

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/01
Read Passage (Core)

Key Messages

This paper was mainly assessed for Reading, although there were 10 marks available for writing in **Question 2**.

1 In responding to all questions, candidates are advised to consider carefully the specific implications of key words within the question or within the phrase under analysis.

2 **Question 1(g)** is a six mark language question assessing an understanding of the meanings of language choices. In this and similar questions in future papers, it is important to note that each component part of the question requires two separate words in the quotation to be explained (1 mark for each explanation). Marks will not be awarded to responses that attempt to define a word by using a different grammatical form of the same word.

3a **Question 1 (h)** is a six mark language question assessing an understanding of the effects of language choices. In this and similar questions in future papers, responses should attempt to explain *how* the choice of words conveys the aspect identified in the question (in this case, a sense of excitement). This question does not require a paraphrase of the words chosen as this skill is tested elsewhere in the paper.

3b When attempting to explain the effects of the writer's use of language for **Question 1(h)**, candidates should be aware that merely identifying figures of speech and other literary devices is insufficient for the award of a mark. Similarly, it is expected that answers to this task will attempt to give developed explanations of how an effect is achieved. Answers on the lines of 'this phrase suggests the writer's sense of excitement because it is exciting' are insufficient as convincing explanations.

4 An informal or colloquial register was appropriate for the Writing task but responses should also show awareness of the need to demonstrate an ability to write accurately, using standard English, in order to have access to the highest bands of the Mark Scheme.

The above points will be considered in greater detail in the following sections of this report.

General Comments

The passage about a visit to Costa Rica proved to be generally accessible and responses gave clear evidence of positive engagement with it. There was very little indication that responses suffered from timing problems and most were of adequate length for all questions. The most successful responses were those that paid attention to the precise requirements of specific questions. There was also very little evidence of serious misunderstanding of the reading passage. As in previous sessions, there was a comparatively large number of responses which did not achieve the full total of marks available for some tasks as they either did not respond to a specific detail required by the question or included an irrelevant point in their answer, possibly as a result of misreading the wording of the question rather than from misunderstanding the passage. It is important to note that this comment applies to both **Question 1** and **Question 2**.

Presentation and handwriting were generally of a good standard and nearly all responses gave clear evidence that candidates were taking the examination seriously and trying their very best to do well.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

- (a) In general, this 1 mark question was answered well and many answers gained the mark by identifying the fact that the writer had visited Costa Rica for a walking holiday. Answers that mentioned 'holiday' alone without reference to its purpose were not rewarded and nor were those which focused (often at length) on the attractions of the area rather than on the specific nature of the holiday.
- (b) The majority of answers scored full marks for this 2 mark question and identified at least two, and often all four, of the points detailed in the Mark Scheme (the lateness of the hour; the heat; the swarms of taxi drivers; the difficulty in finding the guide). Less successful responses merely repeated 'the sense of panic' from the question rubric as a reason for the writer's feeling of panic. There was evidence of some unfamiliarity with the writer's use of idiom in those responses that stated that the writer's plane had been delayed, rather than the hour being late.
- (c) The majority of responses gained at least 1 mark out of 2 for this question by showing a general understanding of the writer's feelings but found it more difficult to give a clear explanation of the word 'creepy'. Some responses correctly identified that the description was based on an oxymoron and the most successful responses gave a clear explanation of why it was so and how it helped to clarify the writer's response to her experience. Interestingly, however, hardly any responses identified the pun in 'creepy' and only a very few answers showed clear awareness that the spider was actually walking over the writer's hand. The phrase 'creeped out' was occasionally used to explain her feelings but was too close to the original phrase to be awarded a mark. Quite a significant minority were either unaware of the force of the adverb 'deliciously' or had been so taken with the writer's description of her enjoyment of the Costa Rican national dish that they assumed that she was looking forward to eating the spider!
- (d) Nearly all responses were correct, gaining 1 mark. They quoted the word 'potholed' or the phrase 'potholed roads'. A few gave the word 'eruptions' as an answer and others were not credited as they quoted at too great a length rather than clearly identifying the specific word 'potholed'.
- (e) This question also was generally answered correctly with a large number of responses referring to at least three of the following points about the Eco Termales Hot Springs resort to gain 3 marks:
- it was not as expensive/overcrowded (as the more famous resort referred to)
 - it had four (large) pools
 - (the travellers could relax/soothe aching muscles in) the warm/steamy water/hot springs
 - the rain had stopped
 - (they could watch the) bats
 - there was good/enjoyable (local/national food)/a good restaurant.

Although most responses showed a good, overall understanding of this section of the passage, precise detail was required in some responses to gain marks; for example, some did not mention the hot springs and so it was not clear where aching muscles could be soothed. Others simply referred to the availability of the national dish without mentioning that it was either a good version of it or that it was eaten in a good restaurant.

- (f) This question asked for details of how the scenery changed on the approach to the Nicaraguan border and was worth a total of 2 marks. To gain 2 marks, candidates were required to identify at least two of the following underlined details: the scenery changed suddenly from fertile, moist (rain)forest to dry/open (grass)land/prairie/savannah. There was some significant misreading of the question behind many responses as many referred to the change in the weather or climate rather than change in the scenery. There were also responses that revealed unfamiliarity with the word 'savannah' and claimed that the writer and her companions were entering a desert landscape.

- (g) (i) A large number of responses gained both available marks for this question by correctly explaining that the writer knew only a small number of words in Spanish. Responses achieving 1 mark tended to correctly define the word 'limited' but needed to provide an explanation for 'vocabulary'.
- (ii) There was a good range of performance on this question. The key point was how well the responses explored the implications of 'literally'. The most successful achieved both marks through giving very precise answers showing clearly that they understood that the writer and her companions were so high up the mountain that they were actually in the clouds. Less successful responses were able to gain one mark if they showed a clear appreciation of the height reached by the writer.
- (iii) This 2 mark question also discriminated well. Responses achieving two marks were able to explain fully the personification in the phrase. Quite a few believed that the actions of hiding were the narrator's and not the volcano's. Although some responses grasped that the writer had personified the mountain, candidates needed to provide their explanation in their own words.
- (h) This 6 mark language question (as mentioned in the Key Messages section of this report) required responses to comment on the writer's use of language and led to a wide range of responses. There were a few excellent responses that achieved the full 6 marks and the majority of responses managed to identify some, if not three, appropriate phrases with a fairly high number being able to give reasonable explanations relating to excitement for at least one or two of these. There were also quite a large number of responses which needed to identify phrases that conveyed excitement but instead quoted phrases such as 'potholed' and 'pura vida' which could not be rewarded. Others provided explanations that did not use their own words and instead used the wording of the question in the response, which limited the marks available. The explanation of writer's effects proved to be a key discriminator.
- (i) Many responses achieved at least 4 marks for this question, with a small number gaining all seven marks available. Most successfully focused on details about volcanoes; the most successful drew their points from the whole of the passage with the result that points 7-10 in those listed below were also included. The majority of responses showed a clear awareness of the principles of summary writing and attempted to select appropriate points. The least successful responses tended to give unrelated details about Costa Rica. The points about volcanoes in Costa Rica that were credited in the Mark Scheme were as follows:
1. There are many of them.
 2. Eruptions have killed people/80 killed (in the last eruption).
 3. They are still active/last eruption was in 1968.
 4. You can see red lava flowing from them.
 5. New mountains are created by (the lava/eruptions).
 6. You can see steam blowing from them.
 7. They are in (the midst of) deep forest.
 8. Hot springs (are often found with volcanoes).
 9. They are often hidden/two thirds covered by clouds.
 10. They are also found in the savannah/near the Nicaraguan border.

Question 2

This question is assessed for both reading (using and understanding the material, 10 marks) and writing (10 marks).

In general, the majority of responses to the Writing task were clearly focused on the task. The detail with which the second bullet was addressed proved to be the main discriminator for the Reading mark. As in previous sessions, candidates performed to a reasonable standard on this task with many candidates achieving in the Band 2/3 range for both elements; a considerably higher number of responses gained marks in the Band 2/1 range than fell into Bands 4 and 5. Overall, the average mark for Writing was slightly above that for Reading. The most successful responses adapted material from the passage quite seamlessly and managed to avoid the pitfall of lifting large amounts of the original passage; the less successful responses needed to be less reliant on the source material but also needed to include content that was relevant to the task – for example, the refreshing drink and spa facilities were irrelevant. These responses would have improved if the material had been organised and if candidates ensured that they had covered the three bullet pointed requirements for the piece of writing. Many of these responses were narrative-based accounts of the walking holiday which did not fulfil the requirements of the task (the challenges and rewards for visitors) and

the format asked for in the question. Reasons why readers should visit Costa Rica were nearly always given, but often as a single sentence 'postscript' rather than in a meaningful section.

There was some evidence of responses successfully adopting an appropriate register for the task and producing lively writing but, in doing so, losing focus on the requirements of the task. To achieve high marks for reading, responses needed to include accounts which selected content about Costa Rica from the passage rather than repetitive exclamations such as 'What a place!', 'You must go there!', 'You would not regret it!'. In more successful responses vocabulary choices were carefully considered and writing was well structured. Although nearly all responses were written with sufficient accuracy to communicate their ideas to their readers, there was evidence of a lot of non-existent punctuation; much misspelling of basic vocabulary and the need for responses to discern between acceptable, formal language and slang: 'gonna', 'cause' etc. along with contractions such as 'aswell'; the use of ampersands instead of the word *and*, and the lower case *i* for the first person singular pronoun should all be avoided, especially by responses hoping to achieve marks in the highest bands. Centres are encouraged to emphasise these points to their candidates because, in many cases, it is the making of these avoidable basic technical errors which prevents responses achieving marks in the grade C range for this paper. Proofing work, with concentration on accuracy in spelling and punctuation would bring rewards.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/02

Reading Passages (Extended)

Key messages for improving performance on this paper:

- Balance all parts of the question.
- Plan each question; cross out material which is not intended to form part of the final answer.
- Explain points concisely, but in sufficient detail to convey clear meaning.
- Use your own words; do not lift whole phrases or sentences from the passages.
- Modify both the style and structure of the passages in all three responses.
- Select only the material that is focused on the question.
- Do not repeat points or ideas.
- Give thought to the structure and sequence of the material in the response.
- Adopt a suitable voice and register for the task.
- Pay attention to length; practice in note-taking and concise expression are recommended.

