the overwhelming number of rules to absorb which are reflected in a series of parallel constructions concerning the rules of the language. Responses often began with discussion of the opening dialogue, with its aggressively loud opening and garbled, almost strangled sounds, and the graphological representation of shouting by using capitals giving the effect of immediate verification of a language lesson. Candidates went on to identify and comment on the simile that suggested how the writer felt out of place ('I was like a tanner') and the simile that suggested his inability to create the sound of 'the bleating of a sheep'. Many responses also commented on the use of colloquial language in 'cracked up', idioms such as 'out of the picture' and the writer's use of exaggeration throughout.

Responses that showed more engagement included comment on the extended detail of the ineptness of the learner and the challenges of the language which he faced, achieved through imagery and onomatopoeia of the present participles of the physical speech production: harsh gutturals ('gagging'); plosives ('plugging') and groups of three to emphasise the variety of physical difficulties he has. These more successful responses noted the tones of frustration and discouragement and the echoes of 'defeat' in 'Mansur retreated into his tea-glass'. Some metaphors were identified and commented upon: 'a desert storm' suggesting the difficulty in learning Arabic, for example. Several candidates commented on 'Snakes and Ladders'; for higher reward, they will have discussed its relevance as a game that is known for its sudden reversal of good fortune. The writer's use of contrast was noted and sometimes the humour of the piece in the last paragraph; the most perceptive commented on the exaggerated descriptions of people's reactions and that here, a tension is built relating to the author's continuing failure. The more perceptive saw the broader picture of the writer's ineptitude in his life in the city, which is drawn with the hyperbolic responses of the host family to his efforts in speech: Fathin 'sniggered', Sawsan 'splattered' and Najib 'cracked up so violently'.

Weaker responses tended towards a narrative or descriptive approach to the passage.

- (b) Candidates were invited to write a section of a brief article for a local tourist agency giving advice to prospective visitors on the subject of using the local language. They were required to base their writing closely on the material of the original text.

Most candidates recognised that the purpose of this piece was both to advise and to encourage. Candidates were able to adapt aspects of the source material to provide the voice of experience, and perceptive responses included more sophisticated examples of humour. One successful candidate adapted the source material to provide a humorous word of warning: 'if you have an inflated ego – it's about to be crushed'.

Whilst adequate responses tended to write mainly in first person in addition to touching on second person to engage, the most effective writing came from candidates who employed a range of moods in the active voice. One candidate, for example, began with an imperative 'Beware' and then switched moods to declarative, interrogative and back to imperative: 'have an infinite supply of determination'. Personal engagement included an effective use of simile: 'learning Arabic is like looking for a water source in a Moroccan desert'.

As is often the case, the accuracy of some candidate's expression waned in the directed writing, just when they must be most conscious of avoiding mistakes. Tenses were a regular issue for many candidates. In several cases, inconsistencies in spelling and punctuation caused otherwise effective responses to suffer in terms of reward. Nonetheless, there was some imaginative and fluent writing devoted to this exercise, demonstrating a clear appreciation of the original passage.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/21 Writing
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Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Candidates need to allocate a set amount of time to: identifying factors for writing; planning to write; writing; proofreading.
- When reading the questions, candidates should concentrate on the instructions and should carefully deconstruct the question, perhaps underlining key instructions. For example, in **Question 1** the key instruction is to 'write a story', creating a sense of 'suspense and drama'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question (as above), leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- During the planning stage, candidates should consider the following: the *purpose* of the piece, the prescribed *form* and *audience* as well as the most appropriate *voice* or persona to adopt, the *mood* and *tone* that they should try to create in their writing and the most suitable *structure* to employ.
- One key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona. Key aspects of the most successful and effective writing in **Section B** are a clearly developed, logically sequenced structure, together with an authentic sense of voice.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation. Clear expression in simple and compound sentences without much variety is preferable to expression that does not flow easily in long, rambling sentences.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- In preparing for **Section A**: Imaginative writing, candidates should develop skills in differentiating between 'showing' versus 'telling', to improve both descriptive and narrative skills.
- When preparing for **Section B**: Writing for an audience, candidates should be encouraged to read a wide variety of newspaper and magazine articles as background preparation. Candidates should be exposed to the tone, register and format of these texts, as well as of speeches and voiceover scripts.

General comments

Technical accuracy tended to be more secure in **Section B** than in **Section A**, where tense errors and confusions often caused problems. **Section B** responses were also often structured more effectively than **Section A**. It may, therefore, be appropriate to advise candidates to attempt their chosen **Section B** task before their **Section A** task.

Quite a number of submissions self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some essays were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. Responses that either fall short of the minimum word limit or exceed the maximum are unlikely to form full, well-rounded pieces, or to meet Mark Scheme criteria relating to structure. Candidates should practise writing time-limited tasks to a specific word length.

For **Section A**, strong responses were those with an original flavour and a convincing sense of place, character or atmosphere. For example, the reader was able to feel a sense of suspense and drama in the story in **Question 1**; appreciate the contrasting perspectives of the two diary entries in **Question 2**; or visualise the light, colour and sound in **Question 3**. Where some candidates fell down in their imaginative writing, it was often due to issues related to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph), or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. A number of answers were hampered by tense confusions, especially when attempting to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Elements that could be improved in weaker responses are the use of the conventions of different forms, the ability to establish a mature, credible voice, and the development of a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story

Write a story which begins with the following sentence: *As the boat got closer, I recognised his face.* In your writing, create a sense of suspense and drama.

Many stronger candidates wrote stories with a coherent cyclical structure that linked the opening and ending effectively. They often cast the passenger as a long-lost relative or friend who the narrator barely knew. Both suspense and drama were facilitated through the passenger's unknown intentions or motive and how the narrator's fate was inextricably bound up with his/her ensuing actions. Stronger candidates generated drama and suspense by skilfully establishing character and setting right from the opening of the story, for example: 'As the boat got closer, I recognised his face, beaming with happiness and as radiant as the brilliant sunlight. Yet his eyes. They say the eyes are windows onto one's soul. His were obsidian black.' They were usually focused on maintaining suspense and drama and many relished the opportunity to use graphic but appropriate language to instil fear, such as: 'It was the face of a monster, the face of a murderer, the face of death'.

Weaker candidates tended not to make clear what circumstances lay behind the opening sentence and sometimes fell into describing gratuitous violence. At times, candidates took the prompt to create a sense of suspense and drama as an opportunity for descriptive writing rather than narrative, highlighting the importance of paying close attention to the requirements stipulated in the question. Weaker stories often centred on a character being followed without the purpose of the following being identified; these candidates therefore struggled to control a coherent narrative as they explained why the character had become lost. Candidates need to think carefully about their choices of language and the suitability of vocabulary they use. Most candidates wrote complete stories; some wrote story openings, again highlighting the need to read the question carefully.

Question 2 – Contrasting diary entries

Write two contrasting diary entries (300–450 words each) about a public event: the first by an important politician attending this event; and the second by the politician's bodyguard. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere and place to help your reader imagine the scene.

Stronger candidates provided a clear contrast between the two diary entries, while providing a close parallel of the sequence of events that both characters could reflect on. The politician was often focused on how he/she might appear to the public and the bodyguard was understandably more obsessed with security. This was handled insightfully by some candidates, who stressed the ironic contrast between the egotistical ambition of the politician, oblivious to the dangers of violence and even assassination, and the fears of the bodyguard, fully aware of these dangers threatening both himself and his client. In one response, the president's diary entry included: 'I seized every chance I got to press the flesh, demonstrating to all present that I am a man of great respect who will certainly someday be the leader of our great country'. Meanwhile the bodyguard had a different viewpoint: 'Although I was honoured to be selected to serve on the elite security detail, I kept my mind clear and composure cool. To do otherwise would only endanger the life of the President'. Another stronger candidate portrayed a ruthless, uncaring presidential candidate protected by a

security man who saw the politician for what he was and despised him, but conscientiously carried out his nerve-racking duties and even hoped to be retained when his client claimed the presidency.

Weaker candidates struggled where they had little knowledge of what a political event might entail and showed difficulty recreating the atmosphere of such a meeting. Candidates needed to go beyond producing a report of the events of the day, heeding the instruction to create a sense of atmosphere and place. They should also take care not to stretch credibility by including direct contradictions between the two diary entries. The role of the bodyguard seemed sometimes to be seen as an invitation to include violence; where so, this violence needed to suitably fit the events the candidates had outlined and the atmosphere they had created in the rest of their diary entry.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Old House*, about an abandoned house in the countryside. In your writing, focus on light, colour and sound to help your reader imagine the scene.

Quite often description was structured within a narrative framework and sometimes this was effective, as long as the focus of the writing remained descriptive.

Stronger candidates successfully created mood and atmosphere, such as in this example: 'Alone. I was completely alone. There was not a soul to be seen in kilometres. It was like a fairytale, perfect, untouched, eternal.' Many stronger candidates focused their descriptions on a few selected rooms and structured their responses around some key ideas, such as the presence of family photos. One dramatised contrasts in light: 'As you walk into the house, you are hit with a sudden burst of darkness, and light becomes a past thought. As your eyes adjust to the darkness of the house, the snowy white cobwebs that engulf the inside of the house become visible.' Another candidate went further than recording the slow rotting and destruction of the house to evoke the life of the family who once occupied it, with a poignant extra layer of nostalgia and compassion: 'On the floor there was a pale-yellow paper. It read "They came looking for us. Now, no looking back..." The note was written in black ink with child-like letters. It ended with "Family Winston, February 13th 1998."' Another interesting and original approach described the house from the narrative point of view of a dog.

Some weaker candidates went through the prompts in a pedestrian manner, first writing about light, then colour and finally sound. Other weaker answers gave brief descriptions of every room in the house, listing adjectives extensively to produce dry catalogues of colours and sounds. A number of weaker candidates had attempted to enhance the descriptive quality of their writing by using fragmented sentences; in fact, appropriate sentence demarcation would have been a much more effective aid in achieving the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. Candidates should be wary of overusing the continuous present tense, which can result in non-standard, often unclear sentence construction.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Review

You recently visited a local tourist attraction for the first time. Write a review of the tourist attraction, which will be published in your school magazine.

Stronger candidates demonstrated a confident first-person voice and a good understanding of the form of a review. They focused on suitably local attractions and took into account that they were writing for a school magazine, interweaving description and comments of interest to the audience, such as opinions, criticisms and hints for other travellers. They used a range of rhetorical devices such as direct address and anecdotes and often began the review in an engaging way, such as in this example: 'As summer approaches, hundreds and thousands of families will come to spend time at Orlando's famous attraction: Disney World. Considering the high ticket price, is it worth it?' One candidate described an old, historic part of the town that had interesting buildings and restaurants and a cemetery: 'It is almost as if you can feel the historic weight of the place. Statues of angels and heroes and weeping women hover beside you as you wander around'. Another described a tour along a scenic road: 'The stretch through North Carolina is particularly beautiful. The villages are visibly blue and the air crisp, almost as if filled with the scent of spice. The locals are most often kind and helpful, so it's perfect for finding other locations to visit while nearby.'

