

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/11 Passages

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they read material from a diverse range of 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.
- They should 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 so that the effects of such features are considered 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

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 number of responses began with a summary of the passage, making no relevant language points.

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 noted the facts of punctuation and sentence structure without providing analytical comment them: for example, on the use of commas, some guidance about the use of asyndetic listing to build up to, perhaps, the notion of abundance; or the effect of an em dash on tone or another feature. Where candidates noted punctuation features in relation to the language used and provided comment on the effect, this was given due credit. 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. Similarly, candidates needed to be aware that they should relate language features to their precise effects and how these contribute to the text's style, language, and purpose. There is a tendency for some candidates to identify a language feature but not its effect or purpose.

A number of responses did not develop consideration of the structure of a passage, yet 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. Responses continue to show weakness where candidate succumb to the temptation to lift phrases 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. A common weakness in sentence construction involved the use of the gerund form of verbs. A significant number of responses did not adhere to the word guidance and candidates should be reminded that this is self-penalising. Furthermore, candidates are reminded of the importance of paying particularly close attention to the accuracy of spelling and punctuation in directed writing responses.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Responses showed a range in terms of understanding of the effects of language and the purpose of the extract. A few strong responses considered the history of the pressure cooker and its representation of class, tradition, and modernity. A very few linked the pressure cooker with the growing American immigrant population and the technological revolution in the kitchen. Many candidates did not recognise this passage as a 'Lifestyle' text and saw it as a straightforward sales pitch.

There was some recognition of the commanding tone of the title 'Put a lid on it' and the use of imperatives in the list '(f)ill it up, slosh in ... , crank ... and set ... ' which, for one candidate, made the text seem 'like an instruction manual'. Candidates commented on the Instant Pot's human qualities suggested by 'it could preserve relationships' and 'whose other skills include ... '. There was some reference to the writer's use of first person, personal anecdotes, dialogue, tripling, listing, hyperbole and positive tone.

One candidate was singularly unimpressed by the lifestyle change presented, commenting that its 'utility is commended for its peace-making ability in the kitchen rather than making particularly good food', especially given that the best that is said about it is that it produces 'tasty sludge'.

Very few candidates recognised 'the-tongue-in-cheek' attitude of the writer, though one candidate did appreciate the humour in the pot having 'a yoghurt-making function for people who lack jobs'.

The weakest responses made a few relevant points about language use, but needed to develop their response.

- (b) There were some delightful voiceover scripts in response to this directed writing task that included a sense of permanence found in the historical background of the pressure cooker.

Some candidates chose to write in straightforward declaratives for this piece. This was quite effective in instances where candidates employed some literary techniques: 'The Instant Pot pressure cooker is a marvelous masterpiece of modern technology'; '(t)he instant pot is a one stop shop for all your mealtime malfunctions'. Some candidates chose to write in first person, which generally made for less successful responses. The most effective voiceovers employed direct address to engage an audience. They utilized product endorsement strategies by those who had used the product before. They employed the imperative listing technique of the original to highlight the pot's features and suggested its benefits in triplets, such as 'saving time, saving relationships and even saving marriages'. A memorable, strong, up-beat note was provided by one candidate: '(s)top letting your pots and pans push you around, upgrade to the Amazon best seller today!'

A number of candidates felt the need to provide camera angles and give direction for the television advertisement. This reduced the word count on the actual voiceover script and created an uneven feel. Weaker responses often included lifting of the listing of 'cooking, steaming, sautéing', often creating a whole scenario rather than just the required voiceover.

Question 2

- (a) This passages but was often explored with much confidence.

Most candidates discussed the emotional and metaphorical pull of the text and the acute sense of loss experienced. Some candidates discussed the use of language devices and the contrast between the relationships of the persona, the canary and the lodgers.

Several weaker responses were very short and remained in the realm of acknowledgement that some sense of grief, sadness and loss were being expressed in the narrative. Personification was often misunderstood but where candidates commented on the 'human' qualities of the canary, suggested by 'he greeted me with a drowsy little note', credit was given. Most candidates recognised the first-person point of view and the personal nature of the text.

Higher band responses commented on the mood changes in the passage as a structural feature. One engaged response noted that the persona 'describes her dead pet as though she were in conversation with' the reader: 'You see that big nail ...'. This candidate noted the use of ellipses at the beginning of six of the eight paragraphs and the frequent interjection of short sentences, as though the persona were constantly 'speaking to reassure herself' and indicating 'breaking points' in the narrative whereby 'her sorrow and grief as well as her loneliness' threatened to overwhelm her. The candidate went on to note that after overhearing the insult 'the Scarecrow', the persona immediately returns to short reaffirming sentences, such as '(i)t does not matter.'

The persona's fond memories of her pet were referred to through Mansfield's use of past tense and flashback: 'The moment I came down in the morning ...'. The persona's soft tone was commented upon in the onomatopoeic 'Sweet! Sweet!'. Some responses explored the grief in Mansfield's use of the adjective 'unbearable' and the adoration with the use of repetition 'hop, hop, hop' to aid the reader's visualisation of the canary's beloved actions.

The simple but 'empty' nail was seen as symbolic of the persona's love for her canary and her loss. Symbolism was also suggested to candidates by the empty cage, emphasising the persona's 'empty heart'. Finally, comments were made about the contrasts between the persona's cheerful disposition and optimism in 'I am thankful for it', her sadness in 'I can scarcely look at it' and her forgiving nature in 'I quite understand'.

- (b) Some responses of these touched on the loss of the bird as a catastrophic event in the house and empathised with the narrator. Most responses were first person complaints about the 'irritating' canary and the 'irritating' landlady constantly moping about the house. Others related to the bird when it was still alive and recorded their annoyance with the narrator's preoccupation with it, and the noise (singing) it made.

A few candidates were confused about whether or not the narrator of the text in **Question 1(a)** was writing about a man or a canary. This had an impact on their journal writing. Most candidates had read the rubric carefully and wrote from an appropriate point of view.

Whilst most kept to the information in the passage, weaker responses lifted material and needed to offer more development and original input. Candidates need to be aware of the difference between echoing and lifting. Expression and accuracy was very limited in some of the weakest responses.

Question 3

- (a) In general, reference was made to the writer's creation of a sense of excitement and adventure in 'unpredictable wilderness' and there was some acknowledgement of a sales pitch in the last paragraph with its recommendation of various travel companies. There was some recognition that the language was descriptive and narrative – some referred to the similes and the metaphor of the skyscraper icebergs – and that the piece was written from the traveller's perspective. For the most part, responses were generalised comments, which would have been more successful with the analytical thrust of identifying a feature, citing an example and then commenting on the effect. This continues to be a significant point for teachers and candidates to take note of. There was some misunderstanding of personification in 'the emptiness will envelope you'.

More successful responses commented on the writer's portrayal of Antarctica as 'teeming with life', suggested by the 'lack of solitude' in a colony of penguins, 'birds packed tightly on every rock' and 'penguins ... "porpoised" through the water like leaping salmon'. Such candidates referred to the abundance of wildlife and picked up on the contrast between the isolation in this remote place and the reference to 'the rat race' in urban life. They commented on the writer's style in creating a sense of both familiarity and wonder: icebergs become 'skyscrapers stretching to the horizon', for instance. Thus, creating for one candidate 'a familiar reference for an alien landscape': an eloquent point.

The most successful responses showed an attempt to engage with the colours employed by the writer: 'turquoise', 'intense blue' and 'topaz or aquamarine'. Such responses went on to comment on how the colours, together with the 'fantastical shapes' in the triplet, created a vivid picture of Antarctica for the reader.

Most candidates missed the opportunity to comment on the change of tone and direct persuasive sales promotion in the final paragraph.

- (b)** Most candidates had some understanding of the letter format and could write with an adequate sense of purpose, expressing their disappointment and/or dissatisfaction about the trip. They understood the need to write in first person and in past tense. Many candidates were hampered by a lack of accuracy and fluency. There were also instances where candidates responded in review format, employing direct address.

One successful response began some way into the letter with a phrase that signalled that the complaint was lengthy ('Above all, however ...'). This candidate then reworked the 'rat race' cliché to indicate that expectations were rather different from reality: 'I felt that this would best allow me to connect with the natural world which daily life in modern society has taken from us.' The letter was then punctuated with short, simple sentences expressing disappointment, and an eloquent, ironic twist about this remote adventure: 'Save from the solace found in my suite, I was constantly surrounded by fellow travellers'.

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General comments

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. There has been a corresponding improvement in the closing paragraph, although some candidates repeated the main features of the passage and only a minimal amount of information could be credited.

Most candidates seemed to understand that language features need to be related to their effects within the passage. These effects were often stated generally, needing 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. The author's use of imagery was sometimes identified, specifically in **Question 3(a)**; where candidates did this, they needed to specify the nature of the imagery and the effect created.

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

There were some vibrant and perceptive responses in the directed writing. 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, however, relatively few 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.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to make adequate points about the most obvious rhetorical features in the passage. These included the writer's use of triplets, listing, onomatopoeia, and alliteration. Higher band responses addressed the writer's use of anecdotes to personalise the piece and provide first-hand experience, thus giving credibility. Factual evidence was referred to: firstly, in relation to the writer's reference to 'Euromonitor'; secondly, in relation to the usage of 'Big Health' in endorsing its product. A very few candidates noted the unsubstantiated credibility of the 'Deep Sleep Pillow Spray', commenting on the irony of the company name: 'This Works'.

Many candidates did not recognise the passage as a newspaper article, suggesting that it was either a narrative piece or a straightforward sales pitch. There was some confusion about the use of first person with many candidates assuming that this suggested an automatic connection with the audience. The use of second person in paragraph eight was also sometimes misunderstood, with candidates citing such usage as an instance of direct address. The use of the metaphor in 'assaulted by a beeping alarm' was commonly identified as an instance of personification, with often lengthy explanations about why this was the case. The writer of the piece was commonly referred to as a man even in such circumstances where candidates had attempted to address the writer's 'sarcasm': "Mummy, is it working?" Clearly not.' Stream of consciousness was often referred to without evidence of a clear understanding of this style of writing. The writer's use of 'a mobile device' in paragraph 3 was misunderstood, with many candidates referring to this as a mobile telephone. Weaker responses needed to develop their analysis beyond recognising some of the supposed 'persuasive' techniques employed. The weakest went no further than repeating the contents of the passage.

Where there was evidence of some difficulty to engage with language features, adequate points were made about structure. Responses referred to the hook implicit in the title and made general comments about the suggested dependency upon technology. Subtitles were addressed in terms of the organisation of the piece and the impact of the 'Ratings' was noted. More care was needed in identifying that these were not, actually, listed in terms of the writer's preference of each gadget.

Higher band responses noted the humour in 'sleep-industrial complex', linked as it was to 'big business'. These responses commented on the writer's reviewing technique in weighing up the pros and cons of each gadget in order to arrive at a rating. Specific language features were addressed, such as the pre-modifying adjective in 'the dratted soft toy' that suggested the writer's frustration; the dynamic verb 'scoured' that suggested the writer's desperation to find a cure; the adverb in 'actually worked' that suggested that no other gadgets had so far; the noun phrase '(f)ull disclosure' that suggested the writer's honesty and balanced view; and the irony of the writer being so 'fixated' on sleep that it caused her insomnia.

- (b) The voiceover task was generally handled well, with most candidates having an adequate or clear sense of how to advertise one of the gadgets in an appropriate style and many adopting a 'personal story' approach. A common choice of gadget for this task was the 'Bodyclock Luxe'. Many based their responses on the cost being set against the advantages of the range of features as a strategy.

Attempts to provide a voiceover script for 'Sleepio' tended to lift material from the original. Many responses providing a voiceover for the 'Deep Sleep Pillow Spray' were less effective, with some candidates focusing on aromatherapy rather than the actual gadget. One candidate, who had noted the irony of the company name in **Question 1(a)**, ended the voiceover effectively with an emphatic 'THIS WORKS!'

Weaker responses paid much attention to providing scene directions where they would have done better to concentrate on the actual voiceover script itself. The least effective responses were paraphrased versions of the original, needing to translate to a different medium. Opportunities were missed to draw upon all the material of the text, to provide a 'comparative' advertisement.

Question 2

- (a) This text was generally handled with confidence. Most candidates commented on the opening rhetorical questions. Reactions to these tended to be lengthy and personal, focussing on an interpretation of their nature as philosophical, rather than engaging with how they helped to set the scene.

Higher band responses noted that the questions provided the framework for an implicit critique of social media and its influence upon the lives of the sisters, the twins and even the persona. Linked to that was some misunderstanding about the further question '(w)hat are we doing?' at the end of paragraph two, with candidates discussing the writer's direct address or audience engagement. The most successful responses noted the irony of the persona's (most often referred to as the 'writer's') dependency on devices in 'our laptops and our phones' and the comparative and self-reflective nature of the question itself. These responses often went on to comment upon the persona's ambivalent attitude towards the sisters, with hints of admiration (suggested in the phrases 'I am moved by their industry' and 'making a project of their lives') alongside hints of sarcasm and also envy (suggested in 'they manage to nab' and clearing away 'stray trash, old leaves, old people' and 'a heartbreaking pair of plain black spectacles').

Many responses commented on the contrast in 'the rare white four-poster beds' and 'the common plastic loungers used by the rest of us'. They noted the superficial nature of the girls' activities and the humour of the upside-down book, the ice creams and the removal of the sweet wrapper for the photograph only being taken for their social media site that could 'be liked or commented upon'. In relation to this, candidates noted the listing technique and the writer's use of first person, with a few commenting on the writer's use of present tense in bringing a sense of immediacy to the narrative.

The judgmental and 'voyeuristic' nature of the persona was suggested in 'creating a stage', with some candidates commenting upon the egoistic 'performance' of the sisters and their link with the twins who had 'just finished their act'. Many noted the work ethic of the sisters in 'unusually active' in comparison to the routine of the other hotel guests. The protective nature of the persona in relation to the children was suggested by the verb 'divert' (our children's eyes) and the more successful linked this to the irony of the adults' dependency on laptops and phones.

