

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/11
Passages

Key message

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

General Comments

The passages selected for this series offered a varied choice of styles and linguistic approaches, with a wide range of topics and settings. The chosen texts proved to be accessible and were generally well understood by candidates. There was further progress in the learners' adherence to the rubric, with almost all remembering to attempt the compulsory question. There were also fewer directed responses which ignored the stipulated word boundaries, and more candidates using the restrictions to their advantage.

In all three components, there were perceptive and well developed commentaries but there is still a tendency among candidates to offer an extended comprehension of the passage without making specific reference to language examples and effects. Candidates are asked to demonstrate skills of analysis and evaluation; this cannot be achieved by relaying the contents of the passage with only a few generalised comments.

Every text will have a range of stylistic and tonal features which the candidates should use to support their responses. A significant number of candidates limited themselves to considering one or two language features, sometimes demonstrating them with multiple examples; better to have used the time to make additional points. This inevitably led to short or very repetitive responses which did not address the full range of relevant language features. To construct an effective commentary, it is important to make points quickly, and thus time should not be wasted on generalisations or irrelevances. Candidates should not spend time trying to define a target audience, unless it sheds light upon the elements of style under discussion. However, this is rarely the case, and the definition of a text aimed at 'a general audience' or 'an educated audience' is simply not helpful at all. Similarly, an opening sentence or paragraph which simply condenses the events of the passage proves nothing about the candidate's understanding of how stylistic effects are achieved.

Candidates need to ensure that their analytical language is precise and purposeful, since having a good range of critical vocabulary is bound to be of importance in defining the stylistic qualities of a passage. The simple polarities of 'positive' and 'negative' are too often used to define passages that are too complex and nuanced to make these useful descriptions. 'High register' and 'low register' are two other very broad categorisations which should not be used as substitutes for precise definitions of stylistic and tonal qualities.

It is worth repeating the self-evident truth that the wider a candidate's vocabulary, the better they will be able to confidently analyse a text.

Candidates will benefit from remembering to read the passage thoroughly and treat all parts of it as being of equal importance. There was a tendency in a number of responses to examine the opening paragraph in some detail but to ignore important elements in the rest of the text. Thorough reading of the passage, leading to precise, economical analysis, should be the candidate's aim.

Section (b) responses were characterised by some very confident and spirited work. There was a generally good understanding of the task and a willingness to use the word parameters as an asset rather than a restriction.

Candidates should always remember that the directed writing is assessed for technical proficiency as well as an understanding of the tone and style of the original passage. As such, they should adopt a consistent and accurate approach to both capital letters at the beginning of the sentences and the punctuation of speech.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1A

This passage was clearly enjoyed by most candidates and its most obvious features were recognised and commented upon. The growing urgency of the exchanges between the couple and the near hysteria surrounding the arrival of the letter were well understood though not always given textual support. The irony of the son's indifference to the arrival of the results was also picked up well. Perceptive candidates also noticed the tension created by the curt exchanges between the pair but generally not enough was made of the use of dialogue. There were few sufficiently developed examinations of the deadpan style and the balance of dialogue and narrative. Similarly, there was a lack of recognition of the comic aspects of the writing and some reluctance to examine how comedy was achieved. This was particularly the case with the events surrounding the arrival of the acceptance letter. This was the comic climax of the passage but its language features and techniques received relatively little attention.

Question 1B

There were some plausible sequels, and the laconic quality of the exchanges between the couple were well realised. Stronger responses also understood and utilised the difference between the two characters, especially the impatient and driven tone of the wife. The choice of 'another important moment' in the son's life was rather limited, his first girlfriend and marriage being the overwhelmingly popular choices. However, the majority of the responses to this section were competently and sometimes very amusingly handled.

Question 2A

This was the less popular of the two optional passages and some candidates struggled to recognise the full range of language features employed. As a result, a number of responses relied upon simple narration of the contents or broad generalisations relating to the character of the writer and, in particular, her initial struggle to be allocated the car.

Generalised comments (such as 'Anna is a strong woman who knows how to deal with rude people who humiliate invalids by acting completely unprofessionally') rarely helped to define the style and language of the passage. Candidates would also benefit from understanding the importance of avoiding an essentially empty opening paragraph that simply states the obvious (for example, 'To create a better portrayal of her experience she uses language and style in a detailed manner'), and wastes valuable time in doing so.

Another version of the empty opening is undue attention to the nature of the target audience for a passage. It is worth repeating that defining the probable audience is only useful when it assists in understanding the resultant style, tone and language. Statements such as 'All this would suggest that she [Anna] writes for a magazine which aims to help invalids' give no useful attention to any aspect of the question.

There was a generally good awareness of the use of repetition and the use of triadic structures in the case of 'no way, no reason, no right'. The listing of the car's imperfections was also recognised, though not always given full textual support. There was also some understanding of the irony implicit in the much anticipated car being virtually unused and ending as a family encumbrance.

The best understood feature of the passage was the often subtle personification of the Zaporozhets which suffered 'mutual torture' with the author and was eventually judged to be 'biologically incompatible' with her family. This was essentially a comic passage yet few candidates devoted sufficient attention to examining

how the humour was achieved. There was some awareness of the comic pathos of the car, 'living on its own, not belonging to anyone but the street cats', but the paradox of the writer being 'not enough of an invalid' to master driving the vehicle was almost entirely missed.

Precise and specific reference to language effects should always be the aim of the candidate; the use of such broad terms as 'negative diction' to describe the tone of a passage will rarely be helpful. In the case of statements such as '[t]he author uses this metaphor [Anna killing the dragon] to bring the negative tone to an objective tone', neither 'negative tone' nor 'objective tone' are given sufficient context to demonstrate any clear understanding of language effects.

Question 2B

Moderate understanding and engagement with the passage resulted in some rather lacklustre directed writing. The question allowed for the possibility of shining a slightly different light upon the events of the text and on the character of Anna, but this was not generally attempted.

The best understood element of the passage, Anna's demolition of the 'woman in charge', was a popular feature but generally needed a more confident and imaginative approach to the incident. Some of the stronger responses picked up on the personification of the Zaporozhets and the pathos of its abandonment, but this was not generally the case.