Weaker candidates tended to recount visits rather than reviewing the attraction, writing a narrative about their day at an amusement park, or listing elements of the attraction without linking or commenting on them. Many weaker candidates wrote in detail about the food available, then the pricing, at times without including

other details about the attraction which would have brought the piece to fulfil the format of a review. Many candidates missed the focus of the question on local attractions, often flying to another country or a different continent.

Question 5 – Contrasting speeches

Two students are going to take part in a debate on whether healthcare should be free for everyone. One of the students supports this idea, and the other student disagrees with it. Write the texts of their speeches (300–450 words each).

The requirement to write two contrasting speeches was met by candidates across the ability range. Weaker candidates struggled where they had little knowledge of how healthcare systems work.

Stronger candidates assumed an authoritative stance and maintained the appropriate form. They used a range of rhetorical devices such as rhetorical questions, statistics, different sentence structures, direct address and powerful vocabulary. The best responses were formal in tone and convincing, challenging others' opinions in an incisive, yet polite, manner. One candidate started in rhetorical style: 'I stand here in front of you all, an American citizen. I stand here with my constitutional rights like life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. But what is life when you are bound to a bed or had to lose a foot because you could not afford healthcare or the medication?' Another asked the audience to use their imagination: 'One second you're driving to work and the next you're being transported by ambulance while the front of your car is in a tree. Yet the only thing you can think of is how you will pay.'

Weaker candidates often wrote their speeches in the form of essays, which resulted in the loss of immediacy that the speeches required. Candidates should be careful not to repeat ideas – or indeed whole sentences – across both parts of the task, varying only the stance. Candidates should ensure that they employ effective paragraphing in their writing, as this will aid the organisation of ideas and arguments. Where candidates ran out of ideas for a viewpoint, there was a tendency to become repetitive and therefore thin on content; effective planning can be used to remedy this, as well as developing the skill of supporting an idea fully rather than relying on a list of lightly supported ideas. Some responses were characterised by a convincing first speech, but a shorter, underdeveloped second speech; this is likely to be remedied by a focus on time management in the exam context.

Question 6 – Voiceover

Write the voiceover script for a TV news report about the problems caused by the amount of traffic in towns and cities. In your writing, create a sense of the scale of the problem and the need for action.

Stronger candidates had a good grasp of what a voiceover should sound like, skilfully combining the description of each of the video shots with the voiceover that accompanied it. They focused closely on certain aspects of the problem of traffic and avoided the potential trap of being too general in their approach. They presented a detailed visual illustration of the hypothetical footage, which was then well supported by the verbal component of the voiceover text. One candidate contrasted traffic control in Germany and Peru, recognising how traffic impacts on developing countries 'and acts as a barrier against social and economic growth.'

The format of a 'voiceover' was something weaker candidates seemed underprepared for, which often led to responses not being fully appropriate to the task; candidates need to have a good level of familiarity with the format and purpose of all text types that can come up in this Paper in order to be able to use appropriate form and content clearly. For example, some candidates wrote an article about traffic in cities, listing problems and possible resolutions rather than producing content fitting for a voiceover script.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/22 Writing
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Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Candidates need to allocate a set amount of time to: identifying factors for writing; planning to write; writing; proofreading.
- When reading the questions, candidates should concentrate on the instructions and should carefully deconstruct the question, perhaps underlining key instructions. For example, in **Question 1** the key instruction is to 'write the opening of a story', creating a sense of 'excitement and anticipation'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question (as above), leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- During the planning stage, candidates should consider the following: the *purpose* of the piece, the prescribed *form* and *audience* as well as the most appropriate *voice* or persona to adopt, the *mood* and *tone* that they should try to create in their writing and the most suitable *structure* to employ.
- One key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona. Key aspects of the most successful and effective writing in **Section B** are a clearly developed, logically sequenced structure, together with an authentic sense of voice.
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- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- In preparing for **Section A**: Imaginative writing, candidates should develop skills in differentiating between 'showing' versus 'telling', to improve both descriptive and narrative skills.
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General comments

Technical accuracy tended to be more secure in **Section B** than in **Section A**, where tense errors and confusions often caused problems. **Section B** responses were also often structured more effectively than **Section A**. It may, therefore, be appropriate to advise candidates to attempt their chosen **Section B** task before their **Section A** task.

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For **Section A**, strong responses were those with an original flavour and a convincing sense of place, character or atmosphere. For example, the reader was able to feel a sense of excitement and anticipation in the story in **Question 1**; appreciate the contrasting outlook and mood of the two diary entries in **Question 2**; or visualise the sound, movement and colour in **Question 3**. Where some candidates fell down in their imaginative writing, it was often due to issues related to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph), or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. A number of answers were hampered by tense confusions, especially when attempting to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Elements that could be improved in weaker responses are the use of the conventions of different forms, the ability to establish a mature, credible voice, and the development of a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story opening

Write the opening of a story called *Setting Off*, about an expedition which has taken many months to prepare for. In your writing, create a sense of excitement and anticipation.

The word 'expedition' was understood by the majority of candidates, although a small number interpreted this as 'exhibition' and wrote about preparing to exhibit artwork at a gallery.

Stronger candidates produced some lively pieces of writing, choosing to write about expeditions ranging from trips into space and mountain climbing to tracing a family tree. Some showed a sense of enjoyment as they planned for a gap year with friends, sometimes focusing their attention on a strong opening by communicating immediately a sense of purpose: 'Months and months of gruelling hard work and planning has finally come to pass. The exhilaration and excitement thrumming through my veins promises an experience for the books. It will be an adventure of a lifetime.'

Weaker candidates often wrote about a normal holiday rather than specifically about an exhibition. Some candidates over-emphasised the preparation aspect of the question, never quite communicating a sense of excitement. For example, they often produced accounts of packing for a holiday and going to the airport, needing to provide more of an insight into the narrator's emotions. Where others demonstrated that they had a good story they wanted to tell, they needed to make sure that they linked their story solidly to the question.

Question 2 – Contrasting diary entries

Write two contrasting diary entries (300–450 words each): the first by a teacher on his first day of work; and the second by the same teacher on his last day of work before retirement. In your writing, create a sense of outlook and mood.

In most cases contrast in voice and tone was managed well. Stronger candidates produced some very realistic and sympathetic portrayals of a teacher's life and of the irritating sets of behaviours exhibited by students. They often communicated a positive and heart-warming image of the teaching profession and a fondness for their teachers. They also used a more mature voice in the second diary entry, to provide contrast. One candidate created a clear sense of mood in the second diary entry: 'I thought about how much I had changed as a person. From an impatient, nervous and timid teacher I turned into a confident, assertive and patient person. As I walked out of the gate for the last time, my journey as a teacher came to an end.' One of the most striking retirement day entries achieved a sense of outlook and mood through symbolism: 'The classroom seemed dull. My desk had lost its shine over the past thirty years [...]. The lesson bell rang for one last time.' Another strong candidate used subtle observations to highlight the passage of time: he had been held up on his way to school on his first morning by an anti-apartheid demonstration and had later been given directions to his classroom by a tall blonde colleague. On his last day the woman he bumped into in the corridor now had grey hairs amongst the blond ones and was his wife; his favourite student, who was helping him to pack up his possessions, was a girl who would not have been permitted to enter the school at the time of the demonstration which had delayed him on his first day.

Weaker candidates dwelt too much on going through morning preparations in the first entry, and sometimes the second as well. Typically the young teachers were full of high hopes of moulding their students into upright citizens; they were apprehensive on their first day, and met with some disobedience and hostility in the classroom; then on the last day the retiree was sad to leave the school, had become deeply attached to the students, and was given a fond farewell by both students and colleagues. Candidates should note that work in the top two bands of the Mark Scheme will be 'imaginative', and 'possibly original' in the very top band.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Crowd*. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere, and focus on sound, movement and colour to help your reader imagine the scene.

Most candidates were able to picture the required sound, movement and colour effects. Many candidates used a narrative frame or a single person's perspective, which worked well in cases where the focus of the piece remained descriptive.

Stronger candidates often wrote from their own experience and were able to write evocatively about the crowd at a sporting event, a music festival, a train station, a national celebration or a protest. Stronger candidates focused on specific people within the crowd, incorporating the elements of sound, movement and colour in a subtle way, producing an effective descriptive piece. One candidate described the crowd at a music festival, giving the crowd a sense of identity: 'The noise of the crowd was deafening. It was like watching an angry ocean in a violent storm. The lights flickered furiously in a mix of colours.' Others took an imaginative approach such as a musician looking out at the crowd, or a bird's eye view of lunch time in a school cafeteria, with the focus on a student attempting to navigate his way through a queue in an attempt to get food.

Weaker candidates often descended into narrative about going to an event, and lost focus on the crowd by describing the event itself. Others utilised fictional sources such as zombie apocalypse films, fantasy or medieval battles and were often plot-driven rather than a deliberate presentation of apt descriptive details. A number of weaker candidates had attempted to enhance the descriptive quality of their writing by using fragmented sentences; in fact, appropriate sentence demarcation would have been a much more effective aid in achieving the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. Candidates should be wary of overusing the continuous present tense, which can result in non-standard, often unclear sentence construction.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Article for school website

In class, you have been discussing whether it is a good idea to take a year off from formal education before going to university. Write an article for your school website about the pros and cons of taking a 'gap year'.

This question produced many responses which showed clear engagement with the topic. Cultural influences made a big difference to what people thought, as in some countries it seems to be an indication of failure, as you may only have a gap year if you need to improve your exam marks. In other countries there was a big fear of being a year behind their contemporaries. Others considered a gap year as an opportunity to mature and gain life experience that helps people to be confidently independent and to focus on their studies once they start university.

Stronger candidates used a wide range of rhetorical devices and some showed cleverness with headings, thus really focusing attention on the school website audience. Effective sub-headings included: 'The Brain Break', 'You jumped off the train', 'Zero Funding' and 'The Nothing Gap'. Many responses were lively and entertaining and often took into account the differing views of teachers, peers and parents. Such responses had a good sense of the audience for this task, adopting an appropriately informal style, often with an effective opening, such as in this example: 'Seven years of primary school, plus five years of high school, then four years of university, then work until retirement. This is the way society has structured our lives. What if you could choose to slow life down to catch your breath before whizzing on to the next chapter? Enter the gap year.'

Weaker candidates mainly listed pros and cons and often needed more balance in their approach. Many had an extreme take on the cons of taking a gap year, with visions of candidates falling into organised crime and generally dissolute behaviour; such views were difficult to support.