- (b) The generally purposeful and well-focused responses demonstrated that candidates felt completely familiar with the subject matter. For the most part, candidates recognised the diary format and were clear about writing from the point of view of one of the sisters in a straightforward way. They wrote in first person and recounted some of the events of the day in past tense. The general focus was on arranging the four-poster bed and tidying up the area in order to take photos and adjusting the lighting.

Many responses showed obvious enjoyment in the writing and some candidates could not resist making fun of the girls and their quest for Instagram 'likes'.

Higher band responses attempted to give some sense of voice to the character by using social media slang and by referring to the 'creepy' person who had been 'watching' the sisters all day. Some of the most engaging responses portrayed the diary writing sister as detesting her sibling and resenting being used as a skivvy.

Some candidates misunderstood that they were asked to write as one of the sisters and offered a diary extract from the point of view of the narrator or one of the twins, which resulted in adequate though uneven writing at best. Although there was some assured writing, many responses were in need of greater attention to accurate expression.

Question 3

- (a) The passage was generally well understood and the principal language features acknowledged. Candidates commented on the soft sales technique of the writer in terms of the superlative embedded in the title and the inclusive nature of the sub-heading with its pitch to a wider audience rather than just those in the know about truffles and who had visited Tuscany before. Most candidates commented on the sense of excitement in the opening paragraph and some remarked on the sense of adventure suggested by 'has to be hunted by dogs'. Some responses caught the sense of mystery conferred by the word 'subterranean' and there was general comment on the creation of a sense of luxury and rarity surrounding the truffle.

Structural features such as the title, the subheading, and the listing of 'the best' places to go were also noted.

Much was made of the visual imagery in the opening paragraph, with the verbal noun 'rolling' and the adjective 'lush' suggesting an idyllic landscape. The adjective 'bountiful' suggested treasure and was linked to 'bounty' and the metaphoric use of 'black diamonds'. For more successful responses, the dynamic verb 'burst', the adjective 'luscious' and the adverb 'juicily' suggested abundance and appeals to the senses, with such candidates noting a change in tone and a contrast in the writer's use of the conjunction '(b)ut' to signal the change in landscape – with truffles being located not in the 'Mediterranean sun' but somewhere 'down under'. Reader engagement and the writer's excitement were noted in the use of second person and in the phrases 'get ready to tuck in' and '(l)et's go truffle-hunting' – 'a call to action' was the key point that was made. The invitation to 'leave us a comment' in the final paragraph was often linked to this.

Candidates noted the writer's use of listing in paragraph two and the further appeal to the senses in the textural details of the truffle as 'a knobbly, rough-skinned potato'. For one candidate, the writer's sales pitch was so successful that it was an attempt to 'drown the reader's senses'. For another, the writer's use of the verb 'waft' to describe the aroma of the truffles together with the ephemeral harvest time – 'three weekends every November' – suggested a kind of 'mystical beauty' that 'amplified the exotic nature' of these 'black diamonds'.

The upbeat voice of the text and the sense of urgency in 'you need to be quick' and 'lose their prized perfume' was noted by many, as was the writer's attempt to bring a little local 'colour' and 'exoticism' into the pitch with the phrase 'Buon apetito!' Higher band responses also commented on the lexical fields of gastronomy and the cost of this fungus, with a focus on the triplet 'taste, test and buy'.

- (b) Generally, this directed writing was well handled by most candidates. Most responses followed the outline of the day described in the passage. More successful responses tended to include a detailed description of the intense natural beauty of the area in Italy and/or create an excited – or disappointing – insight into truffle hunting. One candidate discussed the problem of hunting with pigs, commenting on how slow they are and that they 'smell horrific!'

Weaker responses either repeated the sales pitch of the original passage in first person or focused on travel to Italy and its scenery and the delights of tasting truffles. These weaker responses did not always write a review, i.e. weighing up the pros and cons and, possibly, offering a judgement.

Candidates were rewarded for offering a positive or negative opinion and for providing some sense of purpose regarding 'the hunt'. One memorable heading for the review was, "'Let's go truffle hunting! More like "Let's go bankrupt!"'

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General comments

There were many perceptive and purposeful responses to the passages selected for this component, with candidates commenting on a wide and diverse range of stylistic and linguistic features.

Most candidates seemed to manage the organisation of exam time very well. There were very few unfinished papers and there was little evidence of desperately rushed conclusions.

Relatively few candidates 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 to the value of providing clearly defined language examples.

There also seemed to be an encouraging development in the range of 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) There was almost unanimous recognition of the suspenseful opening, the luxurious indoor setting and the use of alliteration. Most candidates recognised the first-person point of view of this passage, though often not the use of third. Virtually nobody mentioned the pan pipe fanfare which launches the journey. The use of short paragraphs was often commented on, though the snapshot effect was not always made clear.

Successful responses commented on the contrast between the negative aspects of travelling on the Belmond Andean Explorer and the positive ones. Reference was made to suffering with 'the crushing headaches' and the 'abject dizziness' that come with 'altitude sickness, sufficiently perilous 'to floor some Olympic athletes' and the personal impact upon the writer with his use of the colloquial 'stonking headaches' (suggesting 'humour and playfulness'). The dangers of the trip were commented on through the writer's use of adjectives in 'craggy canyons' and 'vertiginous mountain paths' and the factual detail of being '13000 ft up in the high Andes'. The positive aspects of travel were commented on in the writer's use of 'ethereal imagery', as one candidate put it. Reference was made to the adjective 'magical' and the description of the wind whipping 'soft billows of snow'. The magical aspects of this journey were reinforced for candidates by the writer's use of adjectives when describing the wildlife: 'elusive lions' and 'giant condors'. Here, candidates referred to the writer's awed or reverent tone.

Candidates also commented on the writer's use of imagery in the 'train snakes lazily' with one candidate noting that the action was slow, deliberate and sinuous. Weaker candidates suggested that this was an instance of personification.

The luxuriousness and playfulness of the train décor was noted in the descriptions used and the listing of its features: 'brass', 'creamy leather' and 'dangly pom-poms'. The luxuriousness of the food was also commented upon and the attempt to bring a little local colour through the reference to 'soroche'. There was some reference to the chronology of the piece in the time stamps, though several candidates commented that the whole piece was written in chronological order.

The personalisation of the nurse, Mary, in contrast to the rest of the staff, suggested to candidates that the writer had taken this trip before.

Responses in general would have benefitted from giving consideration to the paragraphing of the conclusion, and weaker responses tended to be descriptive and generalised.

- (b) Most candidates had read the rubric carefully and recognised the need to write from the point of view of a member of staff in first person, recalling their experiences of the train journey. Some chose to adopt the voice of Mary, whilst others wrote from the point of view of a member of staff in a 'quirky' uniform and wrote about their pride; some of the successful responses were full of humour. There were varying degrees of engagement with the blog effect, with a minority of responses capturing a real sense of immediacy.

Weaker responses were in need of a clear point of view, and the perspective from which they were writing needed clarity. Many recalled events whilst tending to sick passengers and most had some focus on the privilege of the job in being able to experience such amazing views.

Most candidates made a reasonable attempt. Opportunities were missed to depict incident with difficult passengers or intrusive wildlife.

Question 2

- (a) The most obvious features of this text were commented on. These included the similes: 'like shrine priests' which suggested the parents' secrecy; 'like tots of feathers from a richly plumed bird' which suggested the children's great stress in the way that a bird will lose its feathers under stress.

Metaphors were also explored: 'acquiring the gait of a wet mouse' suggesting the Mother's timidity and fragility upon hearing the news of her husband's immanent departure; 'an impenetrable gloom' suggesting the Mother's inscrutability; 'the two ventricles of the heart' indicating the vital and pivotal

role of the parents in the household. There was evidence that some candidates found it difficult to develop the fearful anticipation of the boys as they waited in their rooms; very few picked up on the words 'we stuck out our antennae' suggesting the children's sensitivity to the emotions of their parents and their fear that disaster might ensue. Many candidates also explored the imagery of the rain 'pulsating with spasms of thunderstorms' that reinforced the gloomy tone.

Candidates generally recognised the first-person voice and the writer's use of past tense. Successful responses recognised the adult voice of this piece and the structural feature of the text in recalling 'a coming of age' moment. There was some confusion about the final simile, with very few candidates recognising the sense of foreboding embedded in it: 'like a locomotive train ... with black coal in its heart ...'. Such candidates went on to comment on the carefree, mundane routine of the children suggested by 'no day was worthy of remembrance'. The use of second person in this paragraph was mostly misunderstood as an instance of direct address.

- (b) Candidates understood the need to write a letter in an appropriate style from the perspective of the narrator's mother. They addressed their letters appropriately and wrote in first person, detailing current events for example that the sons had taken up fishing, and also recalling past ones, such as the arrival of that letter. They expressed a sense of sadness in missing the husband. One response refused to beg for the husband's return and quite unemotionally told him she was leaving with the children to set up elsewhere. Weaker responses focused mostly on the mother's anger of having too much to do at home.

The most successful writing expanded on the complexity of the writer's emotions, expressing a sense of gratitude in having children willing to help, a sense of loss in the husband being so far away, and a sense of regret for having reacted badly to the news contained in the letter and for the 'incessant gloom' that she, subsequently, had inflicted upon the household.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates commented on the positive tone of the writer and her descriptive and poetic style. The argument of the passage was broadly understood. Responses would have been improved with fuller analysis of key features. Some candidates had not read the question preamble and there was confusion over who the author was and the fact that this was a review of the book. The use of alliteration was generally noted, together with some aspects of colloquial language, such as 'wow moments'.

More engaged responses commented on the writer's strategic use of imagery in the first paragraph in order to set the scene for her review. For such candidates, the writer brought water to life in 'the hypnotic hiss of stones' and 'dragged back by waves' – weaker responses cited the latter as an instance of personification. The writer's use of listing suggested the 'never ending achievements' of the book. There was some recognition of first-person plural to connect with the audience, some recognition of the anecdotal nature of the text and some recognition of the motivational and confrontational phrasing in the imperatives 'stop ignoring it and tune in'.

- (b) Responses to this task were adequate, with most candidates having some idea about how to write a promotional leaflet. There was some recognition of the need to identify a venue and a time for the activity. Most responses recognised the need to adopt a friendly and welcoming voice through the use of direct address. Some responses employed rhetorical features successfully, such as tripling: the writer's book 'enlightens, educates, excites' as one candidate put it.

Weaker responses needed to give more consideration to the purpose of the text – to promote a reading of the book at a local library. These responses often included a high degree of lifted material.

The accuracy of some candidates' expression deteriorated 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, spelling and punctuation were inconsistent and this impacted otherwise effective responses. Nonetheless, there was some informed 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: identify factors for writing; plan to write; write; check; correct.
- Candidates should look at the key instructions in the questions they choose. For example, in **Question 2** the key instruction is to 'write two contrasting descriptive pieces', creating a sense of 'atmosphere and place'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question, leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- Candidates should consider the following as part of the planning stage: 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.
- A key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona, while the 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, in long, rambling sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops. Sentence demarcation is key, followed by accurate use of commas, and then the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- There was often a need for improved syntactical awareness, with many weaker responses featuring long unpunctuated sentences. 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.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- 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, both print and online, as background preparation. Candidates should be exposed to the tone, register and format of magazine articles, newspaper correspondence, 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 impeded communication. **Section B** responses were also often structured more effectively than **Section A** responses. It may, therefore, be appropriate for centres 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 were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. 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 visualise the sound, light and colour in **Question 3**. Some imaginative writing fell down due to issues relating to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph) or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. Tense confusions persisted, especially in attempts to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories, and those who have difficulty in this area might be well advised to write in the present tense where possible, as this seemed to lead to fewer errors. Weaker candidates should be encouraged to practise writing in either 1st or 3rd person for narratives so that they are less likely to drift from one to the other.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Areas for improvement in weaker responses were in using the conventions of different forms, establishing a mature, credible voice, and developing a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story

Write a story called *Found!* about an important discovery. In your writing, create a sense of drama and excitement.

While most candidates wrote complete stories, some responses were only story openings. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of structuring responses so that purpose is clear. Some candidates produced responses which did not wholly fulfil the purpose of creating a sense of drama and excitement. For example, one candidate chose to write a story where the main character was searching around his house for his car keys as he had to get to an important meeting. Despite the piece being well written, the story lacked suspense and drama.

Stronger candidates focused clearly on establishing a clear setting, some creating fantasy pieces, with strange lands and explorers in search of lost cities or long-lost treasure. The opening paragraph of these successful responses engaged and intrigued the reader as the story unfolded. For example, one candidate created drama and intrigue with a simple opening paragraph: 'Boom! A blinding light flashed. Pain seared through my body, my limbs went numb, my mind swirled, then there was darkness.' Other successful approaches included characters searching for something hidden for a very long time and often nearly inaccessible, such as a ruin from an ancient civilisation in a remote part of the world or a sunken ship. Stronger candidates focused on the reaction of their characters to events, rather than merely describing events. For example: 'Even though he wore a scuba mask I could see the glint of excitement in his eyes'.

Weaker responses often had over-complicated storylines which were in need of control and a clearer link to the title, often with too many characters. The search for something lost became embroiled in detail, leaving the reader in want of a sense of an ending or resolution. Such stories tended to go from one minor climax to another, preventing the narrative from building a real sense of excitement. Where some had attempted to use advanced vocabulary, this caused the writing to become confused and unclear. Others showed a need for improvements in syntactical awareness, with long stretches of poorly punctuated dialogue: 'Jonny look what I found what is it? I want to see. Look it was all the way at the bottom of the lake, I was down there for about three minutes before I seen it.'