General comments

The candidature for this syllabus has increased in the UK. It was important that new Centres taught their candidates the demands of the questions and how to approach them. Centres are recommended to take advantage of the guidance material available on the Teacher Support Site and specifically in the Principal Examiner Reports for Teachers. Centres need to make sure that candidates realise the need to convey all three levels of reading comprehension for higher band marks: explicit understanding of facts and ideas; implicit understanding of connotations and feelings; cognitive understanding of the effect of individual words. Candidates are also to be advised of careful reading of the requirements of the questions.

Candidates appeared to find both passages equally accessible and were able to finish the paper within the time allowed, with only few of them offering a part answer to a question. Most candidates had been entered for the appropriate tier. There did not seem to be any common misunderstandings of the content of the passages. It is important that responses use own words throughout the paper and development of ideas in **Questions 1 and 2**. There is a significant difference between using textual detail in support of points and lifting material from the text: the former is evidence of understanding.

For **Question 1** and **Question 2**, candidates wishing to score high marks should have a wide, appropriate vocabulary in order both to express themselves and to understand the use of language in the passages. Their responses are expected to be in their own words, with a development of ideas and choices, and specific commentary. Responses were sometimes less strong because of the misreading or misunderstanding of an important individual word, such as humanity for humidity, sneered for snared, or for mistaken beliefs, such as that there were snakes in the jungle and that they attacked Julia, or that Julia was taken to hospital.

In **Question 3** many candidates managed to earn a mark in double figures by finding a reasonable number of points. Again to achieve a high mark for quality of writing, using own words, where appropriate is recommended. Copying suggests that they do not understand the wording of the original. On the other hand, when rephrasing a fact from the passage, the meaning should not change; hearing a lion and seeing it is not the same thing, for example. Also, it is important that responses are of the specified length as overlong responses will receive a lower Writing mark as indicated in the mark scheme. It is expected that the response is in paragraphs: one for each section is sufficient. More detail on these aspects is provided below.

On this Reading paper 20% of the available marks are for Writing. Candidates therefore need to consider the quality of their writing and avoid a cut and paste approach which returns a high degree of lifted material from the passages. Candidates are expected to attempt syntactical and lexical modification of the language

of the original passage. Most responses were written in an appropriate register, though there was some awkward English. There were no marks given for accuracy in this paper, although some Writing marks were affected by unclear or limited style, or over-reliance on the language of the passages. Many responses needed to follow the length guidelines to ensure their answer remained focused and without repetition. The common and unnecessary use of more than one answer booklet meant that candidates often lost sight of the recommended length of answer for each question. The use of grids for the actual response to the questions is not recommended.

It is essential that the skills of selection and modification are demonstrated in all three questions on this paper. In addition, there needs to be a strong focus on the actual wording of the questions. The importance of planning cannot therefore be overemphasised. Effective planning ensures that there is no repetition between sections of a question, that they are all given equal attention and coverage and that the response includes the three necessary components. These are: the use of ideas to demonstrate explicit understanding, the use of detail to show close reading, and the development of ideas to prove implicit understanding. Checking is also advisable, as marks can be lost through slips of the pen which suggest basic misunderstanding.

Question 1: A reporter for a newspaper interviews Julia's parents and asks the following *three* questions only: What made you choose to visit the rainforest with your daughter, Julia; How did Julia's accident happen, and what did she do to survive; What are your thoughts and feelings towards the Achuar people and their way of life?

(20 marks)

Most candidates wrote recognisable interviews and showed that they understood the need to adopt the viewpoint of the parents, though a number gave Julia a speaking role or gave their response in a third person narrative or report format. It was acceptable for either parent to answer the reporter, or for the response to include contributions from both parents. A significant number of responses gave more questions to the reporter than those specified in the task which requested that the reported asked only the three given questions. It is expected that candidates will follow the requirements of the question as the aim is to guide candidates into providing a structured response with a specific content focus in order to assess the reading aspect. The reporter was not a character and did not have a viewpoint to convey; they existed solely to trigger the three areas of response from Julia's parents. It was also not required or desirable that responses should include stage directions; the task asked for the words of an interview not the writing of a drama script. Responses which took this form tended to focus less on the content of the speeches, which was the basis of the assessment of this question.

It was important, for high marks, to develop the content of the passage in the response to this question. Key phrases were lifted rather than re-phrased in order to show understanding, most notably 'biodiversity', 'rainforest in all its glory', 'slight trickle of rain', and 'encyclopaedic knowledge'. As there are many possible paraphrases for these quotations, and given that the question rubric asks for the use of own words, the unmodified use of such phrases indicates a lack of understanding or vocabulary.

The coverage of the three bullets should ideally be equal; either the first or the third section was often sparse. Some inference was required in the first and third sections, whereas the second question allowed candidates to show explicit understanding of the events of the story from a selective and different perspective. The first question related to the parents' reasons for choosing to go to Ecuador before they went, but some responses included information that could only have been known after the event. Although most answers noted that the parents were biologists, few developed this idea into an explanation of why this would make them particularly interested in visiting a rainforest. The last section required an evaluation of the local people from the viewpoint of parents whose child had been found and cured. Some candidates thought that the Achuar were to be pitied rather than admired, because of the bad weather in the rainforest or their social isolation without access to technology.

Stronger responses modified the ideas and events in the passage to create convincing characterisation of biologists keen to expand their professional interests and share their enthusiasms with their daughter through the inspirational trip. They were carefully selective in their use of material for the second bullet, ensuring that it came from the parents' viewpoint. They were able to contextualise the decision to make the trip, the sudden storm, and the treatment of Julia, expressing excitement and anticipation, followed by fear and shock, then by gratitude and admiration. Stronger responses dealt with the third bullet by separating the three ideas of 'harmonious lifestyle, community spirit and generosity', commenting on how each of these had played a role in the treatment of the family as a whole. These answers used their own words to give a lively and thoughtful interview.

Middle-range responses made reasonable use of the passage, with some attempt at own words, but tended to stick closely to the events and ideas, and to present them in the same order as in the passage. Some selection of material for the middle section was evident. They could have improved their marks by development of ideas and conveying of feelings. For example, they tended to list the qualities of the Achuar people without modifying them to focus on the parents' personal circumstances and their feelings about Julia's recovery.

Weaker responses copied out parts of the passage without recognition of the need to select, develop and modify the content, structure and language of the original. They generally took the form of giving an unselective narrative retelling in the second section, despite the fact that the question asks only about the cause of the accident and what Julia did in response, not about the role of the parents or the tribe. In the other two sections, weaker responses needed to modify phrases from the passage to the question or the viewpoint, rather than simply lifting or listing them. Such responses were unable to demonstrate significant understanding of the passage. Weak answers were often sparse, simple or short. Some invented their own material, describing attacks by monkeys or snakes. Other weaknesses were the use of Julia as an interviewee, thereby distorting the required perspective, or ignoring the interview format completely. This demonstrated the need for candidates to read the questions carefully and follow the instructions given. Where the entire response consisted of unmodified material from the passage, the highest mark available was the top of band 5; where two sections consisted entirely of reproduced chunks from the passage, a top mark of 5 was awarded.

The Writing mark reflected the clarity and fluency of the response and how well it used vivid language to capture the sense of the drama of the storm and the strength of character of Julia. The better written responses had a lively and engaging voice, a convincing style, and a mixture of informative and reflective content.

Here are some ways in which this type of response could be improved:

- Answer all parts of the question, giving equal attention to each of the three sections;
- Answer in your own words and adapt material from the passage to the form and viewpoint of the response;
- Use all the main ideas in the passage and use detail to support them;
- Develop and extend some of the ideas relevantly;
- Create a suitable voice, tone and style for the persona(e) in the response.

Question 2: Re-read the descriptions of (a) the rainforest and its wildlife in paragraph 1; and (b) Julia's walk through the rainforest in search of her parents in paragraph 4. Select words and phrases from these descriptions, and explain how the writer has created effects by using this language.

(10 marks)

It was expected that the response would take the form of continuous prose. Marks were given for the quality of the words and phrases chosen to answer the question, and for the quality of their explanations. Three marks were available for a range of appropriate choices in each section. Responses that also gave the meanings of the words were awarded up to a further three marks, depending on how specific and contextual the meanings were. Responses that also explored the effects that the use of particular words had on the reader could score up to the highest mark of ten. As usual, the majority of candidates found this question the most demanding of the three, as it requires a wide vocabulary, close reading, and an ability to relate to subtleties of language beyond explicit meaning. Generally **section (a)** was done better than **section (b)**.

It is recommended to respond to this question in paragraphs rather than in the form of a three-column grid under the headings of point, explanation and effect as this often resulted in the same material being duplicated in two of the three columns, the choices tending to be overlong, and the explanations mechanical, incomplete or undeveloped.

Candidates need to be aware that the criteria for the top two bands of the mark scheme for **Question 2** require a demonstration of an understanding of how language works. Long chunks of text or lists of single words, followed by a general statement do not fulfil this descriptor, even if the choices are all relevant ones. They also need to be aware that the identification of literary devices alone does not gain any credit, and that choices need to be accompanied by thoughtful and full exploration of the specific language used in the specific context.