Question 5 – Contrasting reviews

A new luxury hotel has recently been built in an old part of your town. Write two contrasting reviews (300–450 words each) of the hotel: one praising it, and the other criticising it.

Stronger candidates clearly focused on a review form, providing personal comment on the hotel and its amenities. Where candidates connected the location of the new building being in the old part of the town, it gave them more to say, both negatively (for example, the new business was ruining existing local businesses), and positively (for example, this would be a boost to the local economy). There were two different and equally valid approaches to this question: first, the alleged advantages of resurrecting an old and stagnant area with new energy and employment for locals, as against the discrepancy between a posh and tasteless edifice totally out of keeping with the old but culturally rich area where it was situated, driving out local businesses and staffed by outsiders; second, details of a stay by a guest and what each experienced. Some stronger candidates mixed both elements. One candidate enthused: 'Oh what joy it brings me to see new life injected back into this old town! We have not had a new building or new infrastructure set up in our humble town for years!' Another writer was less than impressed: 'The receptionists greet you with a distant glare with a hint of glee. Not to mention the tantalizing array of breakfast choices; a beige semi-fluid with a white blob floating is supposed to be the early morning drink to keep the gears turning.'

Weaker candidates adopted a list-like approach, providing a tour of the hotel, sometimes after a lengthy prologue detailing travel to the hotel. A significant number of weaker candidates wrote essays, rather than reviews, thus falling short of the requirements of the question. Elements that one would expect to be incorporated into a review include mention of the hotel facilities and comment on them, and offering advice to readers.

Question 6 – Speech

Your headteacher has asked you to give a speech to your year group about a free-time activity that you are very good at. Write the text of the speech. In your writing, create a sense of enthusiasm for the activity and a desire to share this enthusiasm with others.

Candidates who selected this question dealt with a wide variety of activities, from belly dancing, surfing, fishing, baking and yoga to reading, acting, singing and listening to music.

Stronger candidates used a range of rhetorical devices to engage the audience, many beginning their responses with a rhetorical question. They adopted a motivational tone with suitably emotive language; they thoughtfully explained how the activity helped them get through stressful study for exams or difficulty in forming friendships and were very encouraging towards others wanting to take up the interest. Better responses outlined, for example, the benefits of eating healthily, challenging oneself and persevering in difficult situations. They also provided relevant information to reinforce their arguments with claims about improvement in mental health and academic achievement. Many of these stronger candidates wrote from experience, which gave their speeches an authentic feeling. One candidate wrote about drumming: 'It is a fantastic form of catharsis and can help to relieve stress and anxiety. The drums can speak when you cannot.' For another, who had suffered a number of personal problems, running was a fix-all cure. Others wrote about volunteering, with strong conviction: 'Through my free time activity I am able to have a social, economical and environmental impact to the people living in various communities. Do we not want to be the reason for change? Do we not want to help others in need? Do we not want to be proud of something we have achieved?'

Weaker speeches needed more structural attention. They often gave long lists of necessary equipment or wrote about the minutiae of the rules of the game. In many cases it was apparent that candidates would have done better to have written about an activity they were familiar with. For example, cooking was a popular choice, but where candidates made little reference to the process of cooking their speech became less persuasive.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/23

Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Candidates need to allocate a set amount of time to: identifying factors for writing; planning to write; writing; proofreading.
- When reading the questions, candidates should concentrate on the instructions and should carefully deconstruct the question, perhaps underlining key instructions. For example, in **Question 1** the key instruction is to 'write a story', creating a sense of 'suspense and drama'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question (as above), leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- During the planning stage, candidates should consider the following: the *purpose* of the piece, the prescribed *form* and *audience* as well as the most appropriate *voice* or persona to adopt, the *mood* and *tone* that they should try to create in their writing and the most suitable *structure* to employ.
- One key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona. Key aspects of the most successful and effective writing in **Section B** are a clearly developed, logically sequenced structure, together with an authentic sense of voice.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English, with accurate sentence demarcation. Clear expression in simple and compound sentences without much variety is preferable to expression that does not flow easily in long, rambling sentences.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- In preparing for **Section A**: Imaginative writing, candidates should develop skills in differentiating between 'showing' versus 'telling', to improve both descriptive and narrative skills.
- When preparing for **Section B**: Writing for an audience, candidates should be encouraged to read a wide variety of newspaper and magazine articles as background preparation. Candidates should be exposed to the tone, register and format of these texts, as well as of speeches and voiceover scripts.

General comments

Technical accuracy tended to be more secure in **Section B** than in **Section A**, where tense errors and confusions often caused problems. **Section B** responses were also often structured more effectively than **Section A**. It may, therefore, be appropriate to advise candidates to attempt their chosen **Section B** task before their **Section A** task.

Quite a number of submissions self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some essays were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. Responses that either fall short of the minimum word limit or exceed the maximum are unlikely to form full, well-rounded pieces, or to meet Mark Scheme criteria relating to structure. Candidates should practise writing time-limited tasks to a specific word length.

For **Section A**, strong responses were those with an original flavour and a convincing sense of place, character or atmosphere. For example, the reader was able to feel a sense of suspense and drama in the story in **Question 1**; appreciate the contrasting atmosphere of the two descriptive pieces in **Question 2**; or visualise the colour, light and sound in **Question 3**. Where some candidates fell down in their imaginative writing, it was often due to issues related to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph), or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. A number of answers were hampered by tense confusions, especially when attempting to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Elements that could be improved in weaker responses are the use of the conventions of different forms, the ability to establish a mature, credible voice, and the development of a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story

Write a story which begins with the following sentence: *The door opened slowly and silently, and he knew he had just one chance to escape.* In your writing, create a sense of suspense and drama.

Stronger candidates were successful in creating suspense and drama and incorporated the prompt successfully, through the use of intense moments developed through descriptive details. Many stories immediately plunged the reader into a menacing atmosphere, often where a character had been trapped, either in a building or as a prisoner. For example, one candidate continued the story thus: 'His legs ached as the mellow chime of his ankle chains echoed throughout the hallway, their heavy metal pulling him back in a beckoning call to return.' One well-told story was about a black slave escaping from a cotton-picking plantation, against a background of cruelty and abuse. Another told of an attempt to escape from a Nazi concentration camp; this response managed to include flashbacks of the man's past and family history. One very imaginative response was written from the point of view of a dog which had been locked up and was now free, with the character's voice becoming gradually apparent during the narrative.

Weaker responses were often characterised by over-complicated storylines which were not controlled. Some candidates needed a stronger link between their story and the line quoted in the question. Stories often would have benefitted from a better sense of an ending or resolution; such stories tended to go from one minor climax to another, which compromised the building of suspense. Most candidates wrote complete stories, although some were only story openings, highlighting the need for candidates to read the question thoroughly.

Question 2 – Contrasting descriptive pieces

Write two contrasting descriptive pieces (300–450 words each): the first about a beautiful remote beach; and the second about the same beach, ten years later, after it has been developed for tourism. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere and place.

Most candidates managed this quite well; sometimes an element of narrative was used effectively to structure the description and in the second piece many took an opportunity to make environmental points.

Stronger candidates provided a clear sense of contrasting atmosphere, with several recalling – with convincing nostalgia – a childhood family visit to 'their' beach and giving an appropriately heartfelt contrast in later years. One effective description described, 'the water glistening with an impossibly gorgeous white-blue, moves with the elegant grace of a ballet dancer.' The same candidate contrasted the atmosphere effectively in the second piece, beginning: 'And ten years later [...] there are throngs of people roaming the pier, looking about in wonder. Restaurants and stores line the board walk; lobster dinners, hoodies and caps; you name it, you can buy it.'

Weaker candidates struggled to write descriptively for the required three hundred words, sometimes descending into a narrative account of visits to the beach. Others needed to give more descriptive detail in

the first piece and repeated ideas in the second piece, struggling to develop their description beyond the sea being polluted and the beach being littered with plastic.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *Sunset over the City*. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere, and focus on colour, light and sound to help your reader imagine the scene.

Stronger candidates successfully created a sense of atmosphere, such as in this example where the writer envisaged a kind of combat between the city and nature. Interspersed with descriptions of the sun as it was sinking were references to the indifferent city: 'Still the traffic bustled; everyone down there was unaware of the great display in the sky above. Still the city below denied Nature's call to rest. Like a heart it never stops beating even when the rest of the body wishes for stillness and rest.' Another candidate structured their response effectively by describing a city tour: 'Now you're on a bridge stretching from one bank of the river to another. It is dark; there are lights of all colours lighting up the river below.' Another effective approach visualised a rush hour scene which changed into an exciting night-time entertainment scene, with appropriate descriptions of the changing colour of the sun.

Weaker candidates tended to focus on the happenings in the city once the sun had set, rather than describing the effects that the moment of the sun setting had upon the city. For example, one candidate went to a great deal of trouble to describe the events in a nightclub, which took place after dark, when the sun had already set. The list-like approach to description made some responses seem a little laboured. A number of weaker candidates had attempted to enhance the descriptive quality of their writing by using fragmented sentences; in fact, appropriate sentence demarcation would have been a much more effective aid in achieving the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. Candidates should be wary of overusing the continuous present tense, which can result in non-standard, often unclear sentence construction. Over-elaborate language, descriptions filled with clashing imagery, and elaborate names for colour sometimes made it hard to visualise the scene being described.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Magazine article

In class, you have been discussing the importance of learning foreign languages. Write an article called *Let's Communicate*, which will be published in your school magazine. In your writing, create a sense of the benefits of being able to communicate in other languages.

This question produced many responses which showed a good level of knowledge about the topic and clear engagement with it. Most candidates wrote in an appropriate form and many used subheadings, utilised a positive tone of voice and used effective vocabulary to appeal to their audience.

Stronger candidates gave very good examples of how languages were useful to them, or could be in the future. Many examples seemed to come from real experience and this gave them substance. Several strong candidates mentioned the multinational nature of the school they attended and how important it was to try to welcome new arrivals from overseas with an attempt to greet them in their own language. A number of stronger candidates communicated quite passionate feelings about the importance of language and cultural awareness, as expressed clearly in this response: 'Not only does it aid you in communicating with other people but it also helps to bring people together. It breaks down the wall that separates people. It builds up a community where everyone can come together as a society.' Another candidate was more blunt, but had an effective tone: 'It makes you look cool! And appear as someone who is knowledgeable too. Who does not want that?'

Weaker responses were vague and lacked examples or relied on one or two anecdotes to support an argument. Others touched on some pertinent topics, such as language and culture, dying languages and the need to preserve them, or improved brain function; it is important to develop discussion of such topics rather than mention them fleetingly.

Question 5 – Contrasting letters

A local newspaper recently published an article about plans to build a road directly through the middle of a large park in your city. Readers were invited to write letters to respond to this article. Write two contrasting letters (300–450 words each): one supporting the plans; and the other opposing them.