Question 2 – Contrasting descriptive pieces

Write two contrasting descriptive pieces (300 – 450 words each): the first about a lake which is frozen over in midwinter; and the second about the same lake, in the middle of summer. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere and place.

Most candidates focused on description, with only a few narrative responses.

Stronger candidates maintained a clear focus on description throughout their responses, sometimes beginning very vividly, as in this example: 'Underneath a black, moonless sky an icy lake sits dormant; its lifeless shores barren, smothered by a thick covering of snow'. Many stronger candidates constructed their two pieces with a close parallel in the range of details of the lake in the different seasons, often replicating

the sequence of descriptions used in relation to the frozen-over lake and then in the middle of summer. Atmosphere was often developed through the portrayal of differing moods of the describing persona, for example a depressed mood for the frozen lake and a happy mood for the summer lake. Some candidates, however, projected a persona appreciative of the solitude of the winter lake and despairing of the relentless intrusion of humans engaging in water sports and 'cook outs' during the summer.

Stronger candidates retained focus on description throughout their responses, selecting vocabulary precisely and structuring sentences carefully, as in this example: 'Icicles droop from thin fir trees lining the lake, jutting out from rocky cliffs and trembling with each passing gust of icy wind off the distant mountaintops. All is silent in the air but for the sharp whistling of the wind that tears through pine needles and threatens to rip the bark from the trees, which hang precariously over the frozen surface of the lake'.

In weaker responses, focus often drifted from the lake itself and its atmosphere. Some became a narrative, for example describing a family trip to a lake, meeting up with friends, or jet-skiing across the lake and having a picnic. Others described what they could see in a list type structure, needing development and to establish a sense of atmosphere and mood.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Castle*. In your writing, focus on sound, light and colour 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 often used the perspective of moving through the castle from outside to inside. There were some narrative frames which were successful, for example using the voice of a caretaker or describing the progression from an abandoned to a revitalised castle. Stronger candidates portrayed the castle as a 'monster' or 'beast', or subtly used personification, describing its 'pulse' and its 'vulnerability'. One candidate wrote about a castle in a wood: 'I was shocked, in awe; my mouth gaped open as I laid my eyes on the majestic castle with long, green rope-like vines hanging from decaying walls'. A different approach described a sandcastle, with some effective description. Some candidates described sounds effectively, describing their psychological engagement with, and reaction to, features encountered within an abandoned castle.

While the better responses focused throughout on the castle, some weaker ones became absorbed in narrative, starting from leaving home and eventually arriving at the castle. Many went through the prompts in a pedestrian manner, first writing about sound, then light and finally colours. They often listed adjectives extensively to produce dry catalogues of colours and sounds. There was evidence that a number of candidates felt that fragmented sentences enhanced the descriptive quality of their writing, when in fact the lack of appropriate sentence demarcation detracted from the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. The continuous present tense was at times overused, resulting in non-standard sentence construction, which was often unclear.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Article for school magazine

In class, you have been discussing whether 16-year-olds are too young to drive cars. Write an article for your school magazine, giving your opinion on the topic.

Many responses showed clear engagement with the topic and many used sub-headings and topic sentences effectively to assist in structuring the article. Most candidates managed to write with an appropriate sense of audience and candidates across all bands attempted to use engaging devices and techniques – direct address, rhetorical questions and anecdotes, for example. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority argued that a 16-year-old should be allowed to drive.

Stronger candidates used rhetorical language effectively to persuade their audience, linking the topic directly to their lives. One candidate, like several others, began by using a rhetorical question and also personalised the issue thus: 'Fellow young drivers, have you ever been at the wheel and thought to yourself, "I'm worried about my driving"?' Another candidate chose a different technique to begin their article, again engaging the audience: 'Maturity does not always come with age. It comes with experience'. Stronger candidates gave a developed range of points and wrote passionately, engaging with a wide range of issues such as responsibility, independence, convenience and learning to drive as an important life skill. One candidate

engaged the audience throughout, beginning the conclusion to their article like this: 'So, should 16 year olds drive? Are we responsible enough? Do we have enough experience? Are we dangers on the road? In order, my answers to those questions are, "Yes", "Yes" and "Yes". Did that last one catch you off-guard? Well, it should not. Anyone can be a danger on the road and we happen to be as dangerous as everyone else.'

Weaker responses sometimes developed one or two ideas, but often became repetitive or provided lots of facts and information. They also made unsubstantiated, vague claims and often forgot the form and audience, not addressing the school audience at all. In others, focus drifted from the question, becoming absorbed in lengthy personal anecdotes.

Question 5 – Contrasting letters

A newspaper recently published an article about the amount of money that governments spend on wildlife conservation. Readers were invited to respond to this article. Write two contrasting letters (300 – 450 words each): one supporting the use of government money for wildlife conservation, and the other opposing it.

The requirement to write two contrasting letters was achieved by candidates across the ability range. The question produced some interesting arguments for and against using government money in this way, with some mature and well thought-out answers, with developed arguments and thoughtful conclusions.

Stronger candidates produced some highly convincing, contrasting pieces of writing that were fully credible. Form was carefully observed and a lively and passionate style was employed with some quite subtle ideas and arguments such as: the extinction of other species potentially being a precursor to the extinction of the human race; the interconnectedness of different species (including humans) and native flora and fauna that enrich the general environment for humanity's benefit; the escalating costs that will need to be met in future, resulting from the disappearance of natural habitats and hence the biodiversity humans depend upon; the decline of poaching and other such unethical incursions on endangered species. Stronger candidates successfully wrote their two letters with a strong sense of contrasting voices, as in the following example. The letter supporting the use of government money for wildlife conservation began: 'Conserving wildlife is, and should always remain, a main focus of our government; we must do all we can to preserve and, if necessary, restore ecosystems to their original state', while the letter opposing the idea began: 'Why are we so fixated on helping animals instead of each other?'

Weaker candidates tended to produce short answers which needed development, often merely listing the pros and cons of wildlife preservation. Some struggled with contrast and the negative response turned into a rant, often leading to short work. Differentiation between the two voices at times needed to be clearer. Some candidate struggled with the letter form, with the writing becoming more of an article.

Question 6 – Speech

A new community centre is going to open in your area. There will be an official opening ceremony, and a guest speaker has been invited to give a speech. Write the text for the speech. In your writing, focus on the benefits of having a space for the community to get together, and create a sense of opportunity and motivation.

The conventions of a speech were deployed on most occasions, usually quite successfully.

Stronger candidates struck a positive tone and evoked a sense of community, as in this example: 'All of us here come from different parts of the town, different homes, different backgrounds, different lives. But, at the end of the day, we are all gathered here as one, as a community'. They cited a range of positive ideas about the community centre, such as the community cohesion it would encourage, the opportunity for recreation for young people and how it could be used as a venue for a variety of communal events. Many also focused on how it would encourage children to 'get active, make real connections and put down their phones and video games'. Stronger candidates produced a clear structure for their speeches, and had a good sense of audience, often grounding their speeches in personal experience.

In weaker responses, points often needed further development, with many listing a huge and unrealistic range of facilities in the new community centre, such as huge, Olympic size swimming pools and gyms equipped with a long list of top-of-the-range exercise machines. Some speeches were in need of an appropriate introduction or conclusion.

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: identify factors for writing; plan to write; write; check; correct.
- Candidates should look at the key instructions in the questions they choose. For example, in **Question 2** the key instruction is to 'write two contrasting descriptive pieces', creating a sense of 'atmosphere and place'.
- Effective planning, following on from successful interpretation of the question, leads to better crafted and well-shaped responses, therefore minimising irrelevant detail and generic content.
- Candidates should consider the following as part of the planning stage: 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.
- A key aspect of the most successful and effective writing in **Section A** is a convincing and credible narrator/persona, while the 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, in long, rambling sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops. Sentence demarcation is key, followed by accurate use of commas, and then the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- There was often a need for improved syntactical awareness, with many weaker responses featuring long unpunctuated sentences. 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.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- 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, both print and online, as background preparation. Candidates should be exposed to the tone, register and format of magazine articles, newspaper correspondence, 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** responses.

Quite a number of submissions self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement: some were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. 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**. Some imaginative writing fell down due to issues relating to structural control (for

example, an entire piece written as one paragraph) or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. Tense confusions persisted, especially in attempts to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories, and those who have difficulty in this area might be well advised to write in the present tense where possible, as this seemed to lead to fewer errors. Weaker candidates should be encouraged to practise writing in either 1st or 3rd person for narratives so that they are less likely to drift from one to the other.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Areas for improvement in weaker responses were in using the conventions of different forms, establishing a mature, credible voice, and developing 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 doorbell rang and I realised I had run out of time.* In your writing, create a sense of suspense and drama.

While most candidates wrote complete stories, some responses were only story openings. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of structuring responses so that purpose is clear. Some candidates produced responses which did not wholly fulfil the purpose of creating a sense of suspense and drama. For example, a candidate chose to write a story where the main character, a wedding guest, was late for a wedding. Despite the piece being well written, the story lacked suspense and drama.

Stronger candidates were successful in creating suspense and drama and incorporated the opening sentence successfully, through the use of intense moments developed through descriptive details. Many successfully moved on from the opening sentence into a flashback to relate the narrative which led to the given opening. Several opted for the thriller genre, with a gangster/killer/chase type scenario, which satisfied the task. Frequently, the central idea in these narratives was the main character being locked inside a building, hiding from a known individual. Some stories featured espionage or an escaped fugitive being the central character; others focused on a central character trying to escape an abusive partner or relationship.

Stronger candidates addressed purpose through a range of linguistic techniques. Suspense was often gradual, keeping the reader alert, as in the following example: 'I stood in front of the main door with no choice but to open it and face the police. I held the doorknob, my hands sweaty and arms aching ...'.

Weaker candidates sometimes chose to focus their story around a domestic scenario (such as cooking for a dinner party before the guests arrived). These stories tended to lack suspense and drama, as seen in one response that centred around a character packing a suitcase to go on holiday – more attention needed to be given to using language to create a sense of urgency for either the waiting taxi driver or the would-be holiday maker. The piece ended with the would-be holiday maker missing their flight due to packing, and the whole of the response was dominated by the packing of a suitcase. Others had over-complicated storylines which were in need of control and a clearer link to the line quoted in the question, often with too many characters. The reader was often left in want of a sense of an ending or resolution, as the narrative moved from one minor climax to another without ever really building suspense.

Question 2 – Contrasting descriptive pieces

Write two contrasting descriptive pieces (300 – 450 words each) about a market square: the first while the market is in progress; and the second on the same day after the market has closed. In your writing, create a sense of atmosphere and place.

Most candidates focused on description and successfully described contrasting scenes, with only a few narrative responses.

Stronger candidates focused on the atmosphere in the market, with clearly contrasted details, for example: 'Laughter entangles itself with the sounds of a violin being heard next to a game of chess being battled out between two nearby elders' and, in the 2nd piece, 'The blooms of the morning wither and their scent dulls in comparison to the stench of poverty.' Stronger candidates zoomed in on minutiae, mirrored

cohesive details, and sometimes used narrative frameworks effectively. Many used simple but effective choices of vocabulary with some vivid imagery, such as, 'The bare wooden walls stripped clean of their beautiful merchandise and draped ceilings, lay naked under the dimming rain.'

Some responses achieved a smooth, cohesive transition from describing the market when busy to when it was closed, by connecting the two parts. For example, one observer, having strolled through the busy market, entered a café after shopping and left as the market had closed: 'Silence. An almost palpable serene silence paraded the streets as I exited the café.' The device of pathetic fallacy was sometimes used effectively to achieve a sense of atmosphere and place; in one case, describing gathering rain clouds after the market had closed, in contrast to the bright sunny morning at opening time.

Weaker responses often needed more attention to creating a sense of place, sometimes centring almost entirely on lists of stalls and what they were selling, to the extent that the response became repetitive. Some candidates over-used adjectives or attempted to write in complex sentences when they would have written more clearly in simple or compound sentences. For example one candidate wrote: 'The once there breathtaking coffe brewes is gone instead its the sugar coma inviting smell nothing but rich extremly sweet melted sugar is battling the smell of the paint fumes and the frightnin scary invite from the colestrol oils.'

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Laboratory*. In your writing, focus on colour, sound and smell 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 retained a sharp focus on colour, sound and smell throughout the response. Where narrative was incorporated, it was kept to a minimum or used judiciously, sometimes with a first- or third-person voice being used in an observatory capacity, describing the laboratory from a particular perspective. Stronger candidates captured mood and atmosphere well, for example: 'Dark greens, deep blues and vibrant purples mix and mash, explode! Particles dance in the air, visible to the naked eye thanks to the sun's curious gaze. The students are a whirlwind of white coats, occasional laughter and respectable silence.' Some candidates successfully employed the present tense to achieve a strong sense of immediacy, with better ones also being able to integrate descriptions of colour, sound and smell as seen in this example: 'The taps on the burettes are opened, letting the antiseptic-smelling purple solution trickle through with its refreshing sound. The humming air conditioners join in on the melody, shutting out the tick-tocking clock.'

Some weaker responses merely identified everything in a laboratory and some simply listed objects, for example: 'The smell of disinfectant hits the nostrils instantly. Long bright lights raced across the ceiling. It was very well lit.' Others became absorbed in narrative, starting from arriving at a school and eventually locating the laboratory. Adjectives were often listed extensively to produce dry catalogues of colours and sounds. There was evidence that a number of weaker candidates seemed to feel that fragmented sentences enhanced the descriptive quality of their writing, when in fact the lack of appropriate sentence demarcation detracted from the effects which the vocabulary selection was intended to create. The continuous present tense was often overused, resulting in non-standard sentence construction, which was often unclear.

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Report for school magazine

You recently attended an event called *Your Future*, where you got information and advice about future study and employment. Write a report for your school magazine, describing the event and evaluating how useful you found it.