Question 3A

This was a popular choice and was generally approached with some confidence and engagement, though not always with enough attention to specific language effects. The question asked candidates to comment on the creation of 'a sense of mood and place' but there was far more attention to place rather than mood and this resulted in some responses having a very narrow focus of attention. The language features which were almost unfailingly recognised and developed were the personification of Lahore and the writer's identification with the unchanging pelt of the snow leopard. There was also a general recognition of the nostalgic elements of the passage but much less attention to the variety of moods expressed by the writer. 'The tone throughout is nostalgic, depressed and reminiscent' and 'the nostalgic, sentimental and intimate tone are always present' are typical examples of the quite general view of the text.

Relatively few candidates gave much attention to the effect of the first person narration and the quite intimate tone of address to the reader, but some candidates understood it well, citing, for example, '[s]entence and sentence fragments that give a sense of conversation and truthfulness that would come from a friend.' The personification of Lahore and other cities was a technique well understood and omitted only in the weaker responses. Likewise, the reference to the snow leopard and its immutable coat were almost always understood: 'You can take the man out of Lahore but you can not take Lahore out of the man. This city is one that imprints for life.'

The stronger responses noted the change of tone towards the end of the passage; as one candidate expressed it, '...reality arrives and so does the maturity and rationality of adulthood.' This was another instance of a passage which had to be read carefully to the very end.

Some candidates lost valuable time in defining language features for the reader rather than moving on and finding more examples of their effects. This example, relating to the personification of Lahore and other cities, is clearly not helping to answer the question: 'Since one doesn't actually lust for New York City, he is showing his love for that city by giving emotions meant for a female towards it, you cannot savour London's company, for it is not a person that can supply you with company.' Candidates should demonstrate their understanding of language features by making specific reference to their effects.

Question 3B

Some candidates responded strongly to the style of the passage and there were some decisive opening sentences which echoed the original in addition to establishing the setting, such as the following: 'I peer out of the window of the plane but all that I can see is clouds. I want so desperately to see her – Hollywood.'

The opportunity to personify the setting as a lost girlfriend or lover was often eagerly seized upon and there was some genuinely poignant and tender writing. Personification was often successfully extended to create convincing stylistic reminders of the original: 'It is winter in Argentina.....and the wind whispers a plea for help.'

The best responses succeeded in creating a sense of progression and even of developing narrative; there was no necessity for the response to be inert simply because it was backward looking. Weaker responses tended to miss the romantic and sensuous flavour of the passage and could be brutally matter of fact: 'I used to live in this city but it has changed a lot.' Some candidates lacked sufficient confidence to depart significantly from the original, sometimes simply substituting another place name for Lahore, but making little more significant alteration.

Candidates should remember that the directed writing should capture the stylistic and tonal features of the original but is not intended to be a replica with only a few minor alterations.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1A

Ted, the absent-minded grandfather, proved in general to be an engaging topic, though there was some misinterpretation of the writer's view of his grandfather. This was another instance of the necessity of reading the whole passage fully before beginning any response. Some candidates suggested that the author was critical or indeed fearful of his grandfather when the concluding paragraphs make it clear that his attitude is one of admiration, almost of emulation.

Though candidates clearly enjoyed the text, some could have improved their responses by more consistently pursuing the effects of language upon style and tone. There was a particular temptation to recount the examples of Ted's absent-mindedness as if this was the point of the question. It will be useful for candidates to remember that they should normally present language points once only and give textual evidence in support of individual features.

The stronger responses recognised individual language features, such as the comic onomatopoeia of Ted being 'clonked', but also the subtle changes of tone in the passage. Perceptive answers noticed the significance of the phrase 'legendary doziness' in elevating Ted to near heroic status and the sense of revelation when the truth 'dawned' upon Ted. This was a passage in which single words or phrases needed attention and relation to wider effects. Some responses might have been improved by looking for the precise and specific effects of language selection.

All complete responses will have recognised and understood the change of tone which occurs in the final three paragraphs. Generally, this was understood as the author willingly identifying himself with his grandfather. It was plainly not a fearful response and there was no sense of panic in the writer, and this would have been absolutely clear if the final sentence had been carefully read.

Question 1B

This question produced some very diverse but largely energetic and engaged directed writing. However, candidates must make sure that they read the wording of the question carefully, and thereby ensure an appropriate approach to the directed writing. In this instance, some produced a variety of relatives as their subjects, while others continued to write about Ted's misadventures. There were some amusing and deftly written accounts of Ted's daughter; generally these were from candidates who did not strain too hard for improbable eccentricities. Those which went to greater lengths to emphasise bizarre or intentionally strange behaviour missed the point of the original and its affectionate portrayal of Ted.

The stronger accounts succeeded in locating a sense of affection and pride in the writing and, in a few cases, a suggestion of self-recognition as well.

Question 2A

This was by far the more popular of the two optional passages and was clearly very much enjoyed. The use of sarcasm, repetition and capital letters to achieve emphasis was generally noted. The heavily ironic tone and pseudo-friendliness of the passage were well understood in the stronger responses but a few took the apparent acquaintance with Richard Branson seriously; careful reading would have prevented this.

Much of the effect of the passage is achieved by switching tenses to create a sense of immediacy by addressing Richard Branson in the present tense, but this was not widely noted or explored. There was better understanding of the writer's use of short, conversational paragraphs but generally there was insufficient attention to the structure of the letter as well as to the use of tenses. The significance of the final paragraph with its suggestion of the imminent collapse of the airline was hardly noted at all. Almost all candidates commented on the writer's use of sarcasm and the rhetorical question but these are used for varying effects and some answers needed to be far more precise and specific in their identification of effects. In fact, it is true to say that the generally strong recognition of language features needed more specific support from the text.