Most responses were able to identify 4 or 5 appropriate choices, but many of these candidates would have improved by discrimination in their selections. The ability to select relevantly is an assessment objective on this syllabus. Several choices should not be grouped together as one choice; for instance, 'steaming', 'hissing', and 'stole their air' counted as three choices in the mark scheme if offered separately, as their meanings are distinct and something different could be said about each of them. A distinction needed to be made between meaning and effects: for example, the meaning of 'tangles' is that the roots are twisted together in a confused mass; the effect of 'tangles' is that the undergrowth of the jungle is strong and intermingled in a way that asserts its dominance over the pathways and makes it likely that people will trip over it. The screaming of monkeys means that they were making a loud noise; the effect, however, is that they resented the intrusion of the humans into their jungle territory.

It was a feature of some of the responses to this question that they were longer than the **Question 1** responses, which should not be the case, given the relative weighting of marks. Writing at length does not improve the quality of the response if much of it is repetitive, and there is a danger of there not being enough time left to do justice to **Question 3**. On the other hand, less than a full page of writing is unlikely to produce a range of choices, with their explanatory meanings and effects, for each half of the question. One or two choices from each paragraph are not sufficient; the response would be considered to be 'thin' and therefore be given a mark in band 5. Many candidates seemed to have deliberately limited themselves to only three choices for each section, though there were more than twice as many possible appropriate selections available in each paragraph.

Scripts awarded marks in the higher bands for **Question 2** showed precise focus at word level and were engaged and assured in their handling of their appropriate selections. They selected carefully, included images, put the choices in context, and answered both parts of the question equally well. They were able, for example, to explain 'deep darkness' as meaning total blackness and being suggestive of a corresponding sense of loneliness and isolation because of the complete absence of light and the difficulty of orientation. A link was made between the 'hissing' sound in the first paragraph, suggesting heat and humidity about to boil over, and the use of 'snake' in the second paragraph as a metaphorical description of the shape of the tree roots and tendrils. Better responses were able to recognise the double artistic image of the birds 'splashed' and 'flecked' against the background of the jungle canopy and the sky.

Middle-range responses attempted effects by making generalised comments, such as that the jungle is alive or threatening, or hostile to Julia, or that the reader feels sorry for her, but these perceptions needed to be directly related to specific choices or an exploration of imagery, and should not have been repeated after every choice. Responses often went straight to attempting an effect without first establishing the precise meaning of the choice; e.g. they commented that 'trudging' meant that the ground was uneven or difficult to walk on without explaining what the word means. Middling responses often took the form of a commentary on the entire paragraph for each half of the question, containing relevant choices but needing to give a proper explanation of them. Imagery was sometimes explained by the use of another image, and the attempts to explain birds being like splashed paint on a canvas were only partially successful. There was a dependence on the idea of personification, in both sections, which did not contribute helpfully to the explanation of specific effects. Some examples offered were not actually personifications, as in the case of 'steaming and hissing' and 'snaked'. The sound effect of 'screaming jungle' was identified, though very few commented on the evocative sound conveyed by the word 'whirr', linking to the idea of plane engines in 'as large as model aircraft', and to the idea of diving and attacking like bomber planes in a later phrase. In this range of scripts the words 'orbited' and 'gravitated' were usually explained clearly as having connotations of planets and magnets.

Weaker responses offered phrases selected in the order in which they appeared in the paragraphs and often did not get as far as the later, higher quality choices. They included quotations not relevant to the rainforest and its wildlife, although this is the requirement of the question, referring to the 'effortlessly agile' guide or to Julia lying down by the stream rather than to her walk. Often purely factual information, such as 'dense undergrowth' or 'bright colours' in **section (a)** or Julia 'waded through knee-high water' in **section (b)** were selected at the expense of phrases with richer language. Weaker responses concentrated on what happened rather than how it was described; they retold the narrative with a few quotations and comments interspersed. Many made a relevant selection but then focused on the wrong part of it: for instance, having selected 'trudging' as an evocative word, they did not explain the way of walking this implied and reasons for it, or focused instead on 'single file', despite this being purely factual language that does not lend itself to exploration; in the phrase 'angry whirr of swarms of insects' the key word 'whirr' was often ignored. Many gave choices of only one word when its effectiveness depended on being used in combination with adjacent words, e.g. 'outraged' is not in itself evocative without the noises to accompany it. Imagery was avoided or not understood in weaker responses, 'Deep darkness' was sometimes correctly identified as an evocative phrase, but the language of the explanation repeated one or both of the original words. Repeating the

language of the choice can gain no credit, as understanding is not thereby demonstrated. There was occasional misunderstanding about the literal existence of snakes, and the word 'snared' was read as 'snarled' and 'sneered' by some candidates. There was frequent misunderstanding of 'stole their air', as meaning that the jungle was breathtaking.

The following specimen response includes all of the selected quotations in the mark scheme, and fewer choices than this would be more than sufficient for the award of the top mark, provided that the quality of the explanation was high and consistent enough. This sample answer is given so that Centres and candidates can appreciate what constitutes an appropriate type of response to the question.

(a) The rainforest and its wildlife in paragraph 1

The writer conveys the slow speed and effort required by the family in walking through the forest by the word 'trudging', which gives the idea of the difficulty of the terrain, described as consisting of 'thick knots and tangles of roots'. This luxuriant growth and confused mass of interlocked vegetation makes it seem as though the forest does not want visitors to pass through it and is asserting its dominance. The word 'steaming' describes the vapour being given off with a 'hissing sound' reminiscent of a boiling kettle or angry snakes. The jungle seems hostile to the extent that it 'stole their air', as if deliberately trying to suffocate the visitors by depriving them of oxygen. The 'outraged hoops and screams' of the monkeys suggest that their loud angry noise is an attempt to show their displeasure and warn off the intruders into their territory. The birds which 'splashed the canvas' are like randomly thrown, vividly-coloured paint blotches on the dark background of the trees, or dots of green highlighted against the bits of sky seen in the gaps of the canopy; both of these images are artistic and make the jungle scene picturesque and reminiscent of a large painting consisting of contrasting colours. The rainforest is as beautiful as it is inhospitable.

(b) Julia's walk through the rainforest in paragraph 4

Julia's experience of the rainforest is that it is a frightening and painful place to be alone and in 'deep darkness', where the total lack of light creates an effect of being submerged and disorientated. The 'staggered' nature of her unstable walking shows how much pain she is in and how much effort she is having to make to keep moving. The 'screaming jungle', like the screams of the monkeys earlier, makes the place seem alive and threatening, as if trying to drown out any noise she could make. The foliage which 'snaked, twisted and snared' is sinister language showing that the jungle plants seem to be trying to catch hold of Julia and entwine around her to prevent her from escaping its clutches. The swarms of insects 'whirr', suggesting how close they are to her ears and that they sound like an engine rather than something natural. This image is repeated in the reference to their being 'as large as model aircraft'. This makes them seem unnaturally, impossibly huge and therefore frightening, able to inflict damage when they 'dive, attack and bite', once more using the language of fighter aircraft and pain. The fact that they 'orbited her constantly' means that they surrounded her like satellites and focused on her as their target in a way she could not escape. The leeches also 'gravitated' towards her as if their movement was the effect of being pulled by a magnetic or cosmic force. All these aspects of her walk made it a 'torturous journey', pain and suffering deliberately inflicted to a nightmarish degree by an animated rainforest.

Here are some ways in which this type of answer could be improved:

- Choose a range of words and phrases that seem powerful to you. Do not write out whole sentences, but also do not give only one word if it is part of a descriptive phrase. Do not write out the beginning and end of a long quotation with the key words missing from the middle.
- Try to remember to put quotation marks around your choices. This makes it easier for you to focus on the exact wording.
- Re-read the whole paragraph before making selections; choose the best and not those which happen to come first. Remember that you are not being asked to write about the whole paragraph but only about the language which relates to the particular question.
- Treat each of your choices separately and do not present them as a list or give a general comment which applies to all of them.
- Avoid general comments such as 'the writer makes you feel that you are really there' or 'this is a very descriptive phrase'. Such comments will not earn any marks.
- If you are not sure about effects, try to at least give a meaning for each of your choices. That can give you half marks for the question. Explain in your own words what the word or phrase means in the context of the passage.
- To explain effects, think of what the reader sees and feels when reading the word or phrase, because of the connotations and associations of the language. Often there is more than one possible effect.

- Include images from each paragraph, and try to explain them (but you do not need to know or give their technical names); think about sounds as well as visual effects.

Question 3: Summarise (a) what the Kalahari expedition offers a traveller, as described in Passage B; and (b) the challenges *and* potential problems faced by visitors to the rainforest, as described in Passage A.

(20 marks)

To answer this question successfully responses needed to identify fifteen points that were relevant to the question and to present them succinctly and in their own words. Centres are reminded that this is an exercise in informative writing, which should be clear and to the point, and in a different register and genre from those of the passages. There were twenty-three possible answers in the mark scheme, which gave candidates a generous leeway. This was the highest-scoring question for many of the candidates. Most responses showed awareness of the appropriate form, style and tone for a summary. **Section (a)** often contained more points than **section (b)**, which tended to revert to the story of Julia's experience rather than answer the question. Points 2, 8 and 13 were rarely made in **section (a)**; in **section (b)** the most commonly made points were 14, 16, 19, and 20. There was occasional confusion between the two sections and passages, with dense undergrowth in both, bad weather in the desert and lions roaring in the rainforest.