Stronger candidates structured their responses clearly and some used a headline and sub-headings appropriate for a magazine report. Many candidates took on the title of the event, *Your Future*, and used the second person pronoun throughout, to engage the reader and successfully connect to their target audience. They sequenced ideas logically and often made use of sub-headings (e.g. 'Your journey starts today') to set up their argument. To avoid what could be monotonous recount of a young person's experience, some candidates kept the text informal, as in this example: 'With a list in hand I entered the building to find literally thousands of stalls and desks arranged in symmetrical patterns across the building, covering all floors.'

Weaker responses tended to consist of descriptions of all the different stalls available at the event, and of interviews with world-renowned scientists, employers or businesspeople. Typically, they provided lots of facts and information but often neglected the form and audience, not addressing the school audience at all. Others neglected the second part of the question, with no evaluation of the event and its usefulness.

Question 5 – Contrasting letters

A newspaper recently published an article saying that people will be able to live on the planet Mars in the near future. Readers were invited to write letters to respond to this article. Write two contrasting letters (300 – 450 words each): one positive about the idea of living on Mars, and the other negative about it.

While candidates who selected this question showed no shortage of material and ideas, not all of them observed the letter format or acknowledged the article.

Stronger candidates provided some passionate and honest ideas, some seeing the possibility of living on Mars as an escape, with some rather depressing comments on the state of planet Earth and the pandemic. As a counter-argument, candidates saw an opportunity to fix our problems. Some enjoyable responses used knowledge of climate change, population growth and other issues on Earth to back up their arguments about moving to Mars. Where candidates had thought carefully about the article to which they were responding, they wrote with a sense of conviction. For instance, one response referred to the article's imagined headline: 'Another Giant Leap for Mankind.'

One outstanding response to this question was from a candidate who used the contrasting voices and perspectives of a mother and her son. The mother felt strongly that her naive son and his impressionable young peers were being corrupted by articles such as she was responding to, and wrote a very strongly argued letter, with a wide range of fluently expressed and logically developed points. The son, meanwhile, an aspiring astronaut, wrote an equally impassioned positive letter in response to the article, which featured a very strong voice and an effective structure. Other responses were cogently argued and made use of a varied vocabulary, for example: 'It is certainly no secret that man is a greedy animal; neither is it remotely possible to objectively deny that this greed has led to extreme and irreversible exploitation of the scarce resources available to us on Earth.' There were some effective conclusions, achieving a strong sense of voice: 'Space exploration is for the betterment of mankind and is money well spent in my opinion. We can finally be like Captain Jean-Luc Picard and travel around space. The final frontier.'

Weaker responses were often vague, and were insecure in terms of form and audience. They tended to answer the task in the form of a list of possible benefits and drawbacks to living on Mars, with a need for development of ideas.

Question 6 – Voiceover script

Write the voiceover script for a television news report about an awards ceremony for children who have done something very brave. In your writing, focus on the mood and atmosphere of the occasion.

The format of a voiceover was something of a challenge for weaker candidates, with responses often not being fully appropriate to the task.

Stronger candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the style and purpose of the task, as in the following example, which set the scene for the bravery that the children at the awards ceremony were being rewarded for, as well as establishing a strong sense of voice: 'The town, aptly named Rocky River after the rocky river that flows through it, is used to these types of cases, although the victims typically meet a more gruesome end. The speed of the river can go up to 50 mph during this season and the town attributes an average of six deaths per year to the river.' Stronger responses clearly focused on the 'mood and atmosphere of the occasion' rather than merely recounting the bravery of the children: 'It's not every day you meet a child who can stun an auditorium into silence.'

Weaker responses revealed a struggle to meet the demands of the required form, and a need for some candidates to develop their understanding of the format and purpose of a voiceover script. Some candidates wrote articles about the awards ceremony, rather than a voiceover script. Some attempted to include a dialogue between the child heroes and the presenter of the news report, simultaneously giving a description of what video or image was being shown on the screen. This was unnecessary and resulted in a lack of clear focus on the mood and atmosphere of the occasion.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/23 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: identify factors for writing; plan to write; write; check; correct.
- Candidates should look at the key instructions in the questions they choose. For example, in **Question 4** the key instruction is to 'write an article for your school magazine, giving your opinion' on the topic.
- Candidates should consider the following as part of the planning stage: 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.
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- 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, in long, rambling sentences. One error that occurred regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops. Sentence demarcation is key, followed by accurate use of commas, and then the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- There was often a need for improved syntactical awareness, with many weaker responses featuring long unpunctuated sentences. 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.
- Candidates must also be aware of the need for correct spelling and paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
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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** responses. It may, therefore, be appropriate for more centres 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 responses were appreciably short of the minimum word limit. 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 visualise the sound, light and colour in **Question 3**. Some imaginative writing fell down due to issues relating to structural control (for example, an entire piece written as one paragraph) or to the use of suitable language devices to create effects. Tense

confusions persisted, especially in attempts to create drama or a sense of time passing in **Question 1**. Candidates should be encouraged to utilise one main tense in their stories, and those who have difficulty in this area might be well advised to write in the present tense where possible, as this seemed to lead to fewer errors. Weaker candidates should be encouraged to practise writing in either 1st or 3rd person for narratives so that they are less likely to drift from one to the other.

The more successful **Section B** answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Areas for improvement in weaker responses were in using the conventions of different forms, establishing a mature, credible voice, and developing a well thought out, logically organised line of argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Imaginative writing

Question 1 – Story

Write the opening to a story called *What could possibly go wrong?* about an event that had been carefully planned. In your writing, create a sense of drama and anticipation.

Stronger candidates managed to create a sense of both drama and anticipation without an over-reliance on melodrama. Several candidates developed interesting characters and a strong narrative voice, handling dialogue and/or internal thought with skill and originality. There were some interesting plots that were achieved through good structure and a strong voice. Themes varied, ranging from parties to fugitives in grave danger.

Stronger responses exhibited tight narrative control. One candidate created drama and anticipation in his description of a bombing raid: 'The third step, contingent on whether we made it this far or not, was the actual drop of the A112 bomb (aka the 'Motherload'). Satellite recon revealed an out of place housing unit suspected of holding the oil.' Stronger candidates set the scene well and sometimes related it to characters' emotion or thoughts, for example: 'Dark thoughts filled my mind as the looming essence of nighttime came over me. The worst thing about the nighttime is the deathly coldness that surrounds every part of you.'

Weaker responses often started off with characters getting out of bed and having breakfast, an ineffective way of creating drama. There were many stories centred around surprise parties, minor mishaps or family arguments, while others were set over a lengthy time period, with multiple characters, settings and plot points, more in line with the conventions of a novel. They often used simplistic phrasing such as 'Then I' or 'The next day' as a means to move the story on. Some plots were either uneventful and lacking drama, or overly melodramatic. There was at times a struggle to use imagery effectively and create interesting characters, e.g.: 'John parked a cute, big smile onto his face. He had carefully planned everything. It was all going to be as perfect as perfectly can be. He was really excited because he knew his plans were perfect.'

Question 2 – Contrasting blogs

Write two contrasting blogs (300 – 450 words each) about the launch of a space shuttle: the first by an astronaut who was on board the space shuttle; and the second by a person who watched it take off. In your writing, create a sense of mood and atmosphere.

Most candidates managed to create fairly convincing contrasting personas and voices, some with a strong understanding of form.

Stronger candidates vividly conveyed the mood and atmosphere both within the shuttle and around the launch pad. One candidate wrote with purpose: 'The engines roar as if twelve hundred lions catch their first meals in a fortnight. The rocket shoots up into the sky with a blazing glory leaving everyone on earth celebrating with tears of joy and claps of relief. But it was not over yet. The rocket galloped to the heavens beyond.' Other stronger candidates successfully utilised imagery: 'There was a distant roar of sound, like a grumbling bear disturbed from its slumber.' The spectators' perspective was described equally effectively, as in this example: 'We seemed to all become expectant parents, arms open to receive our sprinting child, as the sound of the engines travelled towards us.' One interesting approach involved having the wife of the astronaut from the first piece as the observer who described watching the launch in the contrasting piece. This allowed for deeper exploration of the characters' moods. Other contrasting perspectives were fascinating, such as an astronaut who should have been on the shuttle but was now in hospital and a son

who took his mother to witness the event as a birthday surprise. She had been present at the 1969 shuttle launch in Florida.

Weaker candidates' responses often had less focus on the launch itself, with some allowing their answer to become a narrative, for example describing a family trip to the launchpad. Others described what they could see inside and outside the space shuttle in a list type structure, needing development and to create a sense of mood and atmosphere.

Question 3 – Descriptive writing

Write a descriptive piece called *The Carnival*. In your writing, focus on colour, sound and movement 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 wrote imaginative and powerful descriptive pieces. They kept to the descriptive stance throughout the piece, and colour, sound and movement were described with subtlety and precision. A strong sense of how to engage the audience was apparent in some responses, such as: 'Oversized mismatched tents were scattered around the stadium sized field. Colours ranged from the familiar red of Ronald McDonald's nose, to the bright pink of Barbie's ball gown to the yellow of a Starburst wrapper.' The excitement and atmosphere was evoked effectively by some candidates: 'As we occasionally spun past the evenly spaced mirrors on the ride, I caught glimpses of myself sitting on a gleaming golden saddle atop a white stallion; mouth slightly open and clinging on, as if for dear life.'

Weaker responses often consisted of phrases that hadn't been incorporated into full sentences. This detracted from the overall effect, as did an excessive use of over-ambitious vocabulary, often used out of context. Sometimes imaginative writing was marred by awkward sentence construction and confusion of tenses: 'The smell of genourosly buttered popcorn and frying oil calling, yearning for attention made their stomachs growl. Younger social outcasts leaving their temporary safe haven to scout for food from their distracted family members to return with.'

Some weaker responses drifted from focus on the carnival to what sometimes seemed like pre-planned answers describing adverse weather or a storm. There was often over-writing of description, which lessened the overall effect of the writing. For example, 'It was as if a harmonious explosion of the brightest, vibrant colours went off in the field. The lush, verdant and rich meadow was transformed into an array of beauty, translucent drapes protected the entryway as excited children sprinted through, separating them cautiously.'

Section B: Writing for an audience

Question 4 – Article for school magazine

In class, you have been discussing whether society should encourage young people to be competitive. Write an article for your school magazine, giving your opinion on the topic.

Stronger candidates used rhetorical language effectively to engage the audience, linking the topic directly to their lives. Some addressed both purpose and audience in a convincing opening, sometimes incorporating a rhetorical question: 'At this school we strive to be the best version of ourselves we can possibly be. I mean, that's our motto, is not it?' Many used specific, often personal, examples of competitive situations and how they were either useful or counterproductive. They did this by creating a strong voice and giving a clear opinion: 'Competition sparks innovation and can be a way of interacting socially. Competition in business leads to consumer friendly prices and products, and competition through sports can bring people together.'

Stronger candidates planned and paragraphed their work and were able to present coherent, interesting arguments using a variety of supporting evidence. They also used headings, sub-headings and topic sentences effectively to assist them in structuring their article and quoted experts or statistics to further back up their points. They took a variety of approaches, including personal experience of over-ambitious parents and the potential consequences of living in an overly competitive world: 'No amount of competition is worth the value of a human soul, ever!'. Some made comparisons with the natural world: 'You never hear of lazy lions or wandering water buffalos. The natural world is competitive because life in the wild is competitive.'

Weaker candidates provided lots of facts and information, but made some claims that were unsubstantiated and vague. Form and audience were often neglected, with many not addressing the school audience at all.

Others lost focus, with lengthy anecdotes and failing to give a clear opinion on the topic. Others interpreted 'competitive' in a very narrow way, relating the term mainly to business and market forces. There was a consensus that competition should be encouraged but that excessive competition was detrimental to our mental health. Weaker candidates repeated this point throughout their responses. Points were sometimes made reasonably clearly but became repetitive and needed development. One such candidate had one main point running throughout the article. The article opened: 'Too much competition is bad for us and people can develop mental health problems when the competition gets to them.' The third paragraph repeated the same point: 'As I have already said many mental health problems come from the competition getting a lot of importance in the lives of a person', and concluded: 'We must not let competition become the most important thing for it can lead to many problems for the people who are getting their mental health affected.'

Question 5 – Contrasting letters

A local newspaper recently published an article challenging people to avoid using any digital devices for a week. Readers were invited to take up the challenge and to write letters about their experience. Write two contrasting letters (300 – 450 words each): one by a person whose experience was positive and the other by a person whose experience was negative.

Responses to this question generally showed clear engagement with the topic. Many candidates had strong opinions on the subject and plenty of experience to draw upon.

Stronger candidates focused on creating two contrasting personas and viewpoints. For example, one candidate opened their two letters thus: 'Dear Editor, my name is Jenny Black. I am a mother of three wonderful children and a stay-at-home mum. I first came across your article when my friend at book club recommended it'; 'Dear Editor, I came across your article through my wife who is worried about exposure to technology.' Stronger candidates were able to write persuasively and convincingly with a good range of points and examples. There were some interesting and knowledgeable points made about the nature of scrolling, 'liking' on social media and clickbait, linked to dopamine and serotonin release and addiction.

Many stronger candidates created totally credible personas. One response had a letter from a personal trainer set against a publishing agent. Another saw a fairly relaxed grandfather using his device to read the newspaper and research gardening problems, opposite a business person with all the expected pressures of a tech-free work life.

Weaker responses struggled to fulfil the form of a letter and ideas needed development. Several candidates had one of the correspondents claim that not being able to use electronic devices made it impossible to do their job in IT, for example, which missed the point of the question. Other less successful responses included lengthy narratives of everything that went wrong as a result of not having a mobile phone.

Question 6 – Voiceover script

Write the voiceover script for part of a television documentary about the world's greatest inventions. The documentary is aimed at a teenage audience, and aims to show how these inventions have shaped the world we live in. In your writing, create a sense of interest and enthusiasm.