Most candidates gave an equal commitment to both the positive and negative responses. Stronger candidates sometimes rose to the challenge of adding depth to the discussion by adopting personae from different backgrounds and age groups, who might be expected to take opposite views: for example, a student, an older resident or parent and an environmental campaigner. One objector to the scheme was horrified by the proposal, writing: 'Cornwell Park, enjoyed by all, no matter what age, culture or background, is a place where an individual seeks peace, satisfaction, relaxation and security in one of the few tranquil areas within our now sprawling metropolitan area.' Others decried the appalling traffic congestion, and welcomed the new road which would alleviate it. Questions about safety, the environment and conservation were also raised by many.

Weaker candidates often struggled to organise their letters for this discursive task, mirroring content in the two letters; this produced some differing perspective but needed to differ in voice as well.

Question 6 – Speech

A film director has used your school building to make a film, in which some students had minor acting roles. The film director wants to give a speech to thank the staff and students at the school. Write the text for the speech. In your writing, focus on the ways in which the school and students contributed to the success of the film.

Stronger candidates often placed people who had to be thanked in certain categories, where their efforts and contributions could be mentioned collectively before certain individuals were singled out. One particularly strong and imaginative response managed to show appreciation while barely using the word 'thanks': 'Accustomed as I am to working alongside Hollywood stars, the school made me think humbly of where every director starts – as just an ordinary person.' Cleaning staff were praised for uncomplainingly going beyond their normal duties in clearing up after a scene which had involved a food fight. Teaching staff were complimented for organising students who had undertaken minor roles and those students were shown appreciation by being told that their names would appear among the credits of the film. Some candidates used their knowledge of cinematography and drama, and were able to develop their speeches with detail and imagination.

Weaker candidates had difficulty focussing the thanks given, perhaps as a result of finding it hard to imagine the roles the school might have played in the film. Such speeches often consisted of giving thanks to a long list of individuals for their help in making the film, without providing relevant detail and therefore becoming repetitive.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/31 Text Analysis
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Key messages

- Candidates should prepare for this Paper by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply both when producing a piece of Directed Writing and when analysing and comparing texts linguistically.
- For **Question 1(a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their Directed Writing text. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting the aspects of language from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate the specific effects that are created.
- For **Question 2** candidates need to identify specific features of each text's language and style, relate these to supporting textual details to examine the specific effects produced, and compare how the texts' differences in purpose, context, and audience affect the creation of different meanings.

General comments

Many candidates were evidently well prepared for a Paper designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. A small proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have resulted from candidates chiefly gleaning hints from the information provided in the Questions' instructions, as opposed to carefully analysing the texts themselves.

Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the style and language of the accompanying text, in this session a guide to birdwatching taken from the website of an international organisation dedicated to conserving nature. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was the opening 120–150 words of a speech in a formal school or college debate that outline the main arguments about whether birdwatching is a worthwhile hobby. Careful consideration of the target audience (the members of the other side in the debate and the audience in attendance) was required. Candidates are expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the text produced for **1(a)** with the style and language of the guide to birdwatching. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register, format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Recognition of the style and the range of lexical choices exhibited guide and comparing the effects produced with those in the speech were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to

see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is important to bear in mind that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed comparative responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly responded enthusiastically to this directed writing task, usually demonstrating sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of a debating speech. Most candidates ensured their speech opening statements included a salutation addressed to the debate's opponents and audience either generally ('Good morning ladies and gentlemen') or more specifically ('Respected teachers, my fellow candidates'). Formality varied from the exceptionally formal to a modified formal register usually employed by candidates recreating the website's conversational tone: 'I'd really like to encourage you all to think about taking up this hobby.' Most responses consisted of a few short to medium-length paragraphs in which candidates demonstrated a sense of familiarity with the debating convention of supported arguments, through a clear focus on ideas from the website text. Many candidates structured their main points by successfully mimicking the rhetorical questions of the original text. Some sought to develop a personal anecdote to advocate birdwatching as a hobby from a position of experience: 'Back in 2017 when I got my first pair of binoculars...'

In weaker responses, candidates tended to repeat much of the information about birdwatching from the original material in summaries. Such responses could often have been improved by making direct reference to purpose and form, and presenting their debate arguments in a more concise and clear way. A number of candidates presented conclusions, including statements thanking the audience for their attention, which did not fulfil the requirements of the task to write the 'opening' of a speech, and highlights the need for close reading of the question. Some candidates used many words to introduce the speaker to their audience and express how honoured they were to be making their speech, where they would have done better to get to the point earlier in their writing. General comment about hobbies also caused some pieces to go off topic, with discussion including the benefits of having a hobby, what a hobby involves and how one might go about selecting a hobby. Where responses were intended to oppose the motion, candidates need to remember that arguments should still be based in reworking of the original text.

In strong responses candidates consistently and purposefully introduced the topic and established a clear set of arguments through corresponding effective reworking of the text. Many made effective use of discourse markers to structure their responses: 'I will present three arguments in support of my position [...] My first argument [...] My second [...] Finally [...]'. Other techniques employed were: rule of three; thoughtful use of adverbs and adjectives; and purposeful selection of connectives and triadic structures: 'Birdwatching increases personal health and wellbeing, encourages a spiritual connectedness with nature and educates its practitioners in a practical, hands-on manner'. A considerable number of candidates successfully adopted the opposition position in the debate, arguing that today's youth might prefer to look up birds online and learn much more with the comfort of being indoors and not having to get out of bed early in the morning.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (120–150 words). A number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Examples of this were seen where candidates clearly identified the impact of lexis appearing in the website guide to birdwatching and then examined the carefully chosen vocabulary used in their opening remarks of a debating speech in a comparative fashion. Such responses achieved an equal, or

very nearly so, comparative emphasis on the website description and the debate speech opening. Where textual references are made, candidates should remember to draw conclusions concerning functions and lexical properties.

Weak responses were often brief, focused more on the guide to birdwatching than on their own Directed Writing, and likely to primarily summarise content rather than endeavouring to analyse comparatively. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify in the website guide, especially the use of a title, paragraph structure, numbered points in bold type and capitalisation for a main point ('LISTEN') and a variety of sentence types. Some could have gone into more detail in their comparison of the formality of each text. Sometimes tone could be contrasted, as the website guide is wholly positive whereas some of the speech openings produced by candidates either advocated the opposition's potential observations about anti-social hours and uncomfortable conditions associated with birdwatching.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions of the birdwatching guide and the opening of a debating speech. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the purpose and audience of each text (informative and potentially broad for the website guide, argumentative and quite limited for the debating speech opening). Most contrasted the structure of the website guide and its step-by-step instructions, indicated by the numbered paragraphs, with the less rigidly structured advocacy of their speech opening. Many candidates noted that the most obvious difference is that the website guide is a 'conventional' written mode text that would be read online and likely in private, compared to the speech as a written mode text that is delivered orally to a live audience. Candidates usually focused on the guide's rhetorical questions, designed to 'grab' the reader's attention, and also considered the use of the second person in both the guide and their speech opening, to indicate how the guide's author 'creates' synthetic personalisation so that 'each reader feels personally spoken to', much like listening to a speaker deliver a speech. There was usually comparison of the descriptive language of the guide with the more concise lexis of the speech, often with examination of the enthusiastically persuasive and friendly tone in the original text in contrast to the more serious tone of the latter. Consideration of comparable imperatives usually included the observation that the authors of the two texts were seeking to ensure that the readers and listeners would consider doing as they are instructed. There was occasionally some focus on the guide's field-specific lexis of bird species and the technical requirements of suitable binoculars, as well as on how the informal abbreviations 'nocs' and 'birding' helped to familiarise readers with central aspects of the hobby.

In the strongest responses, candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their writing, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted briefly and analysed in detail. Candidates clearly appreciated the differences in the texts on the basis of structure, syntax (imperatives and rhetorical questions) and semantics (the lexical field of the primary sense of sight associated with birdwatching, and the field of a formal debate associated with references to the opposition side, a chairperson or judge(s) and, once, a timekeeper). There was detailed consideration of the instructional nature of the progression of the guide's imperatives ('Get' binoculars and a bird guide in preparation, 'Take a walk' to familiarise oneself with the activity, and 'Use the internet' to become better informed). A few candidates additionally noted the guide's informal personification of birds implicit in 'refuel' instead of 'feeding', and how the texts' credibility was established through some of its field-specific lexis serving to identify specific bird species (e.g. 'Black-throated Blue Warbler').

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate their appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. There was a tendency in weaker essays to summarise the content of both Texts and list techniques they could identify. In such responses there was exhibited some recognition of the use of form and language to inform the readers of each Text and to convey subject-specific concepts. Candidates who employed a comparative approach were best able to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a secure grasp of the conventions of written language in Text A, two extracts from a textbook entitled 'An Introduction to Painting Portraits' written by Rosalind Cuthbert, and of spoken

language in Text B, a transcript of part of a televised demonstration in which professional illustrator Nick Sharratt shows an audience of teenagers how to draw a face (there are also two presenters, Michelle and Ricky). While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both Texts is potentially niche given the topic, most argued that the audience for Text B would be greater in size than that for Text A: regular viewers of the television programme would swell its audience whereas the textbook containing the extracts about drawing human ears and hands would need to be sought out by interested readers. The different modes were usually well understood through reference to the use of short paragraphs and a concise structure facilitated by subheadings in Text A and the contractions and stresses typical of spontaneous speech in Text B. Differences in tone were identified as didactic as opposed to colloquial. There was usually some engagement with lexis on the basis of high and low frequency, Text B featuring the former ('guys', 'things') and Text A the latter through artistic jargon ('contour', 'tonal', 'proportional'). Candidates established how more descriptive language features in Text A, especially with its use of similes (ears 'as lovely as shells or as grotesque as cauliflowers'), which are not required in Text B because the audience can see what Nick is doing. A number of candidates additionally cited evidence of the politeness principle ('you all look very studious (1) this is good') and some also argued that Michelle's utterances could serve as evidence to support gendered language theories which suggest that women tend to say less in mixed sex discussion and be more supportive in conversations: e.g. her tag question, 'are they looking good guys' and back-channelling, 'yeah nice'.

Many candidates focused especially on the conventions of spoken language they identified in Text B, especially the non-fluency features associated with spontaneous speech exhibited by Nick: a voiced pause ('erm'), repetition ('lets lets'), false starts ('have you all done your (1) how are you getting on') – perhaps because he is drawing at the same time as speaking. The context of Text B was appreciated through Nick's constant use of the plural first person, such as 'we can add', to encourage interest and participation by the studio audience, alongside singular first person ('i think') and second person ('youll get some tips') to establish himself as the experienced artist instructing beginners. It was frequently noted that Nick uses questions to encourage and engage his teenage audience ('how are you getting on', 'do you know what').