A large number of candidates this session gave their summary response partially in note form. Candidates were credited in the Reading mark for writing a split summary half in notes and half in sentences, but the Writing mark was limited when assessed against the criteria for quality of writing. It is not appropriate to use notes in the summary as this is a way of avoiding having to write in concise and fluent sentences, as is required in the Writing assessment for this question. Listed notes tended to repeat the same point, for example that of the mud/flash floods/mini-torrents several times and were therefore deemed to be repetitive. Candidates who used notes as all or part of their answer also often used phrases copied from the passages rather than their own words, and again this affected the mark awarded for quality of writing. It is important that candidates understand the nature of the task, including the requirements for concision and own words. Answers longer than two sides were not unusual, along with note form, narrative, and the style of the original texts.

Candidates need to be aware that it is not expected for responses to exceed the stipulated length of one page of average handwriting (8/9 words per line). Responses which were 'excessively long' (i.e. more than a page and a half of average handwriting) scored 0 marks for writing. Some candidates with very small handwriting clearly wrote at too great a length, even though their answers fitted onto a page; small handwriting and word-processing can fit more than 15 words onto a line, and this must obviously be taken into account. Even where responses were over the length requirement, they rarely gained all 15 reading points, and lost the 5 writing marks. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the amount of material included in a summary, as well as to the language in which it is expressed. Higher marks for writing are awarded where responses consist of varied and fluent sentence structures and give just enough information about the points to convey each one clearly. Long explanations or repetition and importantly, copying from the passages, should be avoided. From Passage B the second paragraph was often copied word for word, as was paragraph four from Passage A. The wording of the response needed to be changed from the text to show understanding.

Weaker responses were muddled and adopted the wrong focus for this question, presenting the first part of the summary as an advertisement to visit the Kalahari and recounting as narrative Julia's experience in the rainforest in the second part. In section (a), which was generally done somewhat better, the focus was often on where one would go and what one would see – for example the rocky escarpments and San bushmen performing various activities – rather than on what visitors would do themselves and on the positive experiences on offer, as required by the question.

Better responses selected and re-ordered the relevant information from the passages, with a clear focus on the actual questions, within the prescribed length, and using own words as far as possible. They avoided writing introductory statements and making comments, and concentrated on giving a factual objective summary, more or less equally balanced. While it was acceptable to give the points in the order in which they appeared in the passage, more able candidates changed the sequence so that related points could be grouped together. For example, in Passage A the insects and the leeches belong together, and in Passage B the hunting expedition goes logically with being taught how to track and how to make weapons.

Awkward syntax was prevalent where a cut and paste approach had been adopted. Weak responses used lifted phrases, such as 'protocols for wildlife encounters', in a way that suggested they did not understand their meaning, and there was repetition of the points used more than once in the passage, such as tracking

and survival skills. Many responses continued for up to two pages, and used quotations or wrote in lists or in a commentary style. A few tried to compare the Kalahari desert to the Ecuadorian rainforest. Long introductory statements, intrusive comments, or unnecessary details were often given, such as the kind of animal spoor to be looked out for. These long explanations tended either to reduce the amount of space available for dealing with other points or to make the summary as a whole longer than the permitted length.

The following specimen answer gives points simply and clearly, paraphrased into the writer's own words. It includes all 23 points, but if handwritten would easily fit onto one page.

Section (a)

A trip to the Kalahari offers stunning panoramic landscapes worthy of photographs and the rare privilege of visiting the artistic decorated rock sites. The traveller learns how to survive in the bush and gets to know and share the lives of the San Bush people, thanks to the guide who is known and trusted by the tribe. There is a huge range of wild animals to be seen, and the thrill of hearing the lions roar. The San teach visitors how to track animals and how to make hunting weapons in preparation for going on a hunt. They also relax by enjoying the music, dancing and crafts of the bush people. Other exciting experiences are sleeping and cooking in the open air in the bush. The San community benefits from the support provided by visitors.

Section (b)

The thick foliage and roots of the rainforest makes it hard for walkers to keep their balance, and it is easy to get lost in such dense and unfamiliar terrain. Limited visibility and excessive noise make the atmosphere uncomfortable, and in addition there is the problem of the heat and humidity which make breathing difficult. At times there are tropical rainstorms which cause thick mud and dangerous flash floods. Large flying insects and leeches in the water attack visitors and inflict wounds. Injury and sickness are not easily treated when the nearest hospital is so far away.

Here are some ways in which summaries could be improved:

- Make points briefly, but in sufficient detail to make it clear what they mean.
- Do not copy whole phrases from the passages.
- Write no more than one side of average handwriting.
- Write in an informative style and never comment on or add to the content of the passage.
- Be careful to include only the information that answers the question.
- Make each point only once.
- Do not generalise the content of the passage.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/03

Directed Writing and Composition

Key messages

This paper was mainly assessed for writing, although there were ten marks available for reading in **Question 1**.

In order to achieve high marks, responses needed to show:

- use of an appropriate form and style, adapted for the intended audience and genre
- ideas structured logically and organised in effective paragraphs
- use of thoughtful and well-structured arguments, with detailed and evocative descriptions and engaging, credible narratives
- sentences constructed accurately and sentence types varied to create effects
- appropriate and wide-ranging vocabulary selected with precision.

General comments

Candidates generally tackled the paper purposefully and produced interesting, well-considered responses. Responses showed an awareness of how marks were awarded and the requirements of the mark scheme. Some weaker scripts would have been improved by better time-management and a sounder grasp of the layout of the paper as more than one composition question was attempted more frequently than in previous years. Weaker responses to **Question 1** needed to use candidates' own words rather than the words and phrases of the passage.

Most responses showed real engagement with the topic in **Question 1** and made sensible use of the reading passage in their letters. Better responses assimilated the material and provided evaluative, persuasive letters. Weaker responses tended to reproduce the details in the passage in a more straightforward manner. These aspects are discussed in more detail later in this report.

Most responses showed a clear attempt to involve the reader in developed arguments, descriptions and narratives, with paragraphs used to guide the reader and shape the response. Some weaker responses needed to show more development of ideas and clearer paragraphing. More successful responses discussed ideas rather than stating or asserting them, especially in the discursive/argumentative writing.

The conventions and focus of each genre were well understood by many, especially those who planned their writing carefully. Most letters in **Question 1** were set out appropriately and the style was suitably persuasive. In **Question 2b**, ideas were structured appropriately by using the phrasing of the question and there was some thoughtful debate in **Question 2a**. Some weaker descriptive responses could be improved by a more consistently descriptive focus rather than a narrative one. In both narrative questions responses needed to shape stories with a clear ending in mind.

The best responses were characterised by the control of style and effect. Sentence types were varied and were consciously selected to shape the reader's expectations and response. Vocabulary was complex and ambitious in range but always selected carefully. Some weaker responses needed more care in the accurate construction and punctuation of sentences. Spelling errors had less of an effect on candidates' overall achievement but more care with basic punctuation was needed in the middle range of marks. Errors in the use of capital letters for names or for first person pronouns were common in some otherwise quite competent scripts, as were lapses in style where colloquial usages sometimes crept in, such as 'gonna'. Descriptions which began in the present tense lapsed into the past and often fluctuated between the two; narratives slipped into the present tense, often where candidates wrote in the same style as they might

recount a story orally. Responses should demonstrate appropriate use of written style throughout in order to be successful.

Section 1: Directed Writing

Question 1:

Read the magazine article opposite about a street child called Emmanuel who has achieved educational success.

You are Sister Jean. Write a letter to persuade local businesses to donate money to expand the work of the Archway Children's Centre.

In your letter you should:

- **explain the work of the Centre and why it is necessary**
- **use Emmanuel's story to support your appeal**
- **give reasons why local businesses should support the Centre'**

(25 marks)

25 marks were available for this question, of which 15 were for the quality of the writing and 10 for the understanding and use of the content in the passage.

Most responses showed a good understanding that a persuasive appeal, based on the details in the passage, was required here. They were written in a style which promoted the Archway Children's Centre in an emotive way, often using Emmanuel's story effectively. It was important to remember that Sister Jean, the founder of the Centre, was the writer of the letter. There was some misreading here with references to Emmanuel as 'my brother'. The term 'fostered' was also sometimes misread as if Sister Jean had adopted Emmanuel. A clearer understanding of the instructions for the task would also have produced stronger responses, as some referred directly to the magazine article, making for a clumsy style in which Sister Jean appeared to have read about, rather than founded, the Centre.

The marks for reading

Good responses followed the bullet points but showed awareness of the evaluative stance required for marks above Band 3. For example, the work of the Centre was sometimes characterised as 'giving children their childhood back', 'giving street children everything your own children have' or, in a clever reflection of the passage's imagery, 'holding the torch which lights their path to a happy adulthood.' These responses assimilated, rather than listed, the details of what the Centre provided and often prioritised education as the key component of their support for children. This thoughtful use of the passage was often accompanied by some probing ideas about Emmanuel's story. The Centre's help was seen as instrumental in his moral education as well as his academic progress by some able candidates, who used his eagerness to help other street children as an example of his unselfish character. Good responses also focused on his determination to succeed and how tenacious Sister Jean was in her support of him. These strongly evaluative responses were given marks in Band 1 for reading.

Many responses awarded marks in Band 2 were adequate, if fairly straightforward, in their handling of the Centre's provision and Emmanuel's story, though they were lifted by an appeal which showed a keen awareness of the interests of local business. Ideas which could be inferred from the passage included the waste of potential employee talent if street children were not helped and the danger that desperate street children would turn to crime which would adversely affect local businesses. Others suggested that educated and successful consumers would help local businesses to thrive or that the business' profile in the community would be enhanced by philanthropic donations. These points were rewarded for reading because they were more rooted in a thoughtful reading of the passage than a generally emotive appeal to business people to donate to the Centre. Responses which tended towards exhortation based on evoking sympathy for street children in a general sense were often rewarded in the writing mark. Their reading mark might have improved if their comments had been anchored in the passage more fully.