Question 2B

The structure and language features of the original helped candidates make some genuinely pungent and trenchant responses. Many candidates clearly realised the opportunity for cumulative irony and sarcasm with a licence for heavy emphasis and the use of capitals: '...that is the stench which greeted my nostrils. The smell of DEAD RATS, Richard.' Some of the most effective responses realised that the writer's tone was often at odds with the formality of the form and enjoyed exploiting the disparity. Sometimes, as was the case with 1(b), the candidates might have benefited from exercising more restraint and not trying to outdo the original in stomach-turning detail: 'TOILETS, Richard, TOILETS.' These figured largely in some of the most graphic and enthusiastically written responses and there was an engaged and sometimes inventive quality to much of the writing.

Question 3A

There were some perceptive answers to this question, the best of them succinctly commenting on the changing tone of the passage, the range of sensory descriptions and the contrasts of mood. Candidates were also generally alert to the use of hyperbole and colour imagery, while the effectiveness of varying sentence lengths was also widely noted: 'the style changes continuously, the writer using short, sharp syntax to indicate changes and moments of crisis in the journey.'

There was also a good recognition of the largely baleful presence of the sun and moon and their effects upon the author: 'There are constant references to cosmic energy [such as] 'a full moon and the night sky'. This has suggestions of the author's helplessness under nature.'

There was some good understanding of language effects in the creation of the hostility of the setting: 'The clear and round full moon awakens a feeling of hope which is instantly erased by its beguiling and murderous beauty, which creates a lonely and deadly atmosphere.'

There might have been more attention to the insistent effect of the first person narrative which creates a strong sense of identification with the traveller's plight.

It was evident at times that not all of the candidates had fully absorbed the whole passage, and that the conclusion of the text was not always considered. However, there was some good understanding of the final sentences and some perfectly reasonable difference of interpretation: 'The last sentence – Thank you brother – is an anti-climax, as it breaks the tension built up by the author's struggle to survive'; and, alternatively, 'Thank you brother' wraps up the fear and urgency into the warmth of the presence of another human being'.

Question 3B

This exercise allowed those who had understood the features of the passage to achieve some very effective and dramatic moments. There was some strong use of the first person narrative in creating a sense of threat and imminent disaster: 'The heat clings to my skin, blanketing me in its inescapable presence.... The eerie slapping of the waves against my inflatable rhythmically ticks away the last moments of my life.'

Many candidates developed the author's use of colour to describe the ominous mood of the landscape: 'The light began to die and the whiteness of the snow turned grey, as if to signify my end. This is not going to happen I told myself, but without much conviction.'

Other candidates successfully picked up on the sense of hostility emanating from the natural world and adapted this for their own settings: 'The cave mocks me; every source of light is laughter in the darkness.'

Although not always remarked on in the commentaries, there was good use of the first person narrative and some imaginative drawing of the landscape. The best responses tended to have the confidence to choose completely different landscapes and a different sequence of dangers. Less confident candidates stuck too closely to the events unfolding in the original and might more profitably have taken advantage of its dramatic tone and technique.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1A

This question produced some excellent responses: there was a general sympathy and engagement with the passage and some perceptive comment upon language and style.

There was a general understanding among candidates of the necessity of examining the whole passage and, in most cases, the concluding paragraphs were well understood and commented upon. Many candidates responded immediately to the paradox of 'aggressive enthusiasm' in the first line and this was often followed by crisply made points on a succession of language features; many of the stronger responses picked up the sense of foreboding created by the 'creaking Cessna' and its 'juddering wings'. There was also understanding of the sense of darkness and potential violence that the author creates with 'the rising moon, blood red in a smoke filled sky.'

Full understanding of the presentation of the central characters was essential for this response and it was often demonstrated in some excellent accounts of their contrasting attitudes and use of language: 'The character of the mother is fully developed through a mixture of dialogue and action which conveys a sense of recklessness as well as cheerfulness'.

There was also good understanding of the increasingly concerned imperatives that the author allocates to the instructor, and the short abrupt sentences that are used to characterise Mr Vaz's growing alarm and irritation.

Some perceptive responses picked up on the 'sense of irony' created by the calm of the mother juxtaposed with the experienced pilot's alarm. There were some surprising omissions in the responses. Very few considered the extended metaphor of flight or the sense of danger suggested by the soldiery on the river bridge.

Generally, however, this passage produced powerful responses with good attention to language effects.

Question 1B

As with 1A there was some purposeful and accomplished writing in response to this question. The comic and dramatic possibilities of the subject were generally well recognised, though there were some surprisingly tame choices of activity, such as tennis. Most candidates attempted to establish the vivacity and bravado of the principal character: for example, 'I'll survive the whole Pacific, you'll see, chirruped Mother.'

The growing friction between the mother and her instructor was exploited well and resulted in some genuinely funny accounts: 'Mr Holt waited by the gate of the shooting range, a flash of concern crossing his features as Mom skipped gleefully up to him.'

There were some pithy and effective punch lines, in this case related to deep sea diving: 'With her know it all attitude...my mother replied – of course, I understand – Was she in for a surprise!'

Some less successful candidates chose either improbably outlandish choices of activity or others that were too unambitious to provide any sense of danger or recklessness. The best responses tended to involve activities which might need the instructor to make a hasty intervention: 'Her hand pushed on the throttle and

a kind of giddy giggle escaped between the sunglasses.... then with a choked surrender Mum allowed Mr Woods to drive the boat (slowly) home.'

As the excerpts suggest, there were some compact and elegantly written little sagas which did complete justice to the original.

Question 2A

This was the less popular of the two available texts and some candidates found it hard to move beyond narrative and/or developed comprehension. Most candidates, however, found the passage accessible and many shared a sympathetic understanding of the subject.

There was a general comprehension of the author's manipulation of the narrative to show the fragility of Jean Rhys and the sense of reality being too hard for her to bear. Some astute responses picked up the uneasy narrative position and its occasional confiding address to the reader.

Stronger responses often demonstrated a good understanding of how the first half of the passage creates a sense of Jean Rhys's complete isolation. There was also some good recognition of the change of tone which occurs after her arrival in Dominica, as well as the sense of affirmation created by the Mother's greeting: 'How could I forget you, Gwen?'