In a number of weak responses candidates approached the task by contrasting the ways the topic of how to produce artistic portraits was handled. They maintained that Text A is much too formal, dry and boring, and consists of too many words to instruct the reader efficiently. They criticised Text B for being too 'laid back', with a lot of unnecessary information in it and too many people trying to speak all at once for efficient instruction to take place. Such candidates would have created more successful responses had they taken a linguistically analytical, rather than a generally critical, approach.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects produced that relate directly to the Texts' shared context of producing artistic portraits of people. They considered the use of the plural first person ('we can see...'); singular first person ('I love...') and the second person ('you') by the author of Text A to accommodate her audience in much the same manner as employed by Nick in Text B. Text A's range of information-laden compound and complex sentences, comparative adjectives ('broader', 'flatter', 'shorter') and striking organic verb choices ('the ear springs', 'the ear grows out of', 'the wrist from which it springs') were frequently contrasted with Nick's use of hedges and tentative language ('i think perhaps', 'maybe youll get some tips', 'i just find', 'you might'). Some candidates additionally focused on some features of Text A that are not normally associated with textbooks, such as vague lexis ('at some distance', 'quite complicated', 'squarish') and the use of imperative verbs ('Check this by...', 'Ask a friend...', 'Do contour drawings...'), presumably deliberately to accommodate as wide an audience as possible. In relation to Text B there was consideration of the presenters' roles in speaking directly to the audience: Michelle uses simple language ('good', 'nice') and both she and Ricky use the noun 'guys' perhaps intentionally to accommodate the teenage audience that may be presumed to be mixed gender, and employ tag questions ('are they looking good', 'good tip isnt it') as attempts by TV presenters to sustain their audience's interest. Some candidates considered how Ricky seems to have more authority than Michelle, as he also asks questions directly of Nick ('why do you start...') and advises the audience ('you guys should be...', 'make sure youve got') on the artist's behalf.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32 Text Analysis
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Key messages

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General comments

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Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the style and language of the accompanying text, in this session a guide to birdwatching taken from the website of an international organisation dedicated to conserving nature. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was the opening 120–150 words of a speech in a formal school or college debate that outline the main arguments about whether birdwatching is a worthwhile hobby. Careful consideration of the target audience (the members of the other side in the debate and the audience in attendance) was required. Candidates are expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the text produced for **1(a)** with the style and language of the guide to birdwatching. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register, format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Recognition of the style and the range of lexical choices exhibited guide and comparing the effects produced with those in the speech were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to

see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is important to bear in mind that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed comparative responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly responded enthusiastically to this directed writing task, usually demonstrating sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of a debating speech. Most candidates ensured their speech opening statements included a salutation addressed to the debate's opponents and audience either generally ('Good morning ladies and gentlemen') or more specifically ('Respected teachers, my fellow candidates'). Formality varied from the exceptionally formal to a modified formal register usually employed by candidates recreating the website's conversational tone: 'I'd really like to encourage you all to think about taking up this hobby.' Most responses consisted of a few short to medium-length paragraphs in which candidates demonstrated a sense of familiarity with the debating convention of supported arguments, through a clear focus on ideas from the website text. Many candidates structured their main points by successfully mimicking the rhetorical questions of the original text. Some sought to develop a personal anecdote to advocate birdwatching as a hobby from a position of experience: 'Back in 2017 when I got my first pair of binoculars...'

In weaker responses, candidates tended to repeat much of the information about birdwatching from the original material in summaries. Such responses could often have been improved by making direct reference to purpose and form, and presenting their debate arguments in a more concise and clear way. A number of candidates presented conclusions, including statements thanking the audience for their attention, which did not fulfil the requirements of the task to write the 'opening' of a speech, and highlights the need for close reading of the question. Some candidates used many words to introduce the speaker to their audience and express how honoured they were to be making their speech, where they would have done better to get to the point earlier in their writing. General comment about hobbies also caused some pieces to go off topic, with discussion including the benefits of having a hobby, what a hobby involves and how one might go about selecting a hobby. Where responses were intended to oppose the motion, candidates need to remember that arguments should still be based in reworking of the original text.

In strong responses candidates consistently and purposefully introduced the topic and established a clear set of arguments through corresponding effective reworking of the text. Many made effective use of discourse markers to structure their responses: 'I will present three arguments in support of my position [...] My first argument [...] My second [...] Finally [...]'. Other techniques employed were: rule of three; thoughtful use of adverbs and adjectives; and purposeful selection of connectives and triadic structures: 'Birdwatching increases personal health and wellbeing, encourages a spiritual connectedness with nature and educates its practitioners in a practical, hands-on manner'. A considerable number of candidates successfully adopted the opposition position in the debate, arguing that today's youth might prefer to look up birds online and learn much more with the comfort of being indoors and not having to get out of bed early in the morning.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (120–150 words). A number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Examples of this were seen where candidates clearly identified the impact of lexis appearing in the website guide to birdwatching and then examined the carefully chosen vocabulary used in their opening remarks of a debating speech in a comparative fashion. Such responses achieved an equal, or

very nearly so, comparative emphasis on the website description and the debate speech opening. Where textual references are made, candidates should remember to draw conclusions concerning functions and lexical properties.

Weak responses were often brief, focused more on the guide to birdwatching than on their own Directed Writing, and likely to primarily summarise content rather than endeavouring to analyse comparatively. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify in the website guide, especially the use of a title, paragraph structure, numbered points in bold type and capitalisation for a main point ('LISTEN') and a variety of sentence types. Some could have gone into more detail in their comparison of the formality of each text. Sometimes tone could be contrasted, as the website guide is wholly positive whereas some of the speech openings produced by candidates either advocated the opposition's potential observations about anti-social hours and uncomfortable conditions associated with birdwatching.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions of the birdwatching guide and the opening of a debating speech. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the purpose and audience of each text (informative and potentially broad for the website guide, argumentative and quite limited for the debating speech opening). Most contrasted the structure of the website guide and its step-by-step instructions, indicated by the numbered paragraphs, with the less rigidly structured advocacy of their speech opening. Many candidates noted that the most obvious difference is that the website guide is a 'conventional' written mode text that would be read online and likely in private, compared to the speech as a written mode text that is delivered orally to a live audience. Candidates usually focused on the guide's rhetorical questions, designed to 'grab' the reader's attention, and also considered the use of the second person in both the guide and their speech opening, to indicate how the guide's author 'creates' synthetic personalisation so that 'each reader feels personally spoken to', much like listening to a speaker deliver a speech. There was usually comparison of the descriptive language of the guide with the more concise lexis of the speech, often with examination of the enthusiastically persuasive and friendly tone in the original text in contrast to the more serious tone of the latter. Consideration of comparable imperatives usually included the observation that the authors of the two texts were seeking to ensure that the readers and listeners would consider doing as they are instructed. There was occasionally some focus on the guide's field-specific lexis of bird species and the technical requirements of suitable binoculars, as well as on how the informal abbreviations 'nocs' and 'birding' helped to familiarise readers with central aspects of the hobby.

In the strongest responses, candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their writing, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted briefly and analysed in detail. Candidates clearly appreciated the differences in the texts on the basis of structure, syntax (imperatives and rhetorical questions) and semantics (the lexical field of the primary sense of sight associated with birdwatching, and the field of a formal debate associated with references to the opposition side, a chairperson or judge(s) and, once, a timekeeper). There was detailed consideration of the instructional nature of the progression of the guide's imperatives ('Get' binoculars and a bird guide in preparation, 'Take a walk' to familiarise oneself with the activity, and 'Use the internet' to become better informed). A few candidates additionally noted the guide's informal personification of birds implicit in 'refuel' instead of 'feeding', and how the texts' credibility was established through some of its field-specific lexis serving to identify specific bird species (e.g. 'Black-throated Blue Warbler').

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate their appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. There was a tendency in weaker essays to summarise the content of both Texts and list techniques they could identify. In such responses there was exhibited some recognition of the use of form and language to inform the readers of each Text and to convey subject-specific concepts. Candidates who employed a comparative approach were best able to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a secure grasp of the conventions of written language in Text A, two extracts from a textbook entitled 'An Introduction to Painting Portraits' written by Rosalind Cuthbert, and of spoken

language in Text B, a transcript of part of a televised demonstration in which professional illustrator Nick Sharratt shows an audience of teenagers how to draw a face (there are also two presenters, Michelle and Ricky). While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both Texts is potentially niche given the topic, most argued that the audience for Text B would be greater in size than that for Text A: regular viewers of the television programme would swell its audience whereas the textbook containing the extracts about drawing human ears and hands would need to be sought out by interested readers. The different modes were usually well understood through reference to the use of short paragraphs and a concise structure facilitated by subheadings in Text A and the contractions and stresses typical of spontaneous speech in Text B. Differences in tone were identified as didactic as opposed to colloquial. There was usually some engagement with lexis on the basis of high and low frequency, Text B featuring the former ('guys', 'things') and Text A the latter through artistic jargon ('contour', 'tonal', 'proportional'). Candidates established how more descriptive language features in Text A, especially with its use of similes (ears 'as lovely as shells or as grotesque as cauliflowers'), which are not required in Text B because the audience can see what Nick is doing. A number of candidates additionally cited evidence of the politeness principle ('you all look very studious (1) this is good') and some also argued that Michelle's utterances could serve as evidence to support gendered language theories which suggest that women tend to say less in mixed sex discussion and be more supportive in conversations: e.g. her tag question, 'are they looking good guys' and back-channelling, 'yeah nice'.

Many candidates focused especially on the conventions of spoken language they identified in Text B, especially the non-fluency features associated with spontaneous speech exhibited by Nick: a voiced pause ('erm'), repetition ('lets lets'), false starts ('have you all done your (1) how are you getting on') – perhaps because he is drawing at the same time as speaking. The context of Text B was appreciated through Nick's constant use of the plural first person, such as 'we can add', to encourage interest and participation by the studio audience, alongside singular first person ('i think') and second person ('youll get some tips') to establish himself as the experienced artist instructing beginners. It was frequently noted that Nick uses questions to encourage and engage his teenage audience ('how are you getting on', 'do you know what').