Marks of 5 and 6 were given for responses which reproduced a range of detail from the passage. 7 marks could be given where there was a little development of the ideas from it or sensible inferences were drawn. It is worth noting that where there was a tendency to copy selected phrases which summarised the Centre's work, especially the details given in the fourth paragraph of the passage, a mark of 5 was more common. Emmanuel's story was also presented in a straightforward, chronological way at this level, although many remembered to show how this 'success story' could be multiplied with more donations or made reference to

the Centre's transformative influence on his life. 6 marks were given where such comments showed an explicit understanding of the passage and the task.

Weaker responses, awarded marks below 5 for reading needed to use their own expression in their writing, rather than the language of the passage. The fourth paragraph of the passage was sometimes copied in its entirety, leaving little which addressed the first bullet point in the candidate's own language. Emmanuel's story was sometimes not referred to at all or was represented by selected phrases and sentences taken from the passage almost verbatim. The scale and frequency of simple copying from the passage was more marked this year than in previous years. Familiarity with the layout and expectations of the paper might have improved responses to this question in particular.

The marks for writing

15 marks were available for style and audience, the structure of the answer and technical accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Style and audience

The majority of responses were appropriately set out in letter form and made use of the persuasive style often used in charity appeals. Direct, empathetic appeals were common, and often effective, at all levels, many imploring the recipient to imagine his/her own children on the streets alone, or developing Emmanuel's story to include more emotive details such as 'ragged clothes' or 'a pitiful look in his eyes'. Most included an introductory paragraph which introduced Sister Jean and her Centre in a straightforward way. Some began with an effective, hard-hitting 'hook' which was more arresting and engaging. One response given a mark in Band 2 opened with 'On your way to your plush office tomorrow morning, please try to meet the gaze of the little street children lying in our prosperous city's draughty doorways.' Weaker responses used some persuasive devices a little more mechanically, such as 'Would you like to be cold and living on the streets?' or the tone of the letter became rather hectoring: 'Why would you not want to save little children's lives...?' Many responses showed a clear sense of audience. The style adopted in weaker responses, usually given marks in Band 3, was less sophisticated and therefore less capable of persuading the audience.

Structure

The structure suggested by the sequence of bullet points was used in many responses to help sequence and paragraph the writing. Better responses tended to use the persuasive purpose of the letter to provide some overall cohesion, presenting Emmanuel's story as evidence of the Centre's useful work, for example, then inviting the recipient to 'make a difference' in other street children's lives in the closing section. Letters given marks in Band 2 were sequenced effectively and paragraphed. The different sections of the letter needed to be better linked in Band 3 responses.

Accuracy

Accomplished writing which was accurate and controlled was given a writing mark in Band 1. These responses were not only authoritative and persuasive in style but fluent and virtually free of error. Some otherwise quite effective letters were affected by persistent 'comma-splicing' or, in the middle range of marks in Band 3, were written in a factual, plain style which was close to the sequence and wording of the passage and had not been adapted to reflect the purpose and audience of the task. Responses where much was copied from the reading passage were difficult to reward for writing, since so much of the style and accuracy could not be attributed to the candidate. In quite a few reasonably expressed responses, the writing mark was reduced because of the frequency of quite basic spelling and punctuation errors. First person pronouns and proper nouns were not capitalised (including Sister Jean, Emmanuel and Archway Children's Centre) and apostrophes of omission were missed throughout some responses. Useful words such as 'achievement', 'sincerely' and 'successful' were often spelled incorrectly. Candidates should proofread their work carefully as doing this may correct basic errors; they were sometimes frequent and serious enough to reduce the writing mark as far as Band 4.

Ways in which this type of answer could be improved

- Use the details in the passage but never copy whole phrases and sentences. Use your own words.
- Try to develop ideas from the passage, using ideas that are suggested in it as well as the surface details.
- Be aware of the genre you are using for your answer. Think carefully about the right style for an article or a letter, for example.
- Check your writing for basic spelling and punctuation errors; these will be likely to reduce your mark.

Section 2: Composition

Candidates are reminded that half of the marks are given for the content of the writing and the way in which it is structured. The criteria vary according to which of the three genres is chosen. The other half of the marks are given for style and accuracy.

Question 2: Argumentative/discursive writing

(a) **'Having lots of rules is better than having lots of freedom.'** (25)

OR

(b) **Do you think the existence of zoos can be justified nowadays, when it is possible to visit animals in their habitat or to see them on television?** (25)

Better responses here made use of a wide range of different ideas, often exploring both sides of the argument in a cohesive, well-argued way. Each idea was developed and paragraphed more or less equally and the conclusion arrived at was convincing and grew out of the discussion which preceded it.

Average responses contained some good ideas which were relevant and gave opinions about the topic which were valid. The discussion was not as developed and some points were rather 'tacked on' in a less organised way. It is important to have enough material to support an argument. Weaker responses did not have enough substance in their ideas or tended to repeat one or two basic points rather than develop a range.

The first question was generally less well done than the second. In the most effective responses, the idea of 'freedom' was discussed thoughtfully. One candidate wrote that, in his view, 'freedom was not worth very much unless it was tempered by responsibility and a respect for others' 'freedoms' and many good responses argued that rules needed to have general consent to be respected. Illustrations of rules in another sophisticated response extrapolated from apparently 'petty' school rules about not running in corridors to the 'rules of the highway' and showed how these small rules preserved the greater freedoms of society's individuals.

Average responses offered some sensible comment and relevant discussion. A more narrow view of rules and freedoms was evident at this level, such as those in the lives of teenagers, their schools and their parents.

Weaker responses equated 'rules' with 'laws', and sometimes gave widely disparate examples (murder and hairstyles in school, in one response) which did not give rise to a coherent argument. Other weak responses remained almost entirely general and assertive. Not having rules, for example, was quite frequently deemed to result in 'chaos and destruction' but no explanation was given. Weaker responses could have been improved by developing an argument rather than making simple assertions: 'Who wants rules? I do not! Why would anybody want a load of rules telling them what to do? Well, I do not and I do not know why anybody would.'

The second choice, about whether zoos can be justified, was often very well done. Good responses offered a range of informed and interesting ideas about the function of modern zoos, such as conserving rare species and scientific research. Convincing arguments were made both in favour of and in opposition to zoos. Many candidates made sensible use of the question and compared the experience of visiting a zoo with going on safari or watching animals on TV. The immediacy and excitement of real animals was balanced with the risk of disturbing them in their habitats and the prohibitive cost of travel abroad was also considered by many candidates who were obviously engaged by the task.

Responses given Content and Structure marks in Bands 2 and 3 usually offered less complex ideas or their treatment of different ideas was patchy and uneven. Weaker responses were characterised by a similar approach to that mentioned above in the other question, in that there was actually little argument and the opinions voiced were not justified and instead relied on assertion: 'How would you feel locked in a cage freezing cold all day when your meant to be roaming your own country? It's not fair', for example. Brevity also affected achievement here, especially where more than one composition question was attempted.

For Style and Accuracy, the highest marks were given for clear, accurate writing and a strong 'voice' which helped to convince the reader. The same weaknesses seen in **Question 1** affected marks in the middle and lower mark range, such as 'comma-splicing' and errors in punctuation and the spelling of common words.

Ways in which the writing of arguments and discussions can be improved

- Make sure you have a variety of ideas at your disposal.
- Justify your opinions with apt examples – avoid simple assertions.
- Develop each idea in a paragraph, sequencing sentences within paragraphs.
- Use clear and precise English.

Question 3: Descriptive writing

- (a) Describe the best meal you have ever had with a group of friends, including details of the place and the atmosphere. (25)

OR

- (b) You arrive at an airport or railway station to discover that there is a long delay. Describe what you see and hear, and your thoughts and feelings while you are waiting. (25)

The first question elicited a great variety of responses; from superbly evocative descriptions which had Examiners' mouths watering at the culinary delicacies on offer, to weak, narrative pieces with little real descriptive focus. A number of well-prepared candidates used the restricted time frame implied in the task to focus their attention on describing the setting, the food and the company in an integrated way. These high scoring responses were full of rich sensory details which helped to build a clear overall picture, often of a family meal in a restaurant or at a relatives' house. One lovely description described the moment his grandmother's Christmas pudding was brought to the table as 'a pause in the Christmas chaos as remembered Christmas puddings were savoured in the anticipation of the next', and there were many that brought to life the warmth and comfort of family gatherings of one sort or another.

Average responses tended to give a lengthier preamble about the setting, often in a factual way, and the description of the food was a little more predictable: 'mouth-watering', 'tasty' and 'delicious' were sometimes repeated, for example. Different courses were listed in some and the question was handled a little mechanically with references to the atmosphere as 'wonderful' with limited description of the features which made it so.

Weaker responses needed to be more specific in their descriptions and to choose more fitting settings. These were often vague, such as a 'posh restaurant' with 'lots of mates'. Some responses were narratively framed, from the decision to go out for a meal, the journey there and what happened in the restaurant (who ordered what, commonly) followed by the journey home. These were usually given marks in Band 4 for Content and Structure.

The second option also produced responses across the range of marks. The best were again focused clearly on evoking the narrator's disappointment, or sometimes panic, at the prospect of a long delay, but also scanned the airport or station for interesting individuals or groups to describe. Boredom is quite a difficult emotion to evoke but one masterful response tracked the narrator's rising irritation at the prickly texture of the airport seat and the constant sighing of the passenger next to her as she endured the long hours of waiting. Some descriptions of frustrated passengers berating airport staff were also often well-observed and, in some polished responses, the internal monologue of the narrator was intriguing and sustained the interest of the reader very well.