There was evidence that weaker candidates struggled with the format of a voiceover, which often led to responses not being fully appropriate to the task.

Stronger candidates had a good grasp of what a voiceover should sound like. They focused closely on certain inventions and avoided the potential trap of being too general in their approach. They presented a detailed visual illustration of the footage, which was then well supported by the verbal component of the voiceover text. For example, one candidate, writing about the invention of the compass, had a clear sense of how a voiceover helps anchor a visual image: '(Fades into a video of sailors lost at sea). "Picture this: you are helpless, lost and stuck in deep sea. A storm is slowly descending on your ship. Your crew members are beginning to lose faith in your guidance. It is a mayhem of fear and chaos. Do not even think about using a telephone – this is the 1650s."' Other stronger responses focused on a range of relevant inventions and wrote in a register that conveyed enthusiasm and interest.

Weaker responses eschewed the required form, showing little discernible understanding of the format and purpose of a voiceover script. Appropriate form and content were not always clear; for example, some writing was closer to an article than to a voiceover script. Some examples that were included were inaccurate, such as claiming that agriculture or electricity were inventions.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/31 Text Analysis
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Key messages

- Candidates should prepare for this Component by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply when producing a piece of directed writing, commenting on style and language, and carrying out comparative analysis.
- For **Question 1(a)** the instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates in their directed writing. Candidates ought to concentrate on making 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 that 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 to apply their knowledge and understanding linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. A very small proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have resulted from candidates chiefly gleaning hints from the instructions rather than carefully analysing the texts themselves. Only a few candidates produced short passages of extremely superficial commentary.

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. Their reworking of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120–150 words in length and were 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 formal letter produced for **1(a)** with that of the extract from an opinion article. Candidates are assessed for their ability to select and analyse specific textual details, and to support their evaluation of language with close textual reference. Recognition of the range of lexical choices exhibited in opinion article and comparison of the effects produced with those in the formal letter were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions; understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and appreciation of linguistic techniques. 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 was good to see a significant proportion of candidates adopt such an approach – these also tended to be the responses that demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

There was evidence that candidates had dedicated much time to completing **Question 1(a)** (which accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available), not leaving adequate time for detailed and thorough analysis of the texts in **Questions 1(b)** and **2**. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to use the proportion of marks available for each item in the Question Paper to guide them in dividing their time and focus appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly demonstrated sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of a speech in an educational context. When presenting the opening of a speech, most candidates ensured their speeches began with a brief salutation (usually friendly e.g. 'I am Bruce, the education officer, and I am so pleased to welcome you to the Cornwall Mining Museum ...') before conveying relevant information efficiently in short sentences and topical paragraphs. Most candidates remained focused on plausible reworking of details selected from the extract from the history book extract that best suited the requirement to describe a day in the life: occasionally aspects of the historical setting above ground, almost always the tinnerns' shift patterns and their soiled work clothes and use of a rudimentary source of light, and the conditions and hazards encountered in 'subterranean workings'. Many candidates effectively focused on the sensory experiences of the tinnerns and reworked the original text accordingly (e.g. 'The claustrophobic, gloomy atmosphere and the smoky scent of the candle') as well as appealing to the readers' powers of empathy (e.g. 'Imagine yourself dog tired, caked in muck, trudging up an endless path on a dark and stormy night'). The educational context was usually maintained to the end of the section of the speech through the use of some examples of the original text's technical lexical field (e.g. 'chimney-stacks' and 'engine-houses' to suggest the ground-level setting, 'several fathoms' to emphasise how deep the tinnerns worked) and their own rhetorical questions (e.g. 'How well do you think you could have coped with such an existence?') to keep the audience engaged and in a reflective state of mind.

In weaker responses, candidates tended to include unnecessarily lengthy introductory remarks, often focused on details about the museum (its history and collection) and aspects of the speaker's visit ('After my talk you will visit the engine-house and get to see the water pump'). The register was often too informal for the speech's purpose and audience, and given the occupation of the person delivering the speech. There was usually copious direct quotation or paraphrasing of details extraneous to the task of describing 'a day in the life', especially the original text's figurative language relating to setting ('chimney-stacks, naked against the sky', 'all the beauty and sadness that Nature gives to ruins') and references to obscuring vegetation ('ivy-covered', 'hack your way through the brambles'). A few candidates had not understood that they were instructed to write 'the script' of a speech and produced transcriptions indicating how the education officer might have spoken (including the duration of pauses and the stressed syllables employed).

Strong responses were usually distinguished by the consistency of an education officer's voice initiated by openings like 'I'm really hoping you will all enjoy your visit to our museum' and 'I would like to begin by sharing with you what a typical day of a tinner was actually like', sustained by means of bridging comments such as 'See, we all really have it easy these days!' and invitations to reflect on what had been conveyed e.g. 'How does that sound for a hard day's work?' A few candidates captured the persona of an education officer who wanted to encourage audience participation e.g. 'Okay, please volunteer if you would like to see if you can pick up one of these authentic sacks of rocks'. Many responses conferred heroic qualities on the tinnerns, sometimes by inclusion of a reference to the arduous and dangerous nature of the tinnerns' ascent after their shift was completed. A few candidates demonstrated strong inferential knowledge – that tin was once a valuable commodity and tinnerns endured many hardships to support themselves and their families.

Most of the candidates abided by the word count guidelines, although a number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them.

Quite a number of candidates sought to deal with each text separately, whereas an integrated approach would have been more effective. Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect, with candidates clearly identifying the impact of lexis appearing in the opinion article and then examining vocabulary used in their formal letters in a comparative fashion. In so doing, such responses achieved a balanced comparative emphasis on the article and the formal letter. There was occasional evidence of planning via acronyms such as PAFT (purpose, audience, form, tone) and GAPT (genre, audience, purpose and tone) – these served to keep candidates focused on relevant topics for making apt comparisons.

Weak responses were often brief and likely to primarily summarise the content of both texts rather than endeavouring to comparatively analyse their style and language. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify, especially the introductory nature of opening paragraphs, the variety of punctuation marks and sentence types, and lengths of paragraphs in both texts, with brief and superficial comparison of the texts' levels of formality (even in cases where candidates did employ a degree of informality to achieve a friendly tone in the their speeches). Candidates need to remember that textual references need to be accompanied by conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Sometimes similarities in tone were recognised, as the history book extract solemnly describes the setting and fervently explains the physical dangers faced by tinnners, whereas the speeches tended to praise them in heroic terms. A few aspects of figurative language in the book extract were identified and cursorily examined: onomatopoeia ('chug', 'throb-throb', 'roar of waves') and simile ('perched like nests of eagles'). Some candidates dwelt on features – there were entire paragraphs written about audiences, tones, tenses, punctuation, ellipsis and elision – and aspects of the history book extract they could not shape into comparisons: 'however this [feature] is not found in my speech'.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of the conventions of a history book and their speeches. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the audience of each text: both potentially quite narrow given the history book would require purchasing or locating in a library, and a limited number of candidates would visit a Cornish mining museum to be addressed by its education officer. There was usually some recognition of shared field-specific lexis, especially 'underground', 'subterranean' and 'shaft-heads' and their corresponding synonyms used in the speeches. Candidates usually focused on how the history book extract characterises tinnners as 'hunters, seekers' in its opening sentence and its repeated use of complex sentences to impart information in a rich descriptive fashion. Occasionally candidates focused on the use of ellipsis – 'or a by-lane ... lonely emblems' – to suggest that the history book writer explains stopping to think and reminisce in a conversational manner that corresponds to the education officer's invitation to reflect on the tinnners' experience. Candidates often commented on the frequent use of low frequency lexis by the writer to evoke the mines' industrial heritage for an educated, mature audience and some high frequency lexis by the education officer to gain and retain the attention of his teenage audience. They chiefly made reference to the writer's use of the second person – 'if you hack', 'look about you' – to relate to the reader, corresponding to the same means of addressing the audience by the education officer exhibited by most speeches.

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. There were consistently sound contrasts between the evocative elements of description in the history book extract and the more focused and lighter style of the speech. Candidates appreciated how the metaphor 'unending quest for treasure' and the repetition of the adverb 'perhaps' were used to suggest that the tinnners' lives can merely be imagined from a modern perspective; some extended the observation to examine how the education officer is effectively doing the same on behalf of the audience being addressed. There was some recognition that the extract's examples of onomatopoeia would be unsuitable for a speech addressed to young adults ('mimicking such sounds would be more appropriate for a primary school audience'). An efficient method of structuring a response entailed identification and discussion of an informative and evocative feature of the history book extract and then contrasting it with the simplified reworking in the speech. For example, 'The extract implies that the tinnners were heroes as "rock was their only protection from sudden death by drowning", whereas my speech explicitly states that they were heroes: "These heroes constantly risked dying."'.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate a good appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Some responses focussed heavily on the content of both texts and listing techniques. 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 eschewed a comparative approach also struggled 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, and of written language in Text B. While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both texts is potentially large, most argued that the audience for Text A would be greater in size than that for Text B: casual listeners of the radio interview could swell the size of the regular audience, whereas the lifestyle section of the newspaper containing Kiran's article would likely be read by a devoted mature, educated audience. A few candidates did not immediately appreciate Graham's role as an interviewer in Text A because one of his participants speaks first, likely in response to a question or prompt previously given by Graham about the importance of teaching children about writing letters. Nevertheless there was usually sustained consideration of the question and answer adjacency pairs throughout much of the conversation in Text A in comparison to the sustained first person narration in the opening three paragraphs of Text B (also the use of the interrogative 'would they bring anguish or comfort?' strategically placed in the the second paragraph to further pique the reader's interest through an attempt to build suspense). Candidates judged the conversation to be relatively fluent, as would be expected in a radio programme where the presenter has likely prepared questions in advance, with many noting that the only instance of overlap might possibly be explained by the speaker's excitement about being a participant of the radio show. In comparison, there was often citing and some examination of Kiran's use of low frequency lexis ('trepidation', 'archaic', 'fragranced', 'extraordinaire') and the simile used in the heading ('like your DNA') that indicate that the article had been revised and edited to suit the newspaper's niche readership.

Many candidates also focussed on the conventions of spoken language they identified in Text A, especially non-fluency features associated with spontaneous speech: the regular pausing used by all the speakers, Mrs Spear and Caspar's voiced pauses ('erm'), Graham's stress for emphasis ('who do they write to'), feedback (Mrs Spear's 'absolutely' and 'yes im back hello'), hesitation ('a part (.) a part of me'), vague lexis ('thing', 'all sorts'), and reformulation (by Graham when Caspar raises a point he may not have previously considered: 'not that we need to argue over the idea ... what about all your friends ...'). Some candidates found that Graham asking Caspar 'can we have a chat' indicates the presenter's professional care for a school-age participant expected to speak to adults, including those listening to the show; a few candidates also maintained this as evidence of the presenter manufacturing the sense of a casual conversation for the benefit of the listening audience whereas the guests' participation had been arranged in advance. Caspar's overlapping was usually regarded as co-operative, especially as the guests' contributions were made remotely (Graham needs to ask 'is caspar there') and so the speakers cannot receive and interpret visual cues, and he is simply eager to jump in and let Graham know that he is ready to contribute.

In relation to Text B's written mode, candidates usually made reference to the use of the simple present tense – 'I still write letters', 'There is a joy ...' – and how it created a sense of immediacy with the article's subject matter, bolstered by the use of direct quotation from Aunt Martha's letter. Features of the writer's use of figurative language were a particular focus for some candidates: 'words ... immortalised in a letter' and 'the pen begs to be enslaved' (as examples of personification) and a letter received in the post is 'a hidden gem: a piece of someone's heart' (as metaphors). Some candidates found the sentence consisting of simple listing – 'TV screen, computer screen, smokescreen' – an effective way to suggest that technology ('email', 'text') obscures the message being sent, in opposition to the metaphoric language of 'words ... travel through your veins' to describe the immense pleasure experienced when reading a handwritten letter.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects relating directly to the texts' shared context of the importance of writing and receiving letters. Candidates observed how both texts are concerned with the relation of personal anecdotes that support the idea that handwritten letters have much more sentimental value than electronic versions: Caspar's simile 'an email just feels like its stuck in a computer' was compared to the writer's colloquial observation 'they seem to exist only to be binned'. Candidates also focused on the ways both texts develop the theme that letters should be valued after initial reading: Mrs Spears uses some elevated lexis to make this point ('a letter is ... treasured' as 'its tangible') that corresponds to the writer's 'trove of letters'. It was usually examined how Graham's use of the colloquial metaphor 'magic' in relation to the discovery of 'letters from family back home in a chest in the attic' corresponds to the writer's observation that letters may be 'magically rediscovered'. There was some focus on Text A commencing in media res and Text B's intriguing extended metaphor in the opening sentence. A few candidates examined Mrs Spears' inclusive 'we' as indicating her position as representative of her school, later speaking for herself – 'i completely agree' – before using the general 'you', in 'that thing in your hand', which acts as a suggestion to others that they should agree with her, in comparison with the writer's regular use of the first person throughout most of the article and, in the final paragraph, the switch to the second person to warn the reader to guard against the insidious nature of electronic texts.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32 Text Analysis
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Key messages

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In **Question 2**, candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions; understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and appreciation of linguistic techniques. 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 was good to see a significant proportion of candidates adopt such an approach – these also tended to be the responses that demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly demonstrated sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of a formal letter. Most letters contained conventional features for organising prefatory information, usually on separate lines: addressee details, a date, occasionally suitable regarding (RE:) information. Salutations were mainly perfunctory and successfully identified the intended recipient and his professional status ('Dear Mr Golby', 'Good morning Sir') and appropriate closings were used in instances where the candidate chose to write the concluding section of the letter (e.g. 'Regards', occasionally 'Yours faithfully', in recognition that Golby and the headteacher were not previously known to each other). Most responses remained objective with focus on plausible reworking of details selected from Golby's article, such as 'proper' uses of pen and paper in an academic setting that a headteacher would advocate (lecture and reading notes, rough drafts of essays, worksheets, entries in homework diaries). Arguments centred on instilling pride in possessing good penmanship skills, in recognition of Golby's anecdote about mechanically botching his simple message in a 'Big Card', and how aspects of personal identity are conveyed in the idiosyncrasies of one's handwriting (opposing Golby's emphasis on dispassionate electronic modes of communication). In the persona of a headteacher, some candidates created their own version of Golby's rhetorical questions and provided brief anecdotes illustrating the importance of stylish handwriting in a professional context (e.g. a note of appreciation to a shy student who successfully led a year assembly).