In a number of weak responses candidates approached the task by contrasting the ways the topic of how to produce artistic portraits was handled. They maintained that Text A is much too formal, dry and boring, and consists of too many words to instruct the reader efficiently. They criticised Text B for being too 'laid back', with a lot of unnecessary information in it and too many people trying to speak all at once for efficient instruction to take place. Such candidates would have created more successful responses had they taken a linguistically analytical, rather than a generally critical, approach.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects produced that relate directly to the Texts' shared context of producing artistic portraits of people. They considered the use of the plural first person ('we can see...'); singular first person ('I love...') and the second person ('you') by the author of Text A to accommodate her audience in much the same manner as employed by Nick in Text B. Text A's range of information-laden compound and complex sentences, comparative adjectives ('broader', 'flatter', 'shorter') and striking organic verb choices ('the ear springs', 'the ear grows out of', 'the wrist from which it springs') were frequently contrasted with Nick's use of hedges and tentative language ('i think perhaps', 'maybe youll get some tips', 'i just find', 'you might'). Some candidates additionally focused on some features of Text A that are not normally associated with textbooks, such as vague lexis ('at some distance', 'quite complicated', 'squarish') and the use of imperative verbs ('Check this by...', 'Ask a friend...', 'Do contour drawings...'), presumably deliberately to accommodate as wide an audience as possible. In relation to Text B there was consideration of the presenters' roles in speaking directly to the audience: Michelle uses simple language ('good', 'nice') and both she and Ricky use the noun 'guys' perhaps intentionally to accommodate the teenage audience that may be presumed to be mixed gender, and employ tag questions ('are they looking good', 'good tip isnt it') as attempts by TV presenters to sustain their audience's interest. Some candidates considered how Ricky seems to have more authority than Michelle, as he also asks questions directly of Nick ('why do you start...') and advises the audience ('you guys should be...', 'make sure youve got') on the artist's behalf.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/33 Text Analysis
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Key messages

- Candidates should prepare for this Paper by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply both when producing a piece of Directed Writing and when analysing and comparing texts linguistically.
- For **Question 1(a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their Directed Writing text. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting the aspects of language from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate the specific effects that are created.
- For **Question 2** candidates need to identify specific features of each text's language and style, relate these to supporting textual details to examine the specific effects produced, and compare how the texts' differences in purpose, context, and audience affect the creation of different meanings.

General comments

Many candidates were evidently well prepared for a Paper designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. A small proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have resulted from candidates chiefly gleaning hints from the information provided in the Questions' instructions, as opposed to carefully analysing the texts themselves.

Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the style and language of the accompanying text, in this session a blog post in which the writer, David Durant, argues that there should be more good news in radio news bulletins. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions: in this session, guidelines advising local radio station reporters on how to achieve an appropriate balance of positive and negative content in their news bulletins. Careful consideration of the target audience (the radio station's reporters) was required, as well as the voice of the news editor who issues the guidelines. Candidates are expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the editorial guidelines produced for **1(a)** with the style and language of the blog post. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register, format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Recognition of the style and the range of lexical choices exhibited in the blog and comparing the effects produced with those in the guidelines were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to

see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is important to bear in mind that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed comparative responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly responded enthusiastically to this directed writing task, usually demonstrating sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of guidelines. Most candidates ensured their guidelines contained conventional features for organising information: appropriate headings (e.g. 'Updated editorial guidelines'); salutations (e.g. 'Dear fellow news reporters'); and bullet points or short paragraphs to succinctly indicate the exact changes in editorial guidelines required. A formal register was usually used to point out the good sense of a policy reform (e.g. 'Dear colleagues, by now you have all had the chance to read through the report summarising listener feedback...'). There was detailed reference to pertinent points in the blog post shaped to the task: avoiding overwhelmingly negative content at certain times of the day and week; elimination of sudden shifts in tone during broadcasts (from 'the soothing and calm voice of the presenter' to 'the newsreader launches into an assault on all my senses with tales of murder'); achieving more of a focus on positive news through a ratio of 70:30 positive to negative; and identification of clear principles as to what constitutes positive news ('the very best of human behaviour', 'people and organisations who are actively taking action to make the world a better place', etc).

In weaker responses, candidates needed to remember that the main focus in this task is to rework the original material. Format needed to be appropriate to guide journalists in understanding and appreciating the change in guidelines. There was a tendency to summarise the passage, at times mimicking Durant's language and style in a way that did not suit the task prescribed. Very often, responses contextualised the issue rather than constructing practical guidelines, for example asserting that 'we must have more positive news', and going on to comment on audience demographics and means to retain or gain listeners.

In strong responses, candidates consistently made use of a bullet-point format that achieved concision and addressed the blog's most pertinent points. Candidates sometimes represented the news editor as directly acknowledging Durant's views and suggestions in a brief preamble, casting the news editor as concerned and responding directly to these or similar findings from 'listener surveys'. There was also a strong sense of an appropriately professional news editor voice running through these responses, soliciting cooperation and offering to explain the rationale for the change in guidelines in private if necessary. Occasionally, there were lists of local positive news stories which suitably contrasted Durant's examples entailing 'murder, violence, extinction', etc. Such guidelines included points about more detailed research into stories so positive tenets or potential outcomes could be identified and then emphasised during broadcast. They sometimes utilised a current international news story as an example of focussing on solutions rather than negativity: 'an achievable solution to this conflict would be for the UN to initiate urgent peace talks'.

Most candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (120–150 words) although a number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Examples of this were seen where candidates clearly identified the impact of lexis appearing in the blog and then examined the carefully chosen vocabulary used in their guidelines in a comparative fashion. Such responses achieved an equal, or very nearly so, comparative emphasis on blog and guidelines respectively. Where textual references are made, candidates should remember to draw conclusions concerning functions and lexical properties.

Weak responses were often brief, focused more on the blog than on their own Directed Writing, and likely to primarily summarise the content of both texts rather than endeavouring to analyse comparatively. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify in the blog and their guidelines. They identified that the texts are both in written mode, though they often did this implicitly through noting that the blog is written in paragraphs and has some long sentences, whereas the guidelines were formatted in points or shorter sentences for easy reading. Some candidates perceived a difference in levels of formality between the blog and their recast, especially in the case of more discursive recasting, which they argued represented the news editor's 'laid-back' style to 'get alongside' the reporters.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions of the blog and guidelines. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the audience of each text, potentially broad though somewhat niche for Durant's blog and extremely limited for the guidelines, due to a presumably small number of reporters employed by a local radio station. They perceived that the blog begins with a narrative to 'set the scene', which lent greater impact to Durant's later points about the effects of upsetting news items on listeners. Some candidates explored in detail how the images of being 'transported' to the 'wonderful place', by the 'soothing sounds' that 'float' into the ear and bring a 'deep feeling of peace' was strikingly contrasted by the listing of news stories entailing 'murder, violence, extinction, war', etc. Most candidates effectively established contrasts between the descriptive aspects of Durant's blog and the more concise, matter-of-fact approach of their guidelines, providing relevant examples in support. They at times achieved a sustained focus on the use of positive adjectives in paragraph 1 ('wonderful', 'soothing', 'calm', 'uplifting'), and how they contrast with the adjectives 'negative' and 'unresolved' in paragraph 5. There was some effective focus on their own guidelines, usually achieved through comparative examination of field-specific journalism jargon in the blog (e.g. 'presenter', 'newsreader', 'headlines', 'editorial policy', 'mainstream news reporting') with an additional emphasis on the use of formal diction in their guidelines when the editor seeks to give precise instructions ('where applicable'; 'at the discretion of'). There was effective comparison of the use of the singular first person and the second person to give the blog a personal feel, whereas in the guidelines the pronouns usually demarcated relative positions of authority. They discussed the blog's use of interrogative sentences (including an extensive tricolon in lines 20–25) as opposed to the guidelines' primarily declarative sentences.

In the strongest responses, candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted briefly and analysed in detail. They usually examined the few potential similarities in graphology, the title in bold heading the blog post and similar headings for the guidelines, immediately informing both sets of readers of the subject matter. They often appreciated that Durant's extended metaphor of a 'short journey' was intended to contextualise his views on reporting in a familiar manner, culminating in the use of politeness marker 'thank you' reinforcing the amicable relationship with his readership. There was usually detailed examination of Durant's emotive use of verbs; 'transported', 'greeted', 'floats' and 'bursting' in paragraph 1, with the immediate change in tone in paragraph 2's metaphorical use of the militaristic 'launches' and 'assaults'. There was exploration of the use of tricolon parallel phrases in lines 28–29 of the blog ('solutions rather than problems; hope rather than despair; humour rather than gloom') effectively serving to inform the instructions to be contained in the guidelines. There was fruitful comparison of the instructional style of the guidelines with the use of the imperative verb 'Consider' in line 26 of the blog.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate their appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. There was a tendency in weaker essays to summarise the content of both Texts and list techniques they could identify. In such responses there was exhibited some recognition of the use of form and language to inform the readers of each Text and to convey subject-specific concepts. Candidates who employed a comparative approach were best able to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a secure grasp of the conventions of spoken language in Text A, a transcript of an extract from a voiceover script for a television documentary about birds, and of written language in Text

B, an extract from a blog entitled '8 Birds That Can not Fly' by Allison Eldridge. While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both Texts is potentially quite large, most argued that the audience for Text A would be greater in size than that for Text B on the basis that the television documentary would be more readily accessible to casual viewers or those with a general interest in wildlife whereas the blog post would most likely be accessed through a specific internet search for flightless birds. The different modes were usually well understood through reference to the use of stress and frequent pauses in Text A and numbered headings to denote different entries in Text B, with a one-paragraph entry devoted to each flightless bird. They usually identify Text A as a voiceover, employing sufficient pausing for viewers to take in the image that appears simultaneously on their screens, with emphasis given to certain words and syllables to enhance the viewer's experience and, in some cases, make the monologue 'a little humorous': 'they can not do the one thing that birds are famous for doing (.) they can not fly'. Many remarked on the similarity in tone between the two Texts. Some candidates focused on the purpose of the opening appeal to readers of Text B to picture the scene as if they 'were an eagle', or 'the mythical phoenix', 'since there are no pictures to help readers otherwise visualise the birds'. There was some consideration of the use of rhetorical questions in both Texts to engage and sustain the audience's interest. Some candidates noted how both Texts would have been carefully composed and edited, so far as to incorporate equally relatable informal registers.