As in the first option, there was the same over-reliance on a narrative approach, evident in some average responses in this question. Details about the holiday destination, the journey to the airport, often with a list of fellow travellers and some of the activities engaged in during the delay, predominated in these kinds of approaches. There needed to be a greater sense of atmosphere or description of detail here. Responses given marks for Content and Accuracy lower than Band 4 were usually brief and undeveloped, factual accounts. There needed to be more descriptive development here for a higher mark.

Marks for Style and Accuracy were often lower than those for Content and Structure. Better responses chose precise and varied vocabulary and controlled complex sentences with secure punctuation within and between sentences. In weaker responses, tenses were used insecurely, and incomplete or poorly separated

sentences adversely affected candidates' marks. These are both a common area to be aware of in descriptive writing. Even in responses with quite engaging content, tenses sometimes switched back and forth from present to past tense, sometimes within the same sentence, and marred the fluency of the style. Strings of incomplete sentences with no finite verb were also fairly common in the middle range: 'Little children running around like headless chickens. Dads dozing under open newspapers and mums stressing about keeping the kids occupied', for example.

Ways in which the writing of descriptions can be improved

- Avoid too much narrative preamble and remember to provide descriptive detail.
- Try to make your description as real as possible. You should be able to see and hear what you write.
- It is good practice to write in the present tense, but do not change tense once you have started your writing.
- Write sentences with proper verbs. There are no special sentence structures for a description.

Question 4: Narrative writing

(a) **You see someone in a crowd whom you recognise but you cannot think why. On noticing you, the person moves away, and you instinctively follow. Write the story.** (25)

OR

(b) **Write a story which begins with someone hearing an eerie and unidentifiable noise.** (25)

The first question was addressed very well in many responses. These sustained the reader's interest by careful shaping of the narratives. Much depended on who the person followed turned out to be and how credible this plot line was. Better responses used familiar settings effectively to help them build the opening; football matches and similar crowded places worked well. The sense of compulsion to follow the person was also described intriguingly in good responses, often followed by quite cinematic accounts of keeping their target in view as they plunged through crowds, catching only fleeting glimpses amongst the many other people. The revelation of the identity of the pursued person was often skilfully handled: some were long-lost siblings or childhood friends and, in one engaging story, the narrator was looking at someone who seemed to be identical to him, with the hinted implication that one or the other was a clone.

There were some stories in which the identity of the familiar person was not revealed or where the climax was ineffective or not credible. These narratives often needed better planning, as did weaker ones in which there were too many events that were unconnected or far-fetched.

The second option was generally less well done, although there were some very good exceptions. A few candidates handled a deliberately comical ending very well, in which a 'frightening' noise was revealed to be a kitten locked in the cupboard or a sibling prankster. Some ambitious scenarios were created, such as a crew of Spitfire pilots who heard the chilling sound of a German fighter plane behind them or the click of a gun being cocked in a detective story.

Again, there was a need for candidates to plan the climax of their story and how the narrative would be shaped in order to sustain the interest of the reader to that point. It is important to remember that well-conceived characters are needed as well as events. Weaker responses were less engaging and the climax was often disappointing. Dialogue sometimes predominated over narration, making the story quite difficult to follow. The origin of some noises, like the identity of the person in the narrative above, was sometimes not revealed or, more often, the noise simply disappeared, resulting usually in an unsatisfying story.

High marks for Style and Accuracy were given for responses where the writing was lively and varied in vocabulary and where different sentence structures were controlled and used to create particular effects. There was a tendency in some weaker responses for narratives to slip into present tense, in the style that stories are sometimes recounted colloquially: 'Suddenly he looks at me and I realise he's not joking.' Errors in sentence control and separation, if persistent, limited even competently told stories to Band 4. This was also the case when frequent errors in basic punctuation were made, such as mistakes in the use of capital letters or in the spelling of many simple words such as 'are' for 'our'.

Ways in which the writing of narratives can be improved

- Remember that stories need more than events to interest the reader.
- Plan the ending before you begin so that you can shape your story appropriately.
- Characters' thoughts and feelings help to engage your reader.
- Originality is important. Try to think of unusual approaches to your topic, but keep the details credible.
- Check your writing for errors, especially missing full stops.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/04
Coursework Portfolio

Key messages

In order to aim for high marks in this component, candidates should:

- reflect in their writing their personal ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world about them;
- demonstrate variety of style, use of language and genre in the three assignments;
- choose assignments that challenge them to write to the highest standard of which they are capable;
- write in fluent and varied sentences separated by full stops;
- proof read their work carefully, as marks may be affected for typing errors.

General comments

The entries for this component represented a considerable increase from last year's November session, with many new UK Centres successfully taking the coursework option for the first time. In a good folder, all three assignments showed the same qualities of writing. This consistency should have been taken into consideration when the final mark was awarded.

The choices of the assignments were generally appropriate. The work for Assignment 1 was varied and often lively. There were fewer examples of research essays, owing more to finding content from the Internet than to expressing arguments and ideas based on personal thoughts and convictions. The first of the key messages makes this clear; one should use coursework to express one's individuality rather than to copying what has been read or heard elsewhere.

The work for Assignment 2 was also satisfactory, particularly where it had some basis in personal experience. There were a number of examples of unreal fiction, often unnecessarily violent, or accounts of tampering with the spirit world in haunted houses. Good writers were sometimes convincing in this.

The choice of articles for Assignment 3 proved to be challenging for candidates to respond to effectively, especially where there were not many arguments in the passage or where they were not sustained at any length. This could be seen when passages from the Internet were used, with short paragraphs and little development of argument or clear structure in the text. These may have made it difficult to provide satisfactory responses to the task.

A word of caution: it was obvious that in some Centres, teachers had over-prepared the work. The content of the responses should be individual and not suggested by the teacher. In some cases it was difficult to differentiate between one response and another because the content and the structure were too similar. It is not recommended to set the same topics for the first two assignments. In Assignment 1 there was sometimes evidence of similarity of content. For Assignment 2, where the response is narrative, the suggestion is to study a short story and then encourage a response in the same genre, leaving the title open. Because of the difficulties of choosing passages for Assignment 3, it is acceptable to use one or two articles across the whole entry. All responses were more lively when the writers had some involvement in their choice.

The assessment of the folders was generally good. The most common reason for reducing the marks given by Centres was the amount of punctuation and grammar mistakes seen. This was especially true where there were sentence separation errors. The marking of reading was also sometimes a mark or two generous, although most Centres awarded a realistic range of marks, typically from 9 or 10 to 4 or 5, with most of the marks lying between 5 and 7. Where the mark was lowered, it was generally because of the quality of the language or the nature of the work over the three assignments was not sufficiently consistent.

On the whole, there was frequent liveliness of work and it was clear that Centres had prepared with great care.

Administration by Centres

There was a certain amount of administration that was needed from Centres in order for Moderation to take place. Centres should check the details of the format of the portfolio in Appendix A of the syllabus in order to ensure that coursework is submitted in the correct manner.

The most important form for centres to complete is the Candidate Assessment Summary Form (CASF). This tells the Moderator the marks given for reading and writing and whether these marks have been changed during internal moderation. The Moderator can tell if one particular set has been subject to change more than the others, and this can then be checked.

In addition there is the form that is attached to each folder, and this tells the Moderator what is in the folder and gives the teacher's general comment on the quality of the work.

Finally there is the mark sheet (MS1) or electronic mark sheet that is sent to Cambridge with a copy to the Moderator.

It is **essential** that the final internally moderated mark on the CASF is the same as that which appears on the MS1 and on the folder. Moderators carried out a check and on occasions discovered that the marks did not tally. As a result, a Coursework Amendment Form had to be sent to the Centre. The work of the Moderator was made more difficult when either the CASF form or the MS1 were missing from the sample.

Most Centres were careful to fix the work of each candidate securely with a staple or a paper clip. It was not necessary to send each folder in any kind of wallet, which nearly always caused the Moderator extra work for various reasons.

It was also important to include in the sample at least one copy of all the articles used for Assignment 3.

Assessment by Centres

There were very few cases where the assessment of either writing or reading was generous or severe by more than two marks. Some Centres found it more difficult to mark accurately at the lower end of the range and there was some generosity at the top of the range, nearly always because of the amount of error.

Assessment of writing

The Band descriptions for writing were found in the Appendix to the syllabus.

Because of the special circumstances under which coursework takes place, with time allowed for drafting and redrafting and the advantage of spell checks, it was expected that accuracy would be faultless at the top of the range. Accordingly, Moderators kept a record of punctuation and grammatical errors as they read the work. The chief weakness was with sentence separation. This often affected the quality of the sentence construction, since commas rather than connectives were used to join sentences. A common omission in word processed work was that of the comma to denote a division within a complex sentence. A third error was that of the apostrophe, often omitted or wrongly used. Finally, semi colons were sometimes used in the middle of sentences where there should have been a comma; there was overuse of the semi colon in some responses, and there was confusion between colons and semi colons. Since Band 1 for writing has five marks it was reasonable to expect marks of 39 and 40 to be awarded to folders that had no mistakes and 38 to those with very minor or very infrequent mistakes.

There were some responses that had examples of the incorrect use of the spell check, which resulted in words that made no sense in their context. Candidates are advised to proof read their work, including typed scripts.

Apart from a lack of error, there were two features characteristic of the very best work. One was an assured use of a wide range of vocabulary, where the choice of the word always conveyed precise meaning and, where necessary, engaged and entertained the reader. The range was immediately apparent and would be different in say, informative, expressive and argumentative writing. The other feature was the use of fluent,

well-constructed sentences that used connectives to show the relationship of one idea or argument to another.

Less successful responses used relatively simple vocabulary and would have benefitted from using a more varied sentence structure, designed to have an effect on the reader. The least successful responses should have used a wider range of more complex vocabulary with more developed and varied sentence structures.

Some marks for writing were too low because the strength of the vocabulary and the fluency of the language were underestimated.