Some candidates understood and commented on the symbol of the Sargasso Sea, as both a path to self-recognition and an obstacle; there was some very perceptive writing related to the 'mess of weed and wreckage'. Most candidates made some reference to specific language features, though sometimes with only a limited range of examples. There was good recognition of the use of the pronoun 'she' to augment the sense of Rhys's isolation, and of the developed simile of her picking up impressions of life, 'like a sponge'.

Question 2B

The directed writing for this passage produced a wide range of capable responses, and some candidates who offered only limited commentaries achieved some empathetic and well written continuations of the extract. The author's use of abrupt impact sentences was generally adopted and some candidates picked up the use of assonance exemplified in the 'usual delicious sinking sensation'. Some responses developed the reference to the father's life being 'a waste of time' and convincingly wrote of Rhys's determination to avoid such a fate: 'Jean vowed that she would not leave the earth without a novel to prevent her sinking into oblivion... that they would read and acknowledge it. This for Jean was a warm and lovely thought.'

There were some very effective and striking evocations of the writer's loneliness and her adoption of the island as a friend or lover: 'The wind through the window smoothed her cheek, it was like a caress, as if she wasn't alone.'

The strong identification of many candidates with the situation and plight of the writer led to some accomplished writing.

Question 3A

This was a popular and accessible passage which was generally well answered and produced some very perceptive and fully developed responses.

Some difficulty was encountered in defining the tone of the passage and how sympathetic the writer was in his portrayal of the German soldier. This did not prevent most candidates making intelligent engagement with the passage and recognising some of the language features employed. Comparatively few candidates resorted to the narration of the events of the passage and there was sympathetic interest in the strangeness of the situation and its awkwardness for both the narrator and the soldier.

Several language effects were widely noted and commented on, notably the use of the word 'herding' in stripping the captured soldiers of identity and the use of colour imagery in establishing the mood of the piece. 'The visual image of 'the grey uniform' and 'white faces' convey a colourless image of the soldiers, almost suggesting that they are dead inside: 'The watery, yellow light' only adds to this mood.'

There was a variety of opinion, most of which was wholly justifiable, about the nature of the mood which was established by the author. Some found the atmosphere of the marquees oppressive but one candidate wrote that 'the cathedral silence was not a silence of tension or hostility, but almost of respect.'

There was a similar variation of opinion about the personality of the German soldier and of the narrator's view of him, but there was a general recognition of his presentation as an outsider in the group.

Many candidates omitted to make a significant mention of the silver pencil holder, especially the crucial fact that it did not bear his initials. This was in line with a general tendency of responses to write more about the creation of mood than that of characters. There was some excellent writing in the concluding paragraph, as the storm settles down upon the camp. Again, this section was open to several perfectly valid interpretations and there was some perceptive writing in presenting the different viewpoints: where one candidate stated that '[t]he wind can be seen as symbolising the world as it was in WW2, hostile and unpredictable' another determined that "'For the first time in safety' concludes the account, the juxtaposition of "safety" with the wind's force highlight[ing] the preciousness of such a rare moment of protection.'

Question 3B

As with the commentary, this task produced a variety of responses and differing approaches to the character of the soldier and his account of the situation. The least successful versions made only marginal alterations to the viewpoint of the original and made little attempt to express the feelings of the character. However, there were many strong and imaginative responses, the best of which gave the soldier his own voice and perspective with interesting hints as to how he'd acquired the pencil holder: 'I only kept possessions from my old life that were significant, so naturally I left Martha's pencil holder, given for my fortieth birthday'.

There were also some sympathetic developments of the character, mainly based on his awkwardness and unpopularity with fellow prisoners: 'The English are kinder than the others in my own battalion, who see me as too fat or too short and timid to be of any use.'

In some cases, the return of the pencil holder was given a tragic dimension, a final catastrophe for a misfit: 'I was shamed, rejected.... now the others will hate me more than ever.'

As is so often the case, some of the most telling responses used the restriction of the word boundaries to their advantage, creating taut and economical reflections on the event.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/21

Writing

Key Messages

The questions differentiated a range of candidates successfully, with answers ranging from the very mature and thoughtful to those marred by significant lapses in technical accuracy. At the high end, there were a good number of highly imaginative and engaging narrative/descriptive responses in **Section A**; and sophisticated and strongly purposeful argumentative/discursive compositions in **Section B**. These fluent and mature responses, as ever, were a delight to read and very impressive, considering the time constraints under which they were produced. At the lower end of the range, answers tended to rely on undirected, drifting or undeveloped plots, with lapses in technical areas and expression. The usual areas of concern emerged: tenses commonly confused; the incorrect use of punctuation in dialogue, especially with speech marks; evidence of apparently 'prepared' answers that did not quite fit the examination questions. On the whole, there were not many rubric infringements and time management seemed satisfactory.

General Comments

The majority of candidates made real efforts to meet the prescribed task. A number needed to address the question focus and consider the nature of the guidelines of the task in **Section A**, e.g. prescribed instructions such as 'colours and sounds' or 'time and place'; or a prescribed form/structure, such as a descriptive piece of writing or an 'opening' to a short story.

The candidates' sense of audience, form and purpose in **Section B** was convincing on the whole: candidates were prepared well in terms of appropriate register, form and tone for such tasks as script for a voiceover, debate or radio script. One area for improvement is to use two different tones in speeches opposing each other, and not keep to the same sort of 'voice' for the two.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

The Carnival

There were a few effective responses which evoked a lively atmosphere through interesting sensory imagery and visual/ auditory details. The creation of characters using dialogue, third person and specific details helped to develop the narrative in some responses. However, in a number of scripts, an appropriate structure was not a strong feature – the requirement to write a story **opening** was frequently overlooked and endings were often conclusive. Candidates who attempted this question often focused heavily on 'colours/sounds' and description overtook narrative in many responses. Less successful responses focused on first person recounts and were less effective as a result. Stronger responses gave a clear sense of a story to come.

Question 2

Sunday Morning

This was quite a popular choice of question, but a significant number of candidates were confused with the form required for the task. Narrative focus was common with quite a few responses that used a simple, linear narrative form which overlooked the need for description. The stronger responses were those that effectively evoked a particular time and a particular place through the use of present tense verb phrases, sensory imagery and close attention to small details. Less successful responses might have been improved by providing more imaginative and/or original descriptive detail beyond the depiction of a central character just lazing around in bed all day.