In a number of weak responses, candidates focused on summarising the content of the texts rather than examining linguistic features. Discussions of both texts were repetitive in nature and the focus on voice needed development. Some candidates appeared to not understand that Text A was a transcription of spoken language, proceeding to point out how incorrectly it was written, 'with no correct punctuation' or paragraphing, and 'with some words unnecessarily underlined'. A number of candidates provided very brief responses that amounted to personal criticisms of texts about birds.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects produced that relate directly to the Texts' shared context of flightless birds. They compared how both Texts use field-specific lexis in identifying the species of flightless birds, with both Texts featuring scientific terminology ('dna' and 'evolutionary history' in Text A, 'territory disputes' and 'nocturnal' in Text B), with Text B also making frequent use of geographic designations ('Antarctica', 'Galapagos'). Candidates noted how adjectives in Text A ('great', 'remarkable', 'exciting', 'unusual') highlighted the uniqueness of flightless birds, and that Text B's adverbs are used to similar effect ('actually', 'remarkably', 'truly', 'even' and 'too'). There was usually developed consideration of metaphors in Text A ('comic characters', 'court jesters', 'oddballs') and Text B's figurative language ('thrashing their wings like the wheels on a steamboat', 'the king of birds', 'one-bird band') that produces similarly entertaining effects. Candidates appreciated the range of information-laden compound and complex sentences in Text B and its frequent use of statistical information ('three out of four species', 'up to forty-five miles an hour') that readers would appreciate for their educational value; they compared this to Text A's broader statements of fact through superlative adjectives ('the fastest bird on land (.) a bird with the biggest eyes on earth'). There was usually consideration of the plural first person 'us' and the second person 'you' which is used with the repeated conditional clause 'if you're a bird' in Text A to both accommodate the television audience and to position the viewer to appreciate the subjects' mutual perspective. They also commented on how Text B's informal lexical choices ('guys', 'messed with'), the use of conjunctions to start some sentences ('But what about', 'And if that's not enough') and alliteration ('wistfully watched birds take wing') were intended to extend the reader's interest in a similarly friendly and entertaining fashion. A few candidates determined that while Text A has the more authoritative voice – 'of all the birds ive filmed over the years' – and Text B contains more information and facts, the Texts both admirably fulfil the mutual purpose of informing their audiences on the subject of flightless birds, possibly in educational frameworks.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/41 Language Topics
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Key messages

- In this Paper, candidates are expected to select carefully from the three questions offered and to write a fluent, developed response to two of them.
- Responses should be structured in a logical sequence of ideas, using – where appropriate – succinct references from the stimulus material and reference to theories which illustrate points made.
- Responses to **Questions 1** and **3** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription, including the features of conversation shown in the transcription key.
 - In **Question 1**, responses should provide a linguistic analysis of the conventions and ingredients of spoken language and social groups, and the effects and qualities conveyed by the language.
 - In **Question 3**, the linguistic analysis should similarly discuss the ways the interlocutors are using language, here in terms of child language acquisition.
- **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than the language it comprises.
- Responses to each of the three questions should be sustained, cohesive and should use a full and accurate range of technical terminology.

General comments

Weaker candidates tended to produce shorter work which were likely to be uneven or undeveloped. This was the case for all three questions. Those responses which were detailed and sustained moved through the higher bands, especially where it was clear that references to theories and theorists had been selected carefully for their appropriateness to the points being made, rather than being briefly mentioned.

In **Questions 1** and **3**, candidates should exercise caution when relying on use of the transcription key for clues which may aid spotting features in the transcriptions, such as overlap, pause, intonation and raised volume. They need to go beyond identifying these features to analyse them in the context of the speech in which they appear. Some weaker responses demonstrated lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription, ascribing the lack of punctuation to delayed cognitive development, which was not the case. Stronger responses discussed in detail and at length the nuances of the language of the interlocutors using linguistic terms accurately.

In **Question 2**, successful responses focused clearly on the contexts provided, using them as a springboard for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Candidates should ensure that a demonstration of knowledge of the history of English, or an overview of a particular theory, should be directly applied and kept succinct to avoid loss of focus. Some weaker responses reproduced long sections of the text or tended to paraphrase the passage without supplying their own ideas.

In all questions, strong and confident candidates were able to provide detailed examples from the material provided. These candidates provided argument and counterargument with theoretical examples drawn from an extensive exploration as part of their wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most responses engaged with the ways in which the context of the radio interview between Nicola Adams and Kirsty Young might affect language, using time constraints and absence of visual clues to the audience, for example, to explore the transcription.

In some cases, it was clear that weaker candidates had not read the question fully; there, the gender of Nicola Adams was indicated ('the first British woman to win an Olympic gold medal in her sport') and such misreading led to difficulty in some responses which attempted to ascribe gender theorists to evidence from the transcription. Other, more confident responses used Adams' use of high rising terminals in place of tag questions (for example between lines 18-25) to explore genderlect theories including those from Lakoff, Tannen, Cameron and Coates. Development was also evident where discussion took place regarding the way high rising terminals were used to elicit backchannel or to yield the conversational floor.

In general, discussion of the perceived emotional content of the exchange overshadowed analysis from a linguistic viewpoint. However, stronger responses appreciated the ways in which Young used language to manipulate Adams' responses to demonstrate her vulnerability and to bring about the shift towards triumph ('it was all worth it') at the conclusion of the exchange.

Most responses explored the balance of status between Adams and Young: weaker responses described Young's method of delivery, using declaratives rather than interrogatives ('the doctors thought you might not walk again') as being rather rude. Stronger responses argued, often making reference to Fairclough, that Young's technique purposefully delivered backstory to ensure audience engagement and to maintain Adams' focus.

Some weaker responses showed an eagerness to discuss the use of jargon, whereas stronger responses referred more accurately to the field-specific lexis used in order not to exclude a wider audience.

Question 2

Question 2 offered two passages as stimulus material, both of which considered the place of English in international business. **Passage A** stated the ways in which 'English is now the global language of business' saying that, in business, a common language is 'a must', and proceeded to describe the ways in which the Japanese internet services company, Rakuten, strove to 'mandate' English speaking in order to achieve success. **Passage B**, written by the CEO of Rakuten, described the commitment to – and challenges of – the project, using the example of Singapore as a successful role model.

Each of the passages offered the opportunity to candidates to create argument and counterargument on the ideas they contained. Weaker responses tended to discuss each of the two extracts separately, whereas stronger candidates had used the stimulus material to construct a cohesive whole discursive essay. Developed responses maintained focus on the language of international business and relations, making reference to Nerrière's 'Globish' construct.

Most responses discussed the idea of language 'take-over', making reference to Crystal's 'snowball' and Diamond's 'steamroller' effects. Weaker responses merely mentioned these names, whereas stronger responses described fully the effects on cultures which have undergone language change, often providing first-hand examples from local knowledge and understanding.

Language death was generally explored, as was hybridisation of Japanese and English into Japlish. Taking the example of Singapore used in **Passage B**, successful responses considered Singlish and the different ways in which hybrids can be used successfully, noting differences between these and the use of official languages in various cultures.

Most responses identified Japan's placement in terms of Kachru's concentric circle model; weaker responses provided some irrelevant material in an effort to describe the model. Those responses which moved through the higher bands gave a detailed discussion on how Kachru's theory might now undergo change as the successes of international business may affect the growth of English as a global language.

Some strong responses described Rakuten's strategy for 'Englishnization' as akin to colonisation, using their knowledge and understanding gained from wider reading on Widdowson's notion of language spread and

distribution. Developed responses further explored the extent to which the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis could be deemed appropriate to the contexts provided.

Question 3

Most responses to Question 3 identified that the two interlocutors, Emily and April, were in the continuing development stage of language acquisition, with stronger responses exploring the ways in which Piaget's concrete operational stage could be applied, including the ability to self-analyse in Emily's 'we were changing' at line 9. Development also evidenced how Aitchison's networking stage had been passed, although there remained naivety in the girls' utterances such as 'we'll each pierce each others ears'.

Often, weaker responses opted to discuss a perceived emotional content of the exchange rather than provide a close linguistic analysis. Weaker responses also provided lengthy descriptions of the holophrastic and telegraphic stages the girls must have passed through to arrive at their present stage of linguistic competence, where they would have done better to focus on analysis of the linguistic features present in the transcription.

Stronger responses explored the appropriateness of Halliday's imaginative function and how it could be applied to the utterances between lines 45-49, the childlike nature of the role play and mimicry of their mothers as Vygotskian more knowledgeable others.

Confident responses argued fluently, with linguistic detail on the extent to which April and Emily evidenced Skinner and/or Bruner and absorption of language such as the American 'cool dude', with developed analysis demonstrating continuing virtuous error in 'im a better cool dude than you' at line 25.

There was some analysis of the ways in which April and Emily might evidence the beginnings of genderlect, although this was not always confident and led at times to irrelevant material. Strong responses maintained focus on theories and theorists of child language acquisition, as are the demands of the question. These included reference to Crystal's later stages, exploring Emily's use of the conditional 'i might' at line 41. Further, confident development analysed the cognitive development in verbs 'think', 'hope' and 'forget' to assess the girls' linguistic competence against their use of vague language 'different stuff' and 'and everything'.

Candidates should be wary of a tendency to conclude an essay with a generalised statement as to whether the interlocutors were 'on track' with their use of language according to their age. Such judgment can lead to a tendency to assertion which detracts from the evidenced linguistic analysis which is the focus of this Question.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42 Language Topics
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Key messages

- In this Paper, candidates are expected to select carefully from the three questions offered and to write a fluent, developed response to two of them.
- Responses should be structured in a logical sequence of ideas, using – where appropriate – succinct references from the stimulus material and reference to theories which illustrate points made.
- Responses to **Questions 1** and **3** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription, including the features of conversation shown in the transcription key.
 - In **Question 1**, responses should provide a linguistic analysis of the conventions and ingredients of spoken language and social groups, and the effects and qualities conveyed by the language.
 - In **Question 3**, the linguistic analysis should similarly discuss the ways the interlocutors are using language, here in terms of child language acquisition.
- **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than the language it comprises.
- Responses to each of the three questions should be sustained, cohesive and should use a full and accurate range of technical terminology.

General comments

Weaker candidates tended to produce shorter work which were likely to be uneven or undeveloped. This was the case for all three questions. Those responses which were detailed and sustained moved through the higher bands, especially where it was clear that references to theories and theorists had been selected carefully for their appropriateness to the points being made, rather than being briefly mentioned.

In **Questions 1** and **3**, candidates should exercise caution when relying on use of the transcription key for clues which may aid spotting features in the transcriptions, such as overlap, pause, intonation and raised volume. They need to go beyond identifying these features to analyse them in the context of the speech in which they appear. Some weaker responses demonstrated lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription, ascribing the lack of punctuation to delayed cognitive development, which was not the case. Stronger responses discussed in detail and at length the nuances of the language of the interlocutors using linguistic terms accurately.

In **Question 2**, successful responses focused clearly on the contexts provided, using them as a springboard for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Candidates should ensure that a demonstration of knowledge of the history of English, or an overview of a particular theory, should be directly applied and kept succinct to avoid loss of focus. Some weaker responses reproduced long sections of the text or tended to paraphrase the passage without supplying their own ideas.

In all questions, strong and confident candidates were able to provide detailed examples from the material provided. These candidates provided argument and counterargument with theoretical examples drawn from an extensive exploration as part of their wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most responses engaged with the ways in which the context of the radio interview between Nicola Adams and Kirsty Young might affect language, using time constraints and absence of visual clues to the audience, for example, to explore the transcription.