Assessment of reading

The Band descriptions for reading were found in the syllabus in the Appendix. The award of 9 and 10 marks was for 'analysing and evaluating several ideas and details from the article and developing lines of thought'. 'Analyse' suggested a detailed interpretation of what the writer says, and 'evaluate' suggested the identification of inconsistencies and bias. In Band 3, most of the response was taken up with summary conveying simple views. There was a considerable scale of difficulty between Band 3 and Band 1 that suggested that many marks should have been between 6 and 7. Responses at Band 1 often gave an overview of the article as a whole and assimilated their individual comments into a well-structured answer. There was sometimes a tendency to give 9 or 10 marks to responses that did not do this.

It was important that comments were relevant to the points raised in the article. Responses that took a series of points from the article and provided brief comments on each were rarely worth more than 6 because of the quality of the comments. These responses needed a more fluent structure in order to gain more marks,

Annotation

It was important that each piece of work bore the evidence of the teacher's pen. A comment at the end of the piece, drawing attention to features of the relevant Band description was extremely useful to the Moderator in allowing them to understand why a mark had been awarded.

Errors should have been carefully noted, and there were many cases where they had been missed. This was especially true of sentence separation and other punctuation errors.

Drafts

There were many examples of good practice, where comments at the end of a draft made positive suggestions for editing, revising and correcting. As a result, some of the drafts were improved from the final version. The most frequently made comments were those that suggested ways of developing a short draft. Such suggestions were entirely appropriate and showed how drafting and redrafting should work. It was also useful to put a comment at the end such as, 'There are several punctuation errors here. Please read through the work and make the corrections'.

Centres should not correct a draft, ringing errors where they were made or writing in the correction, for example. For the concept of coursework to remain intact, it is essential that everyone works together to ensure that the whole process is a reflection of the achievement of candidates as individuals.

Assignment 1

The selection of tasks for this assignment provided some lively writing. Advice has been given to avoid abstract essays, stock titles (such as Euthanasia and Abortion) and research essays that involve paraphrasing content from the Internet. Much of the best writing was where there was an audience involved or where the topic was of close interest to the writer, so that some personal enthusiasm and originality was apparent. Some of the topics were transformed into speeches, providing interest in the language used and rhetoric, whilst maintaining sensible content.

Some of the responses were in the form of guidebooks, film reviews and restaurant reviews, and the best were always those that adapted the conventions of the genre, producing more personal writing. In fact the conventions of the genre often restricted the effectiveness of the response, if followed too closely. The least effective of the genres was writing in the form of a leaflet, where there was often too much attention paid to the layout and the pictures and less focus on quantity of writing.

The personal nature of the more successful responses was often apparent in the title; the following titles were all well argued:

Against racism
Is self-defence justifiable?
Why I love Facebook
Is being overweight a crime?
The harm of computer games
Celebrity cultures
What makes a good teacher?

There was plenty of writing about football teams and particular interests such as horse riding and being an air cadet. Speeches included one to a group of US tourists and there were several examples of 'Do not get me started'. These were successful, provided that they maintained their focus and used a reasoned tone. A letter to the Mayor of Prague offered some interesting possibilities. As usual, 'A day in the life of' was an appropriate choice for those who were expected to provide simpler and more straightforward responses.

Assignment 2

Most of these tasks were set as narratives or descriptions. The more successful of these were those based on situations to which the candidates could relate. *Letters from the trenches* sometimes sounded very similar and were too far from the experience of a sixteen-year-old to be convincing.

Keeping narratives realistic was another characteristic of more successful responses. There were several titles like *My nightmare world*, *Noises in the night*, *Touching the void*, *The empty house*, and *A local ghost story*. Some of these stories were intended to be entertaining in their frightening psychology or their out-of-this-world content, and some of them were well done. The more unreal the events, the harder it was to make them sound convincing.

There were some newer task responses, such as those to *Last day on earth* (about an astronaut) and *A point to prove* (a story about performing a solo in a great cathedral).

On the whole, the descriptions worked better because they were recreations of real things and personal experiences. In descriptive writing, advanced vocabulary should only be used when appropriate, to avoid meaning becoming overloaded or blurred.

Some of the titles for descriptions included:

5th Avenue at dawn
A waterfall
A horse race
The old chip shop
A moment at the test match
The lunch hall

There were some good responses to the generic title, *An autobiographical fragment*. A greater amount of personal writing in responses to this assignment would be a positive development.

Assignment 3

Centres worked hard to find an appropriate article and new Centres wisely decided to use just one or perhaps two articles for all their responses.

It has already been said that the Internet was not the best place to look for an article. Many, particularly from online newspapers, were strangely edited and lacked structure or developed arguments. More successful responses selected arguments and analysed them in detail.

It was best to find a maximum of two articles on the same topic, each with a length of no more than two sides. Longer articles made it difficult to use the detail of what was said in the argument.

The best articles were controversial because they were extreme in their views. Where the article was controversial it was important that the response maintained a balanced tone. This was necessary in order to expose the extremity of what was said and responses should have shown evidence of this. Other articles

were intended to be entertaining, and their views should have been taken less seriously sometimes. For the award of Band 1 marks for reading it was expected that these aspects of the articles should have been identified.

Some articles did not have a sufficient range of arguments and ideas to provide content for an extended response. Articles needed to have at least six points that may have formed the basis of an argument in order for them to be successful.

Some successful articles were:

A USA today article about giving candidates free laptops
Lengthening the school day
The London riots (by Max Hastings)
Swearing
An article on the proposed St Helena airport
The future of public libraries

Much of this writing was good and sometimes the best in the folder. It seemed that with the guidance of the original article, it was easier to write in an effective and involved way as an individual.

Most of the answers were in the form of a letter, but there was no reason why the writing of another article in response was not appropriate, provided that there was a sense of audience, offered perhaps by the title of the magazine or the school publication. A speech was also appropriate, as long as it had not been used for Assignment 1.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/05
Speaking and Listening

Key messages

The main message to Centres is to ensure that candidates do not rely too heavily on their scripts or prompt material. Reading entirely from a script is not permitted and it is contrary to the ethos of this Test. Centres should discourage this at the planning stage and insist on candidates using a variety of prompt material instead. The syllabus suggests a postcard size prompt card, but other aids could be used, for example, brief PowerPoint slides, flip charts or smart phone applications. Candidates will not be able to score high marks if they simply read from a script; awareness of audience and an attempt to engage the audience is a key skill being tested in **Part 1**.

The aim is to deliver a natural, fluent, original piece of around 4 minutes which an audience would find engaging, and which the candidate conveys a personal interest or connection with, and an enthusiasm for.

Other messages:

- Some candidates would benefit from **preparing** more thoroughly for the examination. Success in **Part 1** is clearly linked to researching the chosen topic, planning for a confident and assured delivery, practising the delivery, but also preparing for a strong contribution in **Part 2**.
- Generally, candidates should try to make their **Part 1** presentations more lively, by perhaps incorporating more creative presentational styles, but certainly by relying less on reciting factual information. There is scope for further creativity in **Part 1** – e.g. taking up a ‘voice’ or presenting a dramatic monologue. This session saw several Centres presenting empathic work using *of Mice and Men* and this led to some interesting work.
- In **Part 2**, Moderators would like to hear stronger evidence that candidates are aware **of their role** in the discussion. The candidate’s role should not be that of a passive interviewee, but should be one which is more proactive and seeks to engage with the listener in a collaborative manner.
- It is permissible for teachers to work with their candidates (once the candidate has decided upon a topic) in advance of the test to help enhance the content and to advise upon the approach taken for the delivery.
- **Differentiation by task setting** is encouraged for this component. A more capable candidate is likely to attempt a more ambitious presentation and to engage with more sophisticated content - and such a candidate should be encouraged to do this.
- Please restrict **Part 1** to **about 4 minutes**, and **Part 2** to between **6 and 7 minutes** – as specified in the syllabus. It is difficult to justify the awarding of high marks to **Part 1s** which are short (under 3 minutes) and it is counter-productive to allow **Part 2** to run over 7 minutes.
- Please would all Centres **use digital recording equipment** to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or a USB drive. Please use recognised audio file formats that can be played by common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav, wma). There is no need to use the blue ‘cassette inserts’ – a list of the candidates in the sample, their numbers, and the mark given to each, either on the CD cover (but not on the CD itself please) or on a separate sheet is fine. Please re-name the individual tracks on the CD to the candidate number and name (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.). Please, **avoid** using analogue recording and tapes/cassettes where possible.

Messages relating to assessment:

- In **Part 1**, Moderators advise Examiners to be sure that a candidate has met the criteria for Band 1 fully before awarding 9 or 10 marks. If an individual presentation is of the standard factually-based, reportage style, even if well done, then a Band 2 mark is likely to be the highest available.

- Candidates who present short **Part 1s** or those which rely heavily on a script are not likely to achieve higher than Band 4, where “delivery is not secure, resulting in some loss of audience interest” is the most likely and appropriate descriptor.
- Very short **Part 1s** are likely to satisfy only the Band 5 criteria as content is mostly undeveloped...and the audience have difficulty following the content.
- Examiners are reminded not to award marks for content per se – it is the development of the content which is being assessed; in both **Parts 1** and **2** of the Test. For example, “My life as a 16 year old” could achieve a Band 1, or indeed, a Band 5, depending on how the content has been planned, is introduced, is organised, and then presented and developed.

General comments

This component saw a large rise in entries from UK Centres.

Many candidates who successfully complete this component clearly prepare very well in advance, conduct appropriate research, and are very adept at making presentations.

Centres are reminded that for **Part 1**, the candidates can and perhaps should be involved in the choice of topics. While Moderators understand that at large Centres, it is easier to manage the tests if common themes are followed, the same theme for all candidates is not recommended. It may well be that in larger Centres it makes sense for each classroom teacher to propose a range of themes so that candidates can work in groups and practise presenting their topics to each other. Peer assessment and formative feedback is encouraged.