Question 3

Bitterness

Few responses to this question were seen. Candidates who attempted it tended towards quite predictable themes – failed relationships in particular. Most wrote in appropriate autobiographical form. The idea of ‘not yet coming to terms with experiences’ was generally not successfully addressed. Responses were frequently focused on the central character having to overcome some kind of adversity but lacked the sense of ‘reflection’ demanded by the question. A few responses effectively conveyed a ‘bitter’ state of mind within a credible character. A small number of candidates wrote a third person narrative response, overlooking the requirement to write an autobiographical piece.

Section B

Question 4

Student Council Speeches

This was the most popular choice of question on this paper: many responses were focused and interesting in content but most lacked structure. The strongest responses were those that created two very different voices to appeal to different elements within the imagined audience. The use of colloquial language alongside a more formal register was an effective technique employed by some candidates to create contrasting voices. Less successful responses were rather unoriginal in content – they simply identified some contentious or topical issues and gave opposing perspectives on them without creating the different voices/attitudes demanded by the question.

Question 5

Animal Welfare Voiceover

This was not a popular choice of question and not many responses were seen. Of those that were seen, it was evident that candidates struggled to employ the conventions of the form successfully. Appropriate structural devices were largely overlooked, and responses generally read like newsletters or brochures. Most made no reference to images or the conventions of scripting. Some candidates attempted emotive writing to persuade the reader (not viewer) of the need to have welfare charities for animals. Candidates approached the question in a general manner and therefore suffered with structure and a convincing tone. Some candidates spent too much time in their format for the promotional film rather than the content. However, most candidates did attempt to create a sense of a serious and active organisation.

Question 6

Youth Culture Radio Broadcast

This was the least popular task. Very few responses to this question were seen. Conventions of the script writing form were generally not apparent and candidates did not always give a clear sense of their response being a script for a radio programme. Where candidates did use different voices, it was in an interview form and so they were, essentially, scripting the un-scriptable. Some responses were just a description of youth culture. Some candidates seemed not to know the meaning of youth culture.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/22

Writing

Key Messages

The questions successfully differentiated the whole span of candidates, with responses ranging from the engagingly fluent and mature to those marred by significant lapses in technical accuracy. There were quite a few exceptionally imaginative and convincing narrative/descriptive responses in **Section A**; and sophisticated and highly structured purposeful argumentative/discursive compositions in **Section B**. These fluent and mature responses, as ever, were a delight to read and were very impressive, considering the time constraints under which they were produced. At the lower end of the range, answers tended to lack purpose, featured undeveloped plots, and contained lapses in technical areas and expression. The usual areas of concern emerged: tenses commonly confused; the incorrect use of punctuation in dialogue; evidence of apparently 'prepared' answers that did not quite fit the examination questions. On the whole, there were not many rubric infringements, and time management seemed satisfactory.

General Comments

The majority of candidates made genuine efforts to meet the prescribed task. A number needed to address the question focus and consider the nature of the guidelines of the task in **Section A**, e.g. prescribed instructions such as 'mood and character', 'colours and sounds'; or a prescribed form/structure such as a descriptive piece of writing or an 'opening' to a short story.

The candidates' sense of audience, form and purpose in **Section B** was convincing on the whole: candidates were prepared well in terms of appropriate register, form and tone for such tasks as a newsletter, reference or a brochure. One area for improvement is to use two different tones in references opposing each other, and not keep to the same sort of 'voice' for the two.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

Opening to a Story called *The Market*

This was a very popular choice, though responses tended to be largely descriptive pieces lacking clear narrative control, and were consequently unconvincing as openings for a story. Strong responses came from candidates who correctly identified this question as 'an opening to a story' and also incorporated language effects, summoning interesting sounds and colours into the plot of the narrative, with ambitious vocabulary. Narrative strands included a theft of market goods; a child who was lost; the often comic mismatch between competing vendors' shouting; the narrator's adventures in and around the marketplace, often being coerced into attending the market by their controlling mothers. Less successful responses were either purely descriptive or ended abruptly without there being hints of an 'opening', or discursive pieces sometimes debating the worth of markets generally or advertising a particular market's merits. Tense confusions occurred and not only for the usual reason of a mistaken sense of immediacy/excitement: perhaps some candidates were trying to position the description of a market within a narrator's past experience, while trying to be alive to the bright colours and loud sounds created in a spurious present.

Question 2

A Descriptive Piece called *From Dusk Till Dawn*

This question produced some of the strongest responses. However, many candidates also misread this question, as 'dawn till dusk' rather than the correct 'dusk till dawn', with a number of unfocused descriptions from less successful candidates of their morning routine. The strongest responses had an imaginative sense of the passing of time, using different experiences of the (usually first-person) protagonist to describe differing emotions and/or evocations of landscape. A lot of these combined light/dark imagery with skylines involving the passage of the stars, moon or sun across the sky. Many protagonists had stayed up through the night because of insomnia or thinking about their problems/troubles in a reflective way. Less successful responses provided listings of laboured descriptions; a number displayed a loss of focus on passing time when digressing too much about personal feelings.

Question 3

An Autobiographical Piece called *Contentment*

This was the most successfully answered question of the three from Section A. Strong responses had a well-rounded, engaging and/or imaginative take on what it meant to be contented, and the path the narrator took (or was taken upon) to reach that point. Selected experiences that suggested either a sudden revelation or, conversely, a slow accumulation of wisdom, were seen. Because of the usual tendency amongst candidates to accentuate the gloomy/morbid experiences, the ability to shape a narrative in a positive way stood out even more. Less successful responses were potted life histories (often over-long) – usually long lists of bad things happening – with a sudden reversal at the end.