In weaker responses, candidates tended to include unnecessarily lengthy introductory remarks, often focused on details about the headmaster's school and the nature of its curriculum and candidate body; they also often produced entire letters (instead of 'a section' as advised) that diminished opportunities for precise reworking of Golby's article. Lack of clarity in expression often hampered candidates' attempts to clearly present the headteacher's point of view and attempts to persuade Golby of the importance of handwriting. A few candidates produced personal letters rather than formal ones. Some responses showed misjudgement of the level of formality required, with phrases such as 'I was gobsmacked by your view' and 'I kid you not ...'. One phrase which appeared regularly was 'lead an inkless existence', used to seemingly castigate Golby, though without any related reworking. Impolite criticism of Golby's 'ruining' the 'Big Card' with his 'illegible scrawl' needed to offer instructive advice in mitigation.

Stronger responses consistently presented supporting arguments clearly corresponding to details carefully selected from Golby's opinion piece. Purposeful topic sentences clearly delineated the separate aspects of the headteacher's arguments and effectively linked these as required. A consistently polite though firm tone and some suitable low frequency lexis was often utilised to suggest the professionalism and expertise of a headteacher. Candidates cast the headteacher persona to be aware of the inherent weaknesses of technology in managing everyday activities (e.g. Golby sending email reminder messages to himself only to 'ignore' them) and a proponent of handwriting as a skill closely related to cognitive functions to be inculcated in developing 'the whole person' suitably prepared to face challenges after secondary education. There was often reference to 'education studies', demonstrating the crucial role handwriting plays in social development (in clear contradiction of the 'poll' Golby cites). Candidates frequently turned Golby's ambivalent feelings towards teenagers into rhetorical questions aimed at the author (e.g. 'Why do you not realise that teens are in school to learn?') and effectively reworked the emphatic group of three at the end of the article (e.g. 'Pens are alive. Paper is alive. Handwriting is thriving'). Concluding paragraphs often featured an invitation to Golby to respond to the headteacher's letter and take the matter further 'after better informed reflection on the primacy of handwriting'.

Most of the candidates abided by the word count guidelines, although a number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them.

Quite a number of candidates sought to deal with each text separately, whereas an integrated approach would have been more effective. Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect, with candidates clearly identifying the impact of lexis appearing in the opinion article and then examining vocabulary used in their formal letters in a comparative fashion. In so doing, such responses achieved a balanced comparative emphasis on the article and the formal letter. There was occasional evidence of planning via acronyms such as PAFT (purpose, audience, form,

tone) and GAPT (genre, audience, purpose and tone) – these served to keep candidates focused on relevant topics for making apt comparisons.

Weaker responses were often brief and likely to primarily summarise the content of both texts rather than endeavouring to comparatively analyse their style and language. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify – especially the use of a title for the article, the variety of punctuation marks and sentence types and lengths of paragraphs – with brief and superficial comparison of the texts' levels of formality (even in cases where there was no comparison to be made). Candidates need to remember that textual references need to be accompanied by conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Sometimes differences in tone were recognised, as the article is markedly negative at times (ranging from the self-deprecation of the opening paragraphs to the sarcastic mocking of teenagers in the penultimate one), whereas the letters were critical of Golby's views with an ameliorating objective of convincing him of the value of handwriting. When discussing the article, many candidates simply repeated the observations that some features were intended to create humour or to entertain the audience: thus, the anecdote about the 'Big Card', the simile about a cure for the plague and recurring rhetorical questions were all deemed to be humorous or entertaining, or both.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of conventions seen in both texts. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the audience of each text: potentially very broad for the online article, and a very narrow audience of one for the letter (though a few candidates argued Golby might share the letter with his editor or possibly a colleague). Candidates usually focused on how the article was successfully introduced by its succinct, deliberately controversial title and how its variety of sentence structures facilitated its dual argumentative and entertaining purpose, especially the declarative form in the present tense e.g. 'I lead an inkless existence'. They confidently examined and compared the level of formality exhibited by both texts. Candidates often commented on the frequent use of high frequency lexis (the journalist appreciates the need to accommodate a broad online audience also evident in his use of informal language e.g. 'down with social media') and low frequency lexis (to convey the letter writer's professional status). They chiefly made reference to Golby's use of vague language and the second person used to create a sense of intimacy with the reader, and the third person 'they' to refer to teenagers and thus distance the writer from them. Some candidates also identified an implied distance between the reader and teens, suggested in the line 'I hate teens as much as anyone.' Most remarked on the 'rabbit in the headlights' metaphor and the concluding use of personification – 'Pens are dead. Paper is dead' – with a few identifying 'to my horror' as an example of hyperbole.

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. There was clear appreciation of Golby's conversational style – his use of 'Listen' as an imperative amplifies this impression, as do the rhetorical questions 'Have you heard of mobile phones? Have you heard of email?' Candidates examined the ways in which Golby manipulates his audience to agree with his views, particularly older readers who might accept his views of teens, which a few referred to as his 'othering' them, by referring to them by use of the pronoun 'they'. Other such strategies were the use of article phrases – 'A pen is something I chew on ... Paper is something I pile ...' – to implicitly demean those items and the people who use them, and the simile used to argue that paper and pens are obsolete e.g. 'They need pens as much as they need typewriters and flint'. In comparison, candidates examined how the headteacher is politely direct about his intentions and how lexical fields for education (e.g. 'learning', 'study', 'hard work') and writing ('penmanship', 'calligraphy', 'letter formation') implicitly counter Golby's negative connotations.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate a good appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Some responses focussed heavily on the content of both texts and listing techniques. 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 eschewed a comparative approach also struggled 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, and of written language in Text B. While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both texts is potentially large, most argued that the audience for Text A would be greater in size than that for Text B: regular viewers of the television programme would swell its audience, whereas the online magazine article would need to be sought out by readers other than its usual audience consisting of people with a special interest in jewellery. Phatic communion was well commented on, generally stating that Christina's opening utterances served to make Derry and the audience comfortable. Most candidates were then able to identify and comment on the significance of prosodic features, pauses, micropauses and overlaps as aspects of spontaneous speech. There was usually some consideration of the question and answer adjacency pairs led by the jewellery expert throughout much of Text A in comparison to the use of direct quotations in Text B – rather more candidates appreciated that Christina was soliciting information from Derry to better inform her eventual valuation of the necklace than those who understood how Marco's statements about his motivation and professional credo were recorded during an interview with the writer (as indicated by the present tense verbs 'says' and 'explains' respectively). Many candidates noted how the article was crafted to present Marco and his work in an exciting tone through the use of adjectives to suggest the precision and care of his craftsmanship ('silk-like', 'leaf-thin', 'elegant'), while the exchange between Christina and Derry remained more matter-of-fact, with a degree of enthusiasm evident in Christina's use of adjectives ('stunning', 'beautiful', 'delicate') and superlatives ('most understated', 'most elegant').

In relation to Text A, many candidates could also focus on the relatively fluent speech in the conversation as would be expected in a television programme, some noting the occasions where Derry's speech overlaps with Christina's and Derry repeats 'was a gift to her', and the use of more informal language by Derry such as elliptical sentences ('don't think i ever have worn it', 'don't wear jewellery') and vague language ('it's not my sort of thing', 'probably forty odd') as opposed to the specialised lexis used by Christina as a jewellery expert: 'bolt ring clasp', 'carat', 'graduated pearls'. It was often observed that Christina seems more comfortable and assured (she is the expert; she might have served in that capacity in previous episodes and knows the appropriate form the conversation should take) than Derry (who is not the expert and is somewhat reticent as it may be her first appearance on a television programme).

In relation to Text B's written mode, candidates also usually made an initial reference to the article's title as a salutation (fronted by imperative 'meet'), although only a few examined the effect of the following pun 'golden boy' (referencing his occupation as a goldsmith, occasionally inferred to relate to Marco learning his craft from his father). They noted how the use of technical language such as 'bezel' and 'bulino' was suitable for a specialist audience and the continuous use of the simple present tense created a sense of immediacy for the readers with the article's subject and his creations.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects relating directly to the texts' shared context of jewellery. They appreciated the promotional purpose of Text B through the use of richer description; some observed that Text A had a visual advantage over Text B in relation to the visual qualities of jewellery, although some considered that Text B may also include stylish photographs of Marco's creations. There was consideration of parallel structures in the texts, for example: 'In Christina's second utterance she introduces the "stunning necklace," while Text B introduces the man and the brand in the opening sentence. [The] focus of Text A is that single piece, while Text B focuses on the process of Marco's creation of jewellery pieces.' It was appreciated that emphasis in Text A is achieved through Christina's likely deliberate word stress in adjectives such as 'stunning' and 'understated' early in the conversation – and both speakers' frequent use of intensifiers ('very like', 'very nice', 'very delicate') – to pique both Derry's and the viewers' interest, whilst Marco uses adverbs and adjectives to signal the importance of his craftsmanship and its appreciation by his customers ('fully understand' and 'ultimate satisfaction'). Christina's occasional use of the plural first person ('we've got', 'we know') indicates her endeavour to be inclusive of Derry and their viewers. This was contrasted with the metaphorical use of 'helm' to suggest Bicego has a pivotal role in the company, elevating his status in relation to the reader. Candidates emphasised that Text B's many fronted adverbials ('Immersed in the gold-working tradition ...', 'Mastering the techniques ...') and the frequent use of the passive voice may be intended to manipulate the reader's attitude to Marco and his jewellery in a manner usually associated with a wholly advertorial text. There was some focus on Christina's use of the colloquial metaphor 'sail away' to suggest how quickly the necklace might be purchased, in comparison with the writer's elevated use of lexis, including the onomatopoeic word 'rustling' to unstintingly present Marco's creations as highly desirable objects.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/33 Text Analysis
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Key messages

- Candidates should prepare for this Component by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply when producing a piece of directed writing, commenting on style and language, and carrying out comparative analysis.
- For **Question 1(a)** the instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates in their directed writing. Candidates ought to concentrate on making 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 that 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 to apply their knowledge and understanding linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. A very small proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have resulted from candidates chiefly gleaning hints from the instructions rather than carefully analysing the texts themselves. Only a few candidates produced short passages of extremely superficial commentary.

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. Their reworking of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120–150 words in length and were 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 formal letter produced for **1(a)** with that of the extract from an opinion article. Candidates are assessed for their ability to select and analyse specific textual details, and to support their evaluation of language with close textual reference. Recognition of the range of lexical choices exhibited in opinion article and comparison of the effects produced with those in the formal letter were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions; understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and appreciation of linguistic techniques. 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 was good to see a significant proportion of candidates adopt such an approach – these also tended to be the responses that demonstrated the most comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

There was evidence that candidates had dedicated much time to completing **Question 1(a)** (which accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available), not leaving adequate time for detailed and thorough analysis of the texts in **Questions 1(b)** and **2**. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to use the proportion of marks available for each item in the Question Paper to guide them in dividing their time and focus appropriately.



Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates chiefly demonstrated sound familiarity with the purpose and conventions of a speech in an educational context. When presenting the opening of a speech, most candidates ensured their speeches began with a brief salutation (usually friendly e.g. 'I am Bruce, the education officer, and I am so pleased to welcome you to the Cornwall Mining Museum ...') before conveying relevant information efficiently in short sentences and topical paragraphs. Most candidates remained focused on plausible reworking of details selected from the extract from the history book extract that best suited the requirement to describe a day in the life: occasionally aspects of the historical setting above ground, almost always the tinnerns' shift patterns and their soiled work clothes and use of a rudimentary source of light, and the conditions and hazards encountered in 'subterranean workings'. Many candidates effectively focused on the sensory experiences of the tinnerns and reworked the original text accordingly (e.g. 'The claustrophobic, gloomy atmosphere and the smoky scent of the candle') as well as appealing to the readers' powers of empathy (e.g. 'Imagine yourself dog tired, caked in muck, trudging up an endless path on a dark and stormy night'). The educational context was usually maintained to the end of the section of the speech through the use of some examples of the original text's technical lexical field (e.g. 'chimney-stacks' and 'engine-houses' to suggest the ground-level setting, 'several fathoms' to emphasise how deep the tinnerns worked) and their own rhetorical questions (e.g. 'How well do you think you could have coped with such an existence?') to keep the audience engaged and in a reflective state of mind.

In weaker responses, candidates tended to include unnecessarily lengthy introductory remarks, often focused on details about the museum (its history and collection) and aspects of the speaker's visit ('After my talk you will visit the engine-house and get to see the water pump'). The register was often too informal for the speech's purpose and audience, and given the occupation of the person delivering the speech. There was usually copious direct quotation or paraphrasing of details extraneous to the task of describing 'a day in the life', especially the original text's figurative language relating to setting ('chimney-stacks, naked against the sky', 'all the beauty and sadness that Nature gives to ruins') and references to obscuring vegetation ('ivy-covered', 'hack your way through the brambles'). A few candidates had not understood that they were instructed to write 'the script' of a speech and produced transcriptions indicating how the education officer might have spoken (including the duration of pauses and the stressed syllables employed).