As a reminder to Centres, Cambridge requires three different items in the package sent to the Moderator: (1) the recorded sample on as few CDs as possible and using separate tracks for each candidate, (2) the Summary Forms for the entire entry, and (3) a copy of the Mark Sheet that has already been sent to Cambridge. In addition, any letters relating to the work being moderated can also be placed in the package for the external Moderator.

- (1) Please note that without the recordings, Cambridge is unable to moderate the work from a Centre.
- (2) The Summary Form is the form that records the separate marks awarded to the two Parts of the test, in addition to the total mark. The Examiner who conducts the examination is responsible for filling out the Summary Form. He or she should sign the form and date it. This is the form which is the working record of the examining undertaken, and is therefore of most use to the external Moderator. Please identify the candidates in the sample by using asterisks on the Summary Form. It would also be very useful if the candidate numbers can be recorded on the Summary Form as they appear on the Mark Sheet.
- (3) The Moderator needs a copy of the Mark Sheet in order to verify the accuracy of the transcription of the marks from the Summary Forms.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1 - The Individual Task

The dominant task in **Part 1** remains the informative presentation. Candidates select a topic and provide historical and/or contemporary information about it. A small number of these presentations remain purely factual, but many engage with an issue or controversy relating to the topic. Where the chosen topic relates directly to the candidate’s personal situation or their country or location, there is sometimes scope for more engaging content.

Personal experiences and interests are a common focus – for example, recent trips abroad, reading, sport, music. These kinds of presentations vary in their degree of success, with less successful tasks simply describing likes, dislikes and experiences without further research, depth or insight.

Candidates sometimes attempt to use techniques such as addressing the listener and rhetorical devices, but these approaches should be handled consistently and maintained to achieve higher band marks.

Centres and candidates are of course able to focus on topics which lend themselves to standard presentations. However, Moderators encourage topics with a narrower focus; along with a greater range of presentational styles.

Some examples of productive Part 1 tasks from this session:

- Work experience and what I gained from it
- How **do** you live under a dictatorship?
- What art means to me
- In defence of chewing gum...
- Spiders
- Human migration
- What it feels like to be George (in *Of Mice and Men*)
- Hillsborough – justice for the 96
- Artisans
- The advantages and disadvantages of being popular
- What it would be like to be a drifter
- Addicted to my Blackberry

Part 2 – Discussion

In almost all cases, Examiners were very much part of the discussions, entering into the spirit of the occasion. The conversations were generally productive extensions of the Individual Tasks. This is clearly a strength of this examination.

It was clear in many cases that candidates had planned for further discussion. The best way to do this is to imagine being the Examiner and to draw up a list of prompts or areas of interest that might be appropriate given the scope of the topic.

It is not the responsibility of the Examiner to work hard to sustain discussion – the candidate needs to plan for this, and this element of **Part 2** has indeed been built into the assessment criteria for both listening and speaking. It is, however, the responsibility of the Examiner to move the discussion along and to try to ensure that a 6 to 7 minute conversation occurs.

It is recommended that Examiners avoid adopting a very formal approach in **Part 2**. The aim is to be supportive of the candidate; to share an interest in his/her topic, and to share views, ideas and to work with the candidate to develop the conversation. It was noted during this session that some Examiners had prepared a series of questions for **Part 2**, and while this is acceptable, it is important that the spontaneity of discussion is also maintained – it is a conversation which is sought and not an interview.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/06

Speaking and Listening (Coursework)

Key messages

- Please remember to send in the **Candidate Record Cards** – these are the only means by which the Moderator is made aware of all of the tasks and activities which have been undertaken at the Centre. It is very useful if full details relating to each activity are provided (rather than just ‘role play’ or ‘discussion’, for example) – indeed, it is permissible for the candidates to fill out these sections. Please note that Centres need only send in the Record Cards relating to the candidates in the sample (so not for all of the cohort).
- It is requested that Centres submit recordings of **Tasks 1 and 2** – i.e. the Task 2 activity as required by the sample, but in addition the Task 1 activities for the same candidates in the sample.
- It is not necessary to conduct the same activities for every candidate. For example, different pairs can engage in different role-playing activities. Different small groups can take part in group-based debates on different topics to satisfy **Task 3**.
- **Differentiation by task setting** is encouraged for this component. A more capable candidate is likely to attempt a more ambitious presentation in Task 1, for example, and to engage with more sophisticated content – and such a candidate should be encouraged to do this. Candidates would ideally be paired in Task 2 with other candidates of a similar ability level.
- As Component 6 is **Coursework**, it can be completed at a time which is suitable for the Centre and its candidates. This will usually mean that the three tasks are spread out over a reasonable period of time and that ideally they will be integrated into regular teaching schemes. Centres are encouraged to attend to absenteeism by re-arranging activities where possible, rather than awarding zero to absent candidates. This is unlike Component 5, for example, which is based on a timetabled examination. In Component 6, there is a greater amount of flexibility.
- Please would all Centres **use digital recording equipment** to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or a USB drive. Please use recognised audio file formats that can be played by common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav, wma). There is no need to use the blue ‘cassette inserts’ – a list of the candidates in the sample, their numbers, and the mark given to each, either on the CD cover (but not on the CD itself please) or on a separate sheet is fine. It would be even better if the individual tracks on the CD could be re-named to the candidate number and name (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.). Please, **avoid** using analogue recording and tapes/cassettes where possible.

General comments

This session saw a significant rise in entries from UK Centres.

Centres are reminded that three specific tasks are required: an individual presentation, a paired activity and group work. A wide variety of activities is encouraged – from role playing of real life situations to activities drawn from literary texts and group debates based on areas of contemporary interest. Teachers and candidates are encouraged to be as creative as possible in designing the activities undertaken for each task, ensuring of course that speaking **and** listening skills are demonstrated, and are able to be assessed using the given criteria.

As a reminder to Centres, Cambridge requires four different items in the package sent to the Moderator: 1) the recorded sample on CD, DVD or a USB drive, 2) the Summary Forms for the **entire entry**, 3) a copy of the marks that have already been sent to Cambridge, and 4) the Candidate Record Cards. In addition, any letters relating to the work being moderated can also be placed in the package for the attention of the external Moderator.

- (1) Please note that without the recordings, Cambridge is unable to moderate the work from a Centre.
- (2) The Summary Form records the marks given to the three Tasks, in addition to the total mark out of 30 for the Component. The Examiner who collates the activities is responsible for filling out the Summary Form(s). He or she should sign the form and date it. Please identify the candidates in the sample by using asterisks on the Summary Form(s). It would also be very useful if the candidate numbers can be recorded on the Summary Form(s) in the same order as on the Mark Sheet.
- (3) The Moderator needs a copy of the marks already sent to Cambridge in order to verify the accuracy of the transcription of those marks from the Summary Form(s).
- (4) Centres should offer full annotation on the Candidate Record Cards, detailing and explaining each task and activity undertaken by each candidate. This helps to make the process of external moderation swift and efficient, and enables the Moderator to offer feedback on the range of activities undertaken.

Comments on specific tasks

Moderators reported a very wide range of activities undertaken this session.

More successful **Task 1s** tended to allow candidates to express strongly-held views on areas of personal interest.

Some examples of productive Task 1 activities:

- Room 101 - the three things I would discard from daily life
- Business plan – my presentation to Dragon’s Den
- A speech beginning with “Do not get me started on...”
- Why you should join me this weekend (when I pursue my hobby)
- Why you should give your money and your time to my cause
- *Film Review* – a weekly review of films to see and films to avoid.

Stronger **Task 2s** were those in which a theme was present. For **Task 2**, it is preferable that two candidates work together (rather than the Examiner and a candidate) and spend about 5 minutes engaging with each other in either a role play or a discussion based on a topic which has some depth. **Task 2s** where the two candidates just have a general conversation do not work very well and often do not satisfy the assessment criteria fully. The same applies for **Task 2s** which are rather short – i.e. under 3 minutes.

Some examples of productive Task 2 activities:

- A chance meeting – 15 years after leaving school
- Role playing a customer service adviser dealing with someone with a complaint
- A parent and teenager discussing domestic and other issues
- Two friends find out a third friend has done something wrong - what should they do?
- Two friends discuss which period of history they would have preferred to have lived in
- Add a new dialogue that two of the main characters of a novel might have had.

Task 3 is almost always a debate by a small group. This works well when each group member plays a role (e.g. a parole board) but can also be successful when the candidates are being themselves and discussing a topical issue. As in the paired activity, it is advisable to form groups of candidates with similar ability levels, to avoid the situation where a weaker candidate becomes dominated by stronger candidates. It is usually a good idea to appoint a team leader to manage the flow of discussion though. It is also sensible for the Teacher/Examiner to ensure at the planning stage that the group work assessment criteria (Table C in the syllabus) are able to be met.

Some examples of productive Task 3 activities:

- Is anyone, now or from any period of history, purely good or purely evil?
- Balloon debate – which 3 people should be sacrificed (from a given list of well-known people)
- A group discussion on a topical and controversial issue
- We’re stranded on this desert island. How are we going to survive?
- Taking it in turns to ‘Hot Seat’ characters from a novel

- Create a 'deleted' scene from a play and perform it.

There were Centres who integrated literature into some of the activities – in many cases in an active and dramatic manner, with candidates role-playing characters from novels and plays.

It was also apparent that candidates were being involved in choosing their own activities; particularly with **Tasks 1** and **2** where individual and paired work is required. Candidate-centred tasks can be very rewarding but it is advised that Teachers/Examiners monitor these as sometimes they can lack focus, lack control and result in very short presentations or exchanges which appear to have any real purpose.