In some cases, it was clear that weaker candidates had not read the question fully; there, the gender of Nicola Adams was indicated ('the first British woman to win an Olympic gold medal in her sport') and such misreading led to difficulty in some responses which attempted to ascribe gender theorists to evidence from the transcription. Other, more confident responses used Adams' use of high rising terminals in place of tag questions (for example between lines 18-25) to explore genderlect theories including those from Lakoff, Tannen, Cameron and Coates. Development was also evident where discussion took place regarding the way high rising terminals were used to elicit backchannel or to yield the conversational floor.

In general, discussion of the perceived emotional content of the exchange overshadowed analysis from a linguistic viewpoint. However, stronger responses appreciated the ways in which Young used language to manipulate Adams' responses to demonstrate her vulnerability and to bring about the shift towards triumph ('it was all worth it') at the conclusion of the exchange.

Most responses explored the balance of status between Adams and Young: weaker responses described Young's method of delivery, using declaratives rather than interrogatives ('the doctors thought you might not walk again') as being rather rude. Stronger responses argued, often making reference to Fairclough, that Young's technique purposefully delivered backstory to ensure audience engagement and to maintain Adams' focus.

Some weaker responses showed an eagerness to discuss the use of jargon, whereas stronger responses referred more accurately to the field-specific lexis used in order not to exclude a wider audience.

Question 2

Question 2 offered two passages as stimulus material, both of which considered the place of English in international business. **Passage A** stated the ways in which 'English is now the global language of business' saying that, in business, a common language is 'a must', and proceeded to describe the ways in which the Japanese internet services company, Rakuten, strove to 'mandate' English speaking in order to achieve success. **Passage B**, written by the CEO of Rakuten, described the commitment to – and challenges of – the project, using the example of Singapore as a successful role model.

Each of the passages offered the opportunity to candidates to create argument and counterargument on the ideas they contained. Weaker responses tended to discuss each of the two extracts separately, whereas stronger candidates had used the stimulus material to construct a cohesive whole discursive essay. Developed responses maintained focus on the language of international business and relations, making reference to Nerrière's 'Globish' construct.

Most responses discussed the idea of language 'take-over', making reference to Crystal's 'snowball' and Diamond's 'steamroller' effects. Weaker responses merely mentioned these names, whereas stronger responses described fully the effects on cultures which have undergone language change, often providing first-hand examples from local knowledge and understanding.

Language death was generally explored, as was hybridisation of Japanese and English into Japlish. Taking the example of Singapore used in **Passage B**, successful responses considered Singlish and the different ways in which hybrids can be used successfully, noting differences between these and the use of official languages in various cultures.

Most responses to identified Japan's placement in terms of Kachru's concentric circle model; weaker responses provided some irrelevant material in an effort to describe the model. Those responses which moved through the higher bands gave a detailed discussion on how Kachru's theory might now undergo change as the successes of international business may affect the growth of English as a global language.

Some strong responses described Rakuten's strategy for 'Englishnization' as akin to colonisation, using their knowledge and understanding gained from wider reading on Widdowson's notion of language spread and

distribution. Developed responses further explored the extent to which the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis could be deemed appropriate to the contexts provided.

Question 3

Most responses to Question 3 identified that the two interlocutors, Emily and April, were in the continuing development stage of language acquisition, with stronger responses exploring the ways in which Piaget's concrete operational stage could be applied, including the ability to self-analyse in Emily's 'we were changing' at line 9. Development also evidenced how Aitchison's networking stage had been passed, although there remained naivety in the girls' utterances such as 'we'll each pierce each others ears'.

Often, weaker responses opted to discuss a perceived emotional content of the exchange rather than provide a close linguistic analysis. Weaker responses also provided lengthy descriptions of the holophrastic and telegraphic stages the girls must have passed through to arrive at their present stage of linguistic competence, where they would have done better to focus on analysis of the linguistic features present in the transcription.

Stronger responses explored the appropriateness of Halliday's imaginative function and how it could be applied to the utterances between lines 45-49, the childlike nature of the role play and mimicry of their mothers as Vygotskian more knowledgeable others.

Confident responses argued fluently, with linguistic detail on the extent to which April and Emily evidenced Skinner and/or Bruner and absorption of language such as the American 'cool dude', with developed analysis demonstrating continuing virtuous error in 'im a better cool dude than you' at line 25.

There was some analysis of the ways in which April and Emily might evidence the beginnings of genderlect, although this was not always confident and led at times to irrelevant material. Strong responses maintained focus on theories and theorists of child language acquisition, as are the demands of the question. These included reference to Crystal's later stages, exploring Emily's use of the conditional 'i might' at line 41. Further, confident development analysed the cognitive development in verbs 'think', 'hope' and 'forget' to assess the girls' linguistic competence against their use of vague language 'different stuff' and 'and everything'.

Candidates should be wary of a tendency to conclude an essay with a generalised statement as to whether the interlocutors were 'on track' with their use of language according to their age. Such judgment can lead to a tendency to assertion which detracts from the evidenced linguistic analysis which is the focus of this Question.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/43 Language Topics
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Key messages

- In this Paper, candidates are expected to select carefully from the three questions offered and to write a fluent, developed response to two of them.
- Responses should be structured in a logical sequence of ideas, using – where appropriate – succinct references from the stimulus material and reference to theories which illustrate points made.
- Responses to **Questions 1** and **3** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription, including the features of conversation shown in the transcription key.
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 - In **Question 3**, the linguistic analysis should similarly discuss the ways the interlocutors are using language, here in terms of child language acquisition.
- **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than the language it comprises.
- Responses to each of the three questions should be sustained, cohesive and should use a full and accurate range of technical terminology.

General comments

Weaker candidates tended to produce shorter work which were likely to be uneven or undeveloped. This was the case for all three questions. Those responses which were detailed and sustained moved through the higher bands, especially where it was clear that references to theories and theorists had been selected carefully for their appropriateness to the points being made, rather than being briefly mentioned.

In **Questions 1** and **3**, candidates should exercise caution when relying on use of the transcription key for clues which may aid spotting features in the transcriptions, such as overlap, pause, intonation and raised volume. They need to go beyond identifying these features to analyse them in the context of the speech in which they appear. Some weaker responses demonstrated lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription, ascribing the lack of punctuation to delayed cognitive development, which was not the case. Stronger responses discussed in detail and at length the nuances of the language of the interlocutors using linguistic terms accurately.

In **Question 2**, successful responses focused clearly on the contexts provided, using them as a springboard for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Candidates should ensure that a demonstration of knowledge of the history of English, or an overview of a particular theory, should be directly applied and kept succinct to avoid loss of focus. Some weaker responses reproduced long sections of the text or tended to paraphrase the passage without supplying their own ideas.

In all questions, strong and confident candidates were able to provide detailed examples from the material provided. These candidates provided argument and counterargument with theoretical examples drawn from an extensive exploration as part of their wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates were eager to identify the genders of the teenage interlocutors, Zoe and Cameron and were able to draw upon a range of genderlect theories to support ideas, such as Lakoff, Tannen, Spender, Cameron and Coates. Weaker responses tended to be built solely on this aspect of language, whereas stronger responses were developed by discussion of other elements of the language provided by the transcription.

These other elements included Zoe's narrative technique (seen from line 10) and references to Labov's structural theory. More confident responses demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the theory and how it might be appropriately applied to the transcription. However, not all responses which considered it were sufficiently developed, mentioning the name Labov without detailing the theory and how it is relevant to the transcription.

Similarly, some responses referred to the symmetry of the tenor between Zoe and Cameron, referring to Fairclough to try to assess the balance of power. Those responses which made only minimal reference became uneven, whereas those which provided a balanced and fluent discussion moved through the higher bands.

Some appropriate reference to Cheshire's teenspeak was used in more confident responses, detailing delayed minimal response in Zoe's use of 'like', prevalent throughout the transcription, and use of the high rising terminal in lines 8 and 41. Most responses used the Americanised 'yeah', the colloquial 'rubbish' and cooperative overlap as clues to the age of Zoe and Cameron and the informal register seen throughout, which propelled the conversation forward.

Question 2

Question 2 offered two passages as stimulus material, both of which considered the place of English in international economies. **Passage A** discussed how 'economic performance' might alter in countries where there is a higher proficiency in speaking English, whereas **Passage B** reported on how languages might be 'wiped out by economic growth'. Each of the passages offered the opportunity to candidates to create argument and counterargument on the ideas they contained.

Most candidates appreciated the place of the English language across the globe and the impact that language death might have on cultures around the world. Most responses to this question showed a good level of engagement and development. Weaker responses tended to discuss each of the two extracts separately, whereas stronger responses had used the material to weave a cohesive whole discursive essay.

Language revitalisation, with reference to Hagège and Hebrew, was a popular way to develop responses, and confident candidates referred to Schneider's five stages of language loss. In discussions regarding **Passage A**, candidates often made very brief reference to Crystal, with weaker responses mentioning the name and the brief quote 'money talks, in English'. Diamond's 'steamroller effect' was similarly used very minimally in weaker responses.

Confident responses detailed the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis as well as quoting theoretical examples from Graddol and McWhorter, for example. Most candidates referred to Kachru: weaker responses identified in which of the three circles 'China, Russia and Brazil' (mentioned in **Passage A**) could be placed. Those responses which moved through the higher bands gave a detailed discussion on how Kachru's theory might now undergo change, as the world economy is altering in line with the emergence of English as a global language.

Question 3

Most responses to **Question 3** attempted to analyse Leia's use of her protoword *sooz* and used it to identify her holophrastic stage of linguistic competence. Stronger responses detailed evidence from Leia's utterances to analyse how her language might be entering the telegraphic stage.

The idea of Leia's understanding exceeding her production led to discussion of the Berko and Brown study of the 'Fis phenomenon'. Strong responses selected items from the transcription which made reference to this study entirely appropriate; weaker responses provided more information on the study than was necessary, sometimes omitting inclusion of Leia's utterances as evidence.

Strong responses identified the way in which Leia's utterances seemed 'bossy' as she needed to use the imperative in place of intonation, due to her stage of development. Development of this idea included analysis of how Leia used paralanguage to support her lack of phonemic competence ('FO [*mimes throwing the ball*]').

Other theories and theorists which stronger responses made reference to included Aitchison's 'labelling and packaging', Brown's 14 morphemes and Crittenden's advice on acquisition of plurals. Most responses used Piaget's cognitive development theory to identify Leia as in the sensorimotor stage; confident candidates used their knowledge and understanding of Piaget to analyse how Leia may be entering the preoperational stage.

Where weaker responses opted to discuss Pappy's language, they did so minimally, whereas stronger responses provided equal analysis of the ways child-directed speech was used. They referred in particular to Pappy's scaffolding technique, detailing how theoretical examples from Bruner, Vygotsky and Nelson were appropriate to the language in the transcription.