Section B

Question 4

Contrasting References for a Job Candidate

This question involved the balancing act of establishing 'different experiences/attitudes', while at the same time writing about recognisably the same person in both letters. Successful responses usually included some ironic interplay between the two former employers, either in the simple relating of different dates, so that one could see a progression/regression in the job candidate's virtues/faults, up to rather subtle differences in employers' attitudes; sometimes using dramatic irony to make the reader aware of 'blind spots' in one employer's comprehension, usually through naivety. Less successful responses used simplistic opposing virtues or faults where the job candidate was not recognisably the same. A few misunderstood the task and wrote references for two differently-named people, while a few even wrote job applications.

Question 5

Campaign Group Tackling Issues of Poverty

There were some quite impressive responses to this question although some tried to persuade readers to join the organisation, which was not a requirement of the task. Stronger responses tackled the issues in a sequentially logical/organised way, by sub-headings or paragraphs. Often, better answers included 'human interest' stories in the first couple of paragraphs, as in the tried-and-tested journalistic practice. Less successful responses became carried away with trying to persuade or exhort their readers at the expense of explaining the issues. Some were overly emotional, or forgot they were a campaign group and wrote too subjectively, or wrote the piece as a speech, rather than as a newsletter text.

Question 6

Text for a Building Company's Redevelopment Brochure

The 'brochure' aspect of this question encouraged a lively, though not too informal, style with structured texts often aided by sub-headings to organise points. Stronger responses combined explaining the 'issues' with persuading the 'local residents' to take part – many answers did just this. Less successful responses usually erred on the side of too much persuasion, exhortation in most cases, to the detriment of a healthy discussion

of 'issues', often reading as a pure advert rather than a reasoned argument. A few seemed to misunderstand this question: some seemed to think they were writing a speech; others treated it as a sales brochure as if the building had already taken place.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/23

Writing

Key Messages

The questions successfully differentiated the whole span of candidates, with responses ranging from the engagingly fluent and mature to those marred by significant lapses in technical accuracy. There were quite a few exceptionally imaginative and convincing narrative/descriptive responses in **Section A**; and sophisticated and highly structured purposeful argumentative/discursive compositions in **Section B**. These fluent and mature responses, as ever, were a delight to read and very impressive, considering the time constraints under which they were produced. At the lower end of the range, answers tended to lack purpose, featured undeveloped plots, and contained lapses in technical areas and expression. The usual areas of concern emerged: tenses commonly confused; the incorrect use of punctuation in dialogue; evidence of apparently 'prepared' answers that did not quite fit the examination questions. On the whole, there were not many rubric infringements and time management seemed satisfactory.

General Comments

The majority of candidates made genuine efforts to meet the prescribed task. A number needed to address the question focus and consider the nature of the guidelines of the task in **Section A**, e.g. prescribed instructions such as 'mood and character', 'mystery and suspense'; or a prescribed form/structure, such as a descriptive piece of writing or an 'opening' to a short story.

The candidates' sense of audience, form and purpose in **Section B** was convincing on the whole: candidates were prepared well in terms of appropriate register, form and tone for such tasks as a newsletter, letters or a debate. One area for improvement is to use two different tones in letters opposing each other, and not keep to the same sort of 'voice' for the two.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

Opening to a Story called *The Gathering*

There were some interesting responses to this question, with candidates clearly enjoying the opportunity to write macabre story openings, some of which had a distinctive focus on blood and gore. Many candidates drew on their understanding of the gothic genre to inform this response, which led to some highly effective writing. The best responses were those that retained a close focus on the idea of a 'gathering' of some sort, and some candidates made effective use of language and structural techniques to produce writing which had a genuine feeling of 'mystery and suspense' about them. Less successful responses were those that simply went all out on the idea of vampires, meetings of the occult, or other typically horror genre content without managing the requirement to create the sense of mystery/suspense required by the question. One of the strongest responses seen was one where a secret gathering in a courtyard could be perceived by the central character from his locked chamber from which he later escaped. The setting was imaginatively described, and the reader never got to find out who was meeting or why, but the feeling of mystery and suspense was thoughtfully created. The ending was also carefully managed to set up the sense of a story to come.

Question 2

A Descriptive Piece called *From Sunrise to Sunset*

Only a small number of responses were seen. There was scope here for stronger candidates to produce well-written descriptive pieces. The strongest responses had an imaginative sense of the passing of time, using different experiences of the (usually first-person) protagonist to describe differing emotions and/or evocations of landscape. A lot of these combined light/dark imagery with skylscapes involving the passage of the sun across the sky. Less successful candidates were confused with the form required for the task and the need for description tended to be overlooked. Some struggled a bit with capturing the sense of time passing. Less successful responses provided listings of laboured descriptions; a number of candidates displayed a loss of focus on passing time when they wrote narratives or explanations of how they spent their day.

Question 3

An Autobiographical Piece called *Understanding*

This was the most successfully answered question of the three from **Section A**. Strong responses had a well-rounded, engaging and/or imaginative take on what it meant to have achieved ‘understanding’ about ‘a particular situation’, and the path the narrator took (or was taken upon) to reach that point. More successful candidates selected experiences that suggested either a sudden revelation or, conversely, a slow accumulation of wisdom. Because of the usual tendency amongst candidates to accentuate the gloomy/morbid experiences, the ability to shape a narrative in a positive way stood out even more. Less successful responses involved life histories (often over-long) – usually long lists of bad things happening – with a sudden reversal at the end. Some candidates took the words ‘autobiographical piece’ at face value and appeared to be writing about their own lives, which was limiting on occasion. Others created an effective sense of a character looking back at life.

Section B

Question 4

Television Debate on Tourism

This was the most popular choice of question on **section B** on this paper. The strongest responses were those that created two very different voices to appeal to different elements within the imagined audience. Successful responses used a range of rhetorical language to create contrasting voices. Less successful responses were those that simply identified opposing perspectives on the issue of tourism without creating the different outlooks and attitudes demanded by the question. Some candidates appeared to confuse tourism with immigration and focused one side of the argument on the negative aspects of people coming to the country to live, rather than to travel.

Question 5

Newsletter from Environmental Campaign Group

A few responses were seen and generally, candidates demonstrated confidence and competence with the form. Language devices were used to some effect by candidates in order to achieve the purpose and target the audience for their writing. Less successful candidates focused on the enthusiasm of the campaign group and on persuading people to join, rather than detailing issues. Successful responses provided details on specific environmental problems and explained why these were important, before detailing how the campaign group was helping.

Question 6

Residents’ Letters on Housing and Leisure Development

The ‘letter’ aspect of this question encouraged a lively, though not too informal, style with structured texts. Stronger responses created a sense of differing attitudes and viewpoints. Some candidates wrote letters directly to the ‘company’ rather than to the editor or the readership of the local newspaper, though the question did not make the audience explicit. The more successful candidates recognised the fact that these were letters to a newspaper and they were taking on the role of residents. Less successful responses usually

displayed a lack of identification of platform issues, as well as a lack of support for ideas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/31
Text Analysis

Key Messages

Candidates should prepare for this Component by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply when producing a piece of Directed Writing, commenting on the style and language of that piece of writing in relation to an accompanying text, and when comparing two texts on the same subject for their different language use and styles.

For **Question 1 Part (a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their Directed Writing text. In producing their reworking of the original text candidates ought to concentrate on making carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis and register to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own reworking, with an emphasis on selecting suitable aspects of language from both texts to examine in an analytical manner the specific effects that are created.

For **Question 2** candidates need to identify specific features of each text's language and style, link these to supporting textual details to examine the specific effects produced and compare how the texts' differences in purpose, context, and audience affect the creation of different meanings.

General Comments

Some candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. The carefully structured nature of most of their responses suggested that they used the fifteen minutes of reading time purposefully to begin to formulate their responses to the three texts presented to them (one in **Question 1**, two in **Question 2**) by identifying distinctive linguistic features that informed detailed plans found in their answer booklets. However, most candidates attempted little planning work or did not create plans at all. A sizeable proportion of the responses to **1 (b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than analysing the texts themselves in any purposeful way. A mere reiteration of the content of passages also produces a very limited response. Very few candidates now resort to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1 (a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response *informed by* the style and language of the accompanying text, in this Session either a transcription of an interview on a local radio channel or an article in the online version of a national newspaper. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this Session these were a memo and the text for a leaflet. Careful consideration of the target audience and the requirement to clearly convey a personal perspective or opinion is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120-150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is invaluable in responding to **Question 1 (b)** where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the memo or leaflet produced for **1 (a)** with the style and language of the respective transcription or online newspaper article. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference any evaluation of speakers' or writers' opinions. Recognition of the level of fluency and the range of lexical

choices exhibited in the transcriptions and comparing the effects they produced with those in the candidate's own reworking was a key discriminator in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics enables candidates to demonstrate several of the skills being assessed: a comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential differences between the Texts and the relative strengths of each. More candidates are now adopting a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

Many candidates still evaluate each Text in turn. In order to ensure comparisons are eventually made under this second approach, aspects of the first Text analysed on its own terms must be later selected and evaluated alongside those of the second Text as it is analysed on its own merits in the second part of the response. It should be recognised that the second approach thus leads to a degree of duplication of effort and candidates must work carefully to guard against rushed and superficial comparative analysis and conclusions that can be too pithy and do not offer any further insight.

Few rubric infringements were noted – most instances involved candidates producing responses to **1 (a) and (b)** only. It was apparent that some candidates devoted too much time and effort in composing their Directed Writing pieces for **1 (a)** and then produced brief responses to **1 (b)** and **2**. Centres and candidates need to appreciate that **Question 1 (a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **1 (b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

- (a) The pieces of directed writing candidates produced featured generally solid engagement with the form and style of a memo and suitably reworked references to the original material. The central idea of the product (Hat Gripz) presented in the transcript by its inventor, Lorraine Sullivan, was usually recast briefly although some candidates unnecessarily belaboured explanations of how the product worked at the expense of explaining why its adoption by all on-site construction company employees could help prevent severe head injuries. Most candidates enthusiastically assumed the role of a manager ('boss' and 'Supervisor' were popular synonyms) concerned with their employees' health and safety on the construction site. Most responses incorporated some form of an appropriate anecdote in which use of the product by someone else prevented a serious head injury (and in some cases, a fatality) from occurring. More fluent recasting was usually achieved through the incorporation of personal recommendations focusing on how easy it is to fit Hat Gripz to a standard construction helmet and how comfort is in no way compromised by its use. Candidates perceived how differing levels of formality could function in the memo form equally well, entirely dependant on how personal or impersonal they imagined workplace hierarchical relationships might be in the first place.

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

Strong responses included purposeful, focused and concise re-working of a range of detail drawn from the transcription in a consistent memo style that took account of its specific audience, usually by careful use of the plural first person and a firm but encouraging tone. Weaker responses lacked fluency and accuracy and featured very little or insecure re-working of the transcription's content and an uncertain conception of audience (use of a hectoring tone and threats of financial penalties being applied if, upon inspection, the product was found not to be in use by a specified date).

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, the transcription of the radio interview with Lorraine Sullivan (the inventor of a new product called Hat Gripz) and the memo produced in response to 1 (a). Few candidates simply paraphrased the contents of the transcription and the memo. However, a number of candidates might have improved their responses by recognising the nature of the transcription, and providing evidence of understanding the methodology required to analyse it. Such candidates might also have appreciated the purpose and hence the conventions of a transcription consisting of utterances with regular pauses and turn-taking between speakers, rather than attempting to compare the punctuation and grammar of their memo to the transcription, often at considerable length but little analytical effect. Simply using the comparative words 'spoken' and 'written' in the opening sentence of their responses ought to have ensured these candidates were immediately on the correct analytical track. Overall it was apparent that most candidates had been adequately prepared to analyse a transcription of semi-spontaneous speech.

A considerable number of candidates did not adopt an integrated approach and sought to deal with each text separately. Textual references were often made without drawing conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Such approaches usually yielded thin and perfunctory responses.

Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect when candidates clearly identified the impact of lexical choice exercised by speakers in the transcription and then examined their own carefully chosen vocabulary in their memo in a comparative fashion. By so doing such responses achieved an equal, or very nearly so, comparative emphasis of 50:50 or 60:40 on the transcription and the memo.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate or better knowledge and understanding of the conventions of local radio broadcasting and the purposes of both informing and entertaining an audience primarily consisting of the adult general public. It was usually clearly appreciated that only one participant was an expert on the topic being discussed and that the Interviewer's function was to pose open-ended questions to facilitate Lorraine's detailed and lengthy expository responses concerning the product's usefulness and how she intends to market it (possibly with the aid of notes that may account for her more fluent utterances e.g. lines 10-12).

Most candidates could at least briefly examine the degree of formality exhibited by the transcription and that of the memo (whether the memo was written with an informal or formal register). Usually it was observed there is a clear distinction between Lorraine's unequivocal promotional stance and the manager's authoritative urging, or strong recommendation, for the employees to accept that Hat Gripz enhanced workers' safety. There was also usually some consideration of the relationship between interviewer, interviewee and a distant radio audience being different from that between a manager and employees. This last point was often fruitfully explored regarding lexical choices as well, with language carefully selected to demonstrate that a manager personally knows the employees and would be able to persuade them that the recommendation was made out of true concern for their well-being.

In more substantial commentaries candidates usually made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They examined the way in which the Interviewer's open questions allowed Lorraine to extend her explanations through the use of detailed anecdotes and, periodically, a corresponding increase in the incidence of speech disfluency (repetitions that are not intended for effect, voiced pauses and repairs). Lorraine was found to be an accommodating speaker through her use of a dialect feature, *shake it like billyo*, to cater for her Australian radio audience; some candidates noted that this was a light-hearted, visual simile used to market her invention: a helmet secured to the user's head with Hat Gripz would not easily be displaced even through determined effort. It was noted that Lorraine also makes use of a tag question ('it couldnt get off the slippery head could it'), the colloquial use of 'you know' and plural first person pronouns ('our heads', 'how can we') to include her listeners. She also places a stress on some syllables to help her listeners appreciate the most salient features of the product and what it prevents the helmet doing ('through the hair' and 'directly on your head'; 'doesnt slip...'fly off') and used a string of ameliorating adjectives ('soft, flexible, comfortable') to encourage its use. In discriminating responses the Interviewer's status as a professional radio broadcaster was successfully posited through examination of the speaker's regular use of low-frequency lexis in introducing Lorraine and

her 'contraption', enquiring how she intends to encourage merchants to 'stock' it and concluding the interview by praising Lorraine for her 'testimonial'.

Question 2

As was the case for 1 (b), candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts in turn and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A (perhaps as the candidates were better accommodated by an entertaining style designed to accommodate a wide audience with its variety of figurative language features). Some candidates concentrated too much on punctuation, sentence and paragraph length and producing lists of the linguistic devices they could identify without the support of concise quotation and precise comments that would facilitate the communication of a more thorough appreciation of the effects of the writing. Some ability to recognise the use of form and language to inform readers in each Text, but in isolation from each other, was usually demonstrated. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates could establish the difference in audience, between those who wish to read an expert's perspective on turbulence (Text A is written by a pilot) and those who consult a reference site for information about the basic physics of flight (Text B), the way in which Text B features a helpful diagram and Text A does not, and differences in the technical language used (Text A's encompasses engineering and meteorology whilst Text B confines itself to the terminology of aerodynamic forces). In stronger responses candidates also tended to observe that both Texts make use of figurative devices to describe how a plane in flight behaves – e.g. 'a helpless dinghy in a stormy sea' and 'like the downhill skier' respectively – in order to explain concepts to a common general Internet audience. There was a ready recognition of the use of personification in the opening sentence of Text A – 'Turbulence: 'spiller of coffee, jostler of luggage...' – that establishes its jocular tone and entertaining style whilst in Text B imperatives ('drop', 'chuck') and the second person pronoun are used to involve the reader from the beginning. Text A's low frequency language ('poignant', 'aggravating', 'innate precariousness') and dramatic colloquialisms ('a good walloping', 'dashed into reefs') were usually compared to Text B's clichéd verbs ('squeeze down', 'zip faster') and frequent use of denotation (e.g. drag is 'the friction that resists the motion of an object moving through a fluid').

In the strongest responses candidates analysed language more efficiently as well as exploring the structure of the Texts. The structure of Text A was perceived as sophisticated: the opening paragraph concludes that turbulence is prevalent and dangerous which is directly juxtaposed with a blunt refutation at the end of the first sentence of the second paragraph ('...it's not'), piquing the reader's interest and sustaining it by frequent professional observations made throughout the rest of the passage (e.g. 'Predicting turbulence is more of an art than a science'). In contrast the structure of Text B was found to be clear and simple: the four aerodynamic forces are listed in the opening paragraph and then the main two forces to be considered are signposted in the first sentence of the second paragraph ('First, let's examine thrust and drag'); thereafter, explanations are reinforced with analogies that are familiar to most readers (kite flying and 'stick[ing] your hand out of a car window' to demonstrate drag). In addition, candidates noted how Text A contained alliteration ('cotton-ball cumulous clouds') and sibilance ('a sprinkling of severes'), qualifiers ('by and large') and fixed expressions ('lack of a better term') to maintain the reader's interest and that, like Text B, it resorts to using clichéd verbs ('pulled snug'). The transactional purpose of Text B was usually thoroughly examined in the context of its source being a website entitled 'How Stuff Works'.

In future candidates could refrain from using their conclusions to simply reiterate points made previously in their responses. There is no need for repetition and it would be more effective and efficient to emphasise the Texts' more significant similarities and differences in an evaluative manner instead.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32
Text Analysis

Key Messages

Candidates should prepare for this Component by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply when producing a piece of Directed Writing, when commenting on the style and language of that piece of writing in relation to an accompanying text, and when comparing two texts on the same subject for their different language use and styles.

For **Question 1 Part (a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their Directed Writing text. In producing their reworking of the original text candidates ought to concentrate on making carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis and register to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own reworking, with an emphasis on selecting suitable aspects of language from both texts to examine in an analytical manner the specific effects that are created.

For **Question 2** candidates need to identify specific features of each text's language and style, link these to supporting textual details to examine the specific effects produced