Strong responses were usually distinguished by the consistency of an education officer's voice initiated by openings like 'I'm really hoping you will all enjoy your visit to our museum' and 'I would like to begin by sharing with you what a typical day of a tinner was actually like', sustained by means of bridging comments such as 'See, we all really have it easy these days!' and invitations to reflect on what had been conveyed e.g. 'How does that sound for a hard day's work?' A few candidates captured the persona of an education officer who wanted to encourage audience participation e.g. 'Okay, please volunteer if you would like to see if you can pick up one of these authentic sacks of rocks'. Many responses conferred heroic qualities on the tinnerns, sometimes by inclusion of a reference to the arduous and dangerous nature of the tinnerns' ascent after their shift was completed. A few candidates demonstrated strong inferential knowledge – that tin was once a valuable commodity and tinnerns endured many hardships to support themselves and their families.

Most of the candidates abided by the word count guidelines, although a number of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that did not best suit the form and purpose specified.

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them.

Quite a number of candidates sought to deal with each text separately, whereas an integrated approach would have been more effective. Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect, with candidates clearly identifying the impact of lexis appearing in the opinion article and then examining vocabulary used in their formal letters in a comparative fashion. In so doing, such responses achieved a balanced comparative emphasis on the article and the formal letter. There was occasional evidence of planning via acronyms such as PAFT (purpose, audience, form, tone) and GAPT (genre, audience, purpose and tone) – these served to keep candidates focused on relevant topics for making apt comparisons.

Weak responses were often brief and likely to primarily summarise the content of both texts rather than endeavouring to comparatively analyse their style and language. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of written texts they could identify, especially the introductory nature of opening paragraphs, the variety of punctuation marks and sentence types, and lengths of paragraphs in both texts, with brief and superficial comparison of the texts' levels of formality (even in cases where candidates did employ a degree of informality to achieve a friendly tone in the their speeches). Candidates need to remember that textual references need to be accompanied by conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Sometimes similarities in tone were recognised, as the history book extract solemnly describes the setting and fervently explains the physical dangers faced by tinnners, whereas the speeches tended to praise them in heroic terms. A few aspects of figurative language in the book extract were identified and cursorily examined: onomatopoeia ('chug', 'throb-throb', 'roar of waves') and simile ('perched like nests of eagles'). Some candidates dwelt on features – there were entire paragraphs written about audiences, tones, tenses, punctuation, ellipsis and elision – and aspects of the history book extract they could not shape into comparisons: 'however this [feature] is not found in my speech'.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate knowledge and understanding of a range of the conventions of a history book and their speeches. Candidates often began their comparisons by succinctly outlining the audience of each text: both potentially quite narrow given the history book would require purchasing or locating in a library, and a limited number of candidates would visit a Cornish mining museum to be addressed by its education officer. There was usually some recognition of shared field-specific lexis, especially 'underground', 'subterranean' and 'shaft-heads' and their corresponding synonyms used in the speeches. Candidates usually focused on how the history book extract characterises tinnners as 'hunters, seekers' in its opening sentence and its repeated use of complex sentences to impart information in a rich descriptive fashion. Occasionally candidates focused on the use of ellipsis – 'or a by-lane ... lonely emblems' – to suggest that the history book writer explains stopping to think and reminisce in a conversational manner that corresponds to the education officer's invitation to reflect on the tinnners' experience. Candidates often commented on the frequent use of low frequency lexis by the writer to evoke the mines' industrial heritage for an educated, mature audience and some high frequency lexis by the education officer to gain and retain the attention of his teenage audience. They chiefly made reference to the writer's use of the second person – 'if you hack', 'look about you' – to relate to the reader, corresponding to the same means of addressing the audience by the education officer exhibited by most speeches.

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. There were consistently sound contrasts between the evocative elements of description in the history book extract and the more focused and lighter style of the speech. Candidates appreciated how the metaphor 'unending quest for treasure' and the repetition of the adverb 'perhaps' were used to suggest that the tinnners' lives can merely be imagined from a modern perspective; some extended the observation to examine how the education officer is effectively doing the same on behalf of the audience being addressed. There was some recognition that the extract's examples of onomatopoeia would be unsuitable for a speech addressed to young adults ('mimicking such sounds would be more appropriate for a primary school audience'). An efficient method of structuring a response entailed identification and discussion of an informative and evocative feature of the history book extract and then contrasting it with the simplified reworking in the speech. For example, 'The extract implies that the tinnners were heroes as "rock was their only protection from sudden death by drowning", whereas my speech explicitly states that they were heroes: "These heroes constantly risked dying."'.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates needed to analyse Text A and Text B in a comparative fashion in order to demonstrate a good appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Some responses focussed heavily on the content of both texts and listing techniques. 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 eschewed a comparative approach also struggled 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, and of written language in Text B. While candidates could usually establish how the audience for both texts is potentially large, most argued that the audience for Text A would be greater in size than that for Text B: casual listeners of the radio interview could swell the size of the regular audience, whereas the lifestyle section of the newspaper containing Kiran's article would likely be read by a devoted mature, educated audience. A few candidates did not immediately appreciate Graham's role as an interviewer in Text A because one of his participants speaks first, likely in response to a question or prompt previously given by Graham about the importance of teaching children about writing letters. Nevertheless there was usually sustained consideration of the question and answer adjacency pairs throughout much of the conversation in Text A in comparison to the sustained first person narration in the opening three paragraphs of Text B (also the use of the interrogative 'would they bring anguish or comfort?' strategically placed in the the second paragraph to further pique the reader's interest through an attempt to build suspense). Candidates judged the conversation to be relatively fluent, as would be expected in a radio programme where the presenter has likely prepared questions in advance, with many noting that the only instance of overlap might possibly be explained by the speaker's excitement about being a participant of the radio show. In comparison, there was often citing and some examination of Kiran's use of low frequency lexis ('trepidation', 'archaic', 'fragranced', 'extraordinaire') and the simile used in the heading ('like your DNA') that indicate that the article had been revised and edited to suit the newspaper's niche readership.

Many candidates also focussed on the conventions of spoken language they identified in Text A, especially non-fluency features associated with spontaneous speech: the regular pausing used by all the speakers, Mrs Spear and Caspar's voiced pauses ('erm'), Graham's stress for emphasis ('who do they write to'), feedback (Mrs Spear's 'absolutely' and 'yes im back hello'), hesitation ('a part (.) a part of me'), vague lexis ('thing', 'all sorts'), and reformulation (by Graham when Caspar raises a point he may not have previously considered: 'not that we need to argue over the idea ... what about all your friends ...'). Some candidates found that Graham asking Caspar 'can we have a chat' indicates the presenter's professional care for a school-age participant expected to speak to adults, including those listening to the show; a few candidates also maintained this as evidence of the presenter manufacturing the sense of a casual conversation for the benefit of the listening audience whereas the guests' participation had been arranged in advance. Caspar's overlapping was usually regarded as co-operative, especially as the guests' contributions were made remotely (Graham needs to ask 'is caspar there') and so the speakers cannot receive and interpret visual cues, and he is simply eager to jump in and let Graham know that he is ready to contribute.

In relation to Text B's written mode, candidates usually made reference to the use of the simple present tense – 'I still write letters', 'There is a joy ...' – and how it created a sense of immediacy with the article's subject matter, bolstered by the use of direct quotation from Aunt Martha's letter. Features of the writer's use of figurative language were a particular focus for some candidates: 'words ... immortalised in a letter' and 'the pen begs to be enslaved' (as examples of personification) and a letter received in the post is 'a hidden gem: a piece of someone's heart' (as metaphors). Some candidates found the sentence consisting of simple listing – 'TV screen, computer screen, smokescreen' – an effective way to suggest that technology ('email', 'text') obscures the message being sent, in opposition to the metaphoric language of 'words ... travel through your veins' to describe the immense pleasure experienced when reading a handwritten letter.

In the strongest responses, candidates tended to focus confidently on the effects relating directly to the texts' shared context of the importance of writing and receiving letters. Candidates observed how both texts are concerned with the relation of personal anecdotes that support the idea that handwritten letters have much more sentimental value than electronic versions: Caspar's simile 'an email just feels like its stuck in a computer' was compared to the writer's colloquial observation 'they seem to exist only to be binned'. Candidates also focused on the ways both texts develop the theme that letters should be valued after initial reading: Mrs Spears uses some elevated lexis to make this point ('a letter is ... treasured' as 'its tangible') that corresponds to the writer's 'trove of letters'. It was usually examined how Graham's use of the colloquial metaphor 'magic' in relation to the discovery of 'letters from family back home in a chest in the attic' corresponds to the writer's observation that letters may be 'magically rediscovered'. There was some focus on Text A commencing in media res and Text B's intriguing extended metaphor in the opening sentence. A few candidates examined Mrs Spears' inclusive 'we' as indicating her position as representative of her school, later speaking for herself – 'i completely agree' – before using the general 'you', in 'that thing in your hand', which acts as a suggestion to others that they should agree with her, in comparison with the writer's regular use of the first person throughout most of the article and, in the final paragraph, the switch to the second person to warn the reader to guard against the insidious nature of electronic texts.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/41 Language Topics
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Key messages

- Candidates are required to select carefully from the optionality presented, writing their responses in a fluent, logical sequence of ideas.
- To ensure full development, candidates are required to select succinct and relevant evidence from the passages provided, making references to appropriate theories and theorists.
- Responses to **Questions 1** and **3** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription including, but not limited to, the features of conversation shown in the transcription key.
 - **Question 1** requires a linguistic analysis of the conventions and ingredients of spoken language and social groups, and the effects and qualities conveyed by the language.
 - **Question 3** calls for linguistic analysis with discussion of the ways the interlocutors use language, but in terms of child language acquisition.
- The demand of **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than analysis of any language features which may be apparent in the original writing.
- Responses to each of the three questions need to be sustained, cohesive and to use a full and accurate range of technical terminology, whilst maintaining a linguistic stance throughout.

General comments

Some candidates chose to answer all three questions, which resulted in submission of three undeveloped responses instead of the two developed responses which were required.

Some shorter responses were seen. These were often uneven or generally undeveloped either in terms of sourcing evidence from the text provided or theoretical reference. 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 some weaker responses to **Questions 1** and **3**, candidates had relied on the transcription key for clues to assist them in spotting features of the transcript. These candidates needed to go beyond identifying these features, into making an informed analysis of them. Other weaker responses demonstrated lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription, ascribing the lack of punctuation to delayed cognitive development in child and adult interlocutors. Occasionally there was a tendency to assertion regarding the socioeconomic situation of the interlocutors, which is outside the scope of Paper 41. Stronger responses made at-length and in-detail discussion of the nuances of the language of the interlocutors, with accurate use of linguistic terms.

In **Question 2**, confident responses focused clearly on the context provided, using it as a springboard for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Responses were weaker where candidates had chosen to demonstrate knowledge of the history of English, or to provide a generalised overview of a particular theory. In both cases, this resulted in a loss of focus. In some weaker responses, candidates had reproduced long sections of the text, or paraphrased the passage without supplying their own ideas. Stronger responses demonstrated a confident, detailed and perceptive application of a wide range of theoretical examples to their own ideas which had been stimulated by the context of the passage. In such responses, it was clear that candidates had made an extensive exploration of English as a global language as part of their wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Responses identified the relaxed register of the conversation, describing how the domestic context and cooking activity were reflected in dysfluency features such as long pause and overlap, which candidates spotted easily. The colloquial terms *chuck* and *okay* were used to strengthen such identification.

There was much discussion regarding the relative status of the interlocutors. In confident responses, language and status became a core focus, with reference made to Fairclough, for example. Higher status was often perceived in Victoria, who referred to the cookery book to try to ensure correct procedure, issuing the imperative *hang on* and the declarative *last time everything went wrong*. Weaker responses did not explore any further linguistic nuances, whereas confident responses perceived a status shift where Lisa's possible irritation in *well thats what im saying*, and her own imperative *lets just wait* brought about the overall equilibrium.

Stronger responses explored the developing pattern of instruction (*they will as long as the oils hot*), questioning (*do we do that now?*) and agreement, in which a range of Hallidayan functions were detailed.

There was a great deal of discussion on genderlect. Features were spotted and identified as indicators of female language, such as tag question (*isnt it*), vague language (*that bit*) and cooperative overlap. These were generally seen in Lisa's utterances. She was also seen to animate her utterances with increased volume, onomatopoeia and paralanguage. This aspect proved interesting to more confident candidates who explored her utterances, which were seen to take the lead, yet demonstrated more female language traits according to Lakoff, Tannen, Cameron, Coates or Holmes.

There was pleasing observation of how the pace of the conversation was quickened chronologically by cooperative overlap, with relevant reference to Beattie. These overlaps do not accurately evidence theory by Zimmerman and West, although weaker candidates attempted to identify male linguistic traits in any interruption. More accurately, supportive overlap reflected the immediacy of the cooking context, the close friendship of the interlocutors and the way in which they each attempted to achieve a common goal.

Question 2

The passage introduced the phenomenon of *interlanguages*; candidates were familiar with hybridisation and most were able to offer examples such as Singlish or Hinglish – or indeed demonstrated their local knowledge and understanding. In such responses, many interesting examples from personal experience were provided.

The paragraph heading *What is being lost?* offered a springboard for discussion on language death, dialect levelling, borrowing and destandardisation. A variety of theorists were called upon to develop strong responses, including Crystal, Diamond, McCrum, Widdowson, McWhorter. Stronger responses also detailed discussion of how English used on the internet may continue to influence Kachru's model, with some confident suggestions that the outer and expanding circles may cease to be defined in the future, or that speakers in all three circles now have norm-developing status.

In weaker explorations of the role of the internet – or at least the electronic mode, including texting – the main focus was on whether or not short forms such as emoji or other semiotic systems are valuable to young adult users. Weaker responses at times based their responses on examples of such, in an effort to mimic the style of the author's final line, which added little value in terms of the demands of the assessment. Some more valuably evaluated the differences perceived when English is written and when it is spoken.

Stronger responses retained focus and developed discussion on the development of English as a global language and its reception. Most responses explored the relative values of *automatic translation software*, and – more confidently – how English may not continue as a lingua franca in such institutions as the United Nations following Brexit.

Question 3

At the age of 3 years 9 months, Alice was found to remain in the Piagetian preoperational stage of cognitive development. Her utterances were mainly post telegraphic, although *no (.) fish (.) fish can* pointed to some telegraphic speech. There were also some complex structures, such as *i can swim better (.) but she [picks up her doll] she can not swim better than me (.) and she can not (.) she can not go in the water*. Overall,

confident responses discussed how Alice's linguistic competence falls between different stages, referring to Bellugi to discuss pronoun use and exploring the complex negation in *can not swim*. Weaker responses often described Alice as 'holographic' or 'telephrastic', with further inaccurate use of linguistic terminology during the body of the work.

Alice's utterances demonstrate a variety of Hallidayan functions. The imaginative function was clearly evident in the transcript. Alice supports her imagination with the exclamatory *BOO* in raised volume when she *[pretends her doll is talking]*, demonstrating ease in use of prosodics for emphasis. She also creates emphasis through repetition (*fish can*) and reduplication (*far far far*). Alice operates the past tense competently and uses the correct form of *swam* and *swim*; where stronger responses identified these features, detailed reference was made to Chomsky and the way in which the child's utterances correspond to Universal Grammar. Weaker responses made only passing reference to Chomsky in an attempt to identify any perceived virtuous error.

In his role as caretaker, the father's questioning technique takes a variety of forms, from the simple *did you?* which enables Alice to affirm and develop her response, to his expansion in *can you swim underwater?*, which elicits an imaginative response from Alice. The father's closed *where do you go?* is developed in his scaffolded *where did you go this morning though?*. Brown, Gleeson or Tomasello were appropriately referred to by very strong candidates in their exploration of the fatherese exhibited in the transcript, using the bridge hypothesis to examine Alice's reactions in detail.

There was some good discussion of the father's use of scaffolding, through the Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development. More confident candidates evidenced and detailed their references with accuracy. Most candidates offered discussion on Bruner (LASS) or Skinner (positive reinforcement) with appropriate evidence from the transcription. In weaker responses, such references were brief and usually limited to the names of the theorists suggested in the syllabus. For higher reward, more sufficient evidence was needed to support claims.

It is clear from her utterances that Alice is able to distinguish time and space: weaker responses discussed this aspect of the transcription at length, whereas strong responses maintained a solid linguistic focus and commented only on relevant cognitive aspects such as competence in tense.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42 Language Topics
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Key messages

- Candidates showed engagement with the stimulus material for each of the three questions in Paper 42 this series. Thorough reading of the whole Question Paper will have aided candidates to make an informed choice of questions before attempting any response.
- Candidates are expected to write a fluent, developed responses. Responses are required to 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, but not limited to, 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 use language, but in terms of child language acquisition.
- The demand of **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than analysis of any linguistic features which may be evident in the original writing.
- Responses to each of the three questions need to be sustained and cohesive, and to include accurate use of a full range of technical terminology.

General comments

Some responses were short, which led to them being uneven or undeveloped in terms of inclusion of evidence from the stimulus or theoretical examples. Moreover, some weaker candidates chose to answer all three questions. This is not a requirement of Paper 42, and it results in a loss of time needed to supply the two full responses which the examination demands. On the other hand, 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 with little context.

In **Questions 1** and **3**, some candidates chose only to use the transcription key for clues which may have aided spotting features in the transcriptions, such as overlap, pause, intonation and raised volume. Merely identifying these features does not constitute analysis. Stronger responses made at-length and in-detail discussion of nuances perceived in the language of the interlocutors, with an accurate use of a wide range of linguistic terminology.

In **Question 2**, confident responses focused clearly on the context provided, using it as stimulus for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Responses were weaker where candidates had chosen to demonstrate their knowledge of the history of English – or an overview of a particular theory – without direct application to the topic, leading to some loss of focus. In some weaker responses, candidates had reproduced long sections of the text, or paraphrased the passage without supplying their own ideas. Evidence from the text should always be kept succinct and directly relevant to the discussion in hand. Strong, confident candidates selected examples from the material provided with great care, choosing points for discussion with discrimination. Such responses provided argument and counterargument with theoretical examples drawn from an extensive exploration as part of wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A great deal of genderlect analysis was attempted. Weaker responses evidenced a feature-spotting technique, assisted by the transcription key, to identify genderlect traits such as empty adjective (*quite good fun*) and vague language (Lakoff, Cameron or Tannen). Weaker responses also attempted to define gender by describing Safiya's support overlap as interruption, with reference to Zimmerman and West. Stronger responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding of a variety of genderlect theories, including those from Wiseman or Jones (mutual self-disclosure), showing a refreshing and commendable exploration of this topic which went beyond the scope of the syllabus. Some very strong responses explored the transcription in the light of Troemel-Ploetz' antigenderlect theory and its consideration of conversational symmetry or sympathetic circularity.

More confident responses looked closely at the range of Safiya's supporting tactics, which included backchannel, non-competitive overlap, closed versus open questions, topic expansion (*is it like whitewater rafting?*) and paralanguage (*[laughs]*). They noted how, overall, Safiya remained cooperative in a rather clever way, displaying a level of generosity in propelling the conversation forward – especially as Aisha described privilege which was different from Safiya's experience of school trips. Because of her topic expansion strategy, stronger responses perceived Safiya as having the higher conversational status and made reference to Fishman to support their argument.

Weaker responses did not evidence a full or accurate range of linguistic terminology, often describing *majorca* or *whitewater rafting* as jargon where field specific lexis would have been the correct term. The term deixis also presented some confusion at times, although most responses showed that candidates were clear in a basic knowledge of linguistic terms.

Question 2

The opening paragraph of the passage contained three possible points for discussion. In some cases, it was clear that weaker candidates had looked no further into the stimulus material than *the PewDiePie generation, machine translation, and the political climate*. It was only where candidates had read on to the final line, however, that understanding of the main thrust of the passage became evident: *when perfect English becomes standard, Brits and Americans lose their advantage*. Strong responses contained developed ideas on this issue, supporting arguments with a wide range of theoretical examples which included Schneider's dynamic model, the hypodermic syringe theory, Crystal's ebb and flow, Aitchison's crumbling castle, and exploration of potential changes to Kachru's concentric circles or the work of Abram de Swaam.

Stronger responses were confident in challenging the statement that *Perfect English is taken more seriously than what's said in other languages*, often making reference to local, personal experiences. Wider exploration was not only demonstrated by investigation of theoretical examples, however; some responses made references to popular cultural reception of the topic, such as to the recent Korean film 'Parasite', which had clearly carried deep meaning for some candidates.

In weaker responses, there was some confusion as to the purpose and use of Nerriere's *Globish*, with little evidence of knowledge or understanding of how, why and for whom Nerriere's construct was launched. Stronger responses discussed why the introduction of Globish *had fateful consequences*, and were able to compare and contrast the construct with Mizumura's ideas.

Some detailed discussions were presented concerning *What is well articulated in English on the internet becomes truth*, with developed arguments for and against the loss of multilingualism. These included descriptions of the UNESCO stages of language death and its consequences.

There was some confident discussion of the perceived conflicting views in *the US and UK will lose their dominance of media* and *The next global ruling class will perceive the world chiefly in English*. Stronger candidates explored the wider meaning of one or both of these ideas, demonstrating how they may have related to the overall sentiments of the article.

Question 3

The gender of the interlocutors was provided in the rubric (*sisters* and *father*). The girls had age range (two years, six years and eight years) that demonstrated a marked difference in linguistic competence. Nonetheless, in general, discussion concentrated on the utterances of Precious who was mainly telegraphic – *go in the fair (1) picnic* with some post telegraphic emergence. She was around the age at which Piaget's preoperational stage of cognitive development is evidenced. Her phonological development was demonstrated in her use of sibilant phoneme/s/ instead of full articulation of *shoes* although, interestingly, pronunciation of *wellyboots* did not appear to present any problem. There was also substitution of final phoneme /ŋ/ with /n/ in *go in*, use of plural marker *sooz*, no use of future aspect *we go a picnic* and seemingly an inability to respond to the *why* questioning of the father, all of which gave clues to her stage of development. Most responses identified some of these features, although weaker responses made reference only to those which could be identified using the transcription key.

By contrast, Kuku and Tanya had probably reached their Piagetian concrete operational stage: their utterances were complete, evidencing continuing development, and brief, serving mainly to develop the cooperative nature of the conversation. Very strong responses juxtaposed evidence from all three child interlocutors to compare and contrast linguistic competence.

There was some detailed phonological discussion, often with reference to Berko and Brown, although phonemes were often inaccurately labelled as were consonant clusters, deletion and substitution.

Weaker responses assumed the father to be the chief linguistic caretaker, but that was not necessarily the case and there was much evidence of Kuku and Tanya in turn adopting the role of Vygotskian More Knowledgeable Other (*where are we going precious?* and *that sounds good*). The girls scaffolded their younger sister, enabling her to expand her ideas and respond to questions; Tanya used onomatopoeia to give additional, humorous meaning to the way the father was trying to organise the family outing and to affirm Precious' response *we go in a car*. This was an interesting section of the transcript, as Kuku's question *do you want to go out on your bike?* was either perceived to deliberately confuse Precious, or to offer her a choice between going in a car or using her bicycle. Tanya's utterance *that would be good* was often misunderstood in weaker responses to be the type of short sentence to be expected in Piaget's preoperational stage, whereas stronger responses analysed the utterance in detail in terms of her use of modality.

In **Part B**, weaker responses only commented on Precious' cognitive development, discussing her awareness of object permanence, or how items may have belonged to herself or her siblings. Stronger responses developed discussion using a linguistic stance, discussing Precious' early use of different sentence constructions which included interrogatives, declaratives and imperatives. A range of linguistic functions according to Halliday was applied to such discussions. Further confident discussion on **Part B** considered the implications of fatherese which was evident, usually with reference to Bruner and Vygotsky.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/43 Language Topics
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Key messages

- Candidates are required to select carefully from the optionality presented, writing their responses in a fluent, logical sequence of ideas.
- To ensure full development, candidates are required to select succinct and relevant evidence from the passages provided, making references to appropriate theories and theorists.
- Responses to **Questions 1** and **3** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription including, but not limited to, the features of conversation shown in the transcription key.
 - **Question 1** requires a linguistic analysis of the conventions and ingredients of spoken language and social groups, and the effects and qualities conveyed by the language.
 - **Question 3** calls for linguistic analysis with discussion of the ways the interlocutors use language, but in terms of child language acquisition.
- The demand of **Question 2** is different in that it requires analysis of the ideas presented in the stimulus material rather than analysis of any language features which may be apparent in the original writing.
- Responses to each of the three questions need to be sustained, cohesive and to use a full and accurate range of technical terminology, whilst maintaining a linguistic stance throughout.

General comments

Some candidates chose to answer all three questions, which resulted in submission of three undeveloped responses instead of the two developed responses which were required.

Some shorter responses were seen. These were often uneven or generally undeveloped either in terms of sourcing evidence from the text provided or theoretical reference. 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 some weaker responses to **Questions 1** and **3**, candidates had relied on the transcription key for clues to assist them in spotting features of the transcript. These candidates needed to go beyond identifying these features, into making an informed analysis of them. Other weaker responses demonstrated lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription, ascribing the lack of punctuation to delayed cognitive development in child and adult interlocutors. Occasionally there was a tendency to assertion regarding the socioeconomic situation of the interlocutors, which is outside the scope of Paper 43. Stronger responses made at-length and in-detail discussion of the nuances of the language of the interlocutors, with accurate use of linguistic terms.

In **Question 2**, confident responses focused clearly on the context provided, using it as a springboard for ideas pertaining to the overall topic. Responses were weaker where candidates had chosen to demonstrate knowledge of the history of English, or to provide a generalised overview of a particular theory. In both cases, this resulted in a loss of focus. In some weaker responses, candidates had reproduced long sections of the text, or paraphrased the passage without supplying their own ideas. Stronger responses demonstrated a confident, detailed and perceptive application of a wide range of theoretical examples to their own ideas which had been stimulated by the context of the passage. In such responses, it was clear that candidates had made an extensive exploration of English as a global language as part of their wider reading.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Responses identified the relaxed register of the conversation, describing how the domestic context and cooking activity were reflected in dysfluency features such as long pause and overlap, which candidates spotted easily. The colloquial terms *chuck* and *okay* were used to strengthen such identification.

There was much discussion regarding the relative status of the interlocutors. In confident responses, language and status became a core focus, with reference made to Fairclough, for example. Higher status was often perceived in Victoria, who referred to the cookery book to try to ensure correct procedure, issuing the imperative *hang on* and the declarative *last time everything went wrong*. Weaker responses did not explore any further linguistic nuances, whereas confident responses perceived a status shift where Lisa's possible irritation in *well thats what im saying*, and her own imperative *lets just wait* brought about the overall equilibrium.

Stronger responses explored the developing pattern of instruction (*they will as long as the oils hot*), questioning (*do we do that now?*) and agreement, in which a range of Hallidayan functions were detailed.

There was a great deal of discussion on genderlect. Features were spotted and identified as indicators of female language, such as tag question (*isnt it*), vague language (*that bit*) and cooperative overlap. These were generally seen in Lisa's utterances. She was also seen to animate her utterances with increased volume, onomatopoeia and paralanguage. This aspect proved interesting to more confident candidates who explored her utterances, which were seen to take the lead, yet demonstrated more female language traits according to Lakoff, Tannen, Cameron, Coates or Holmes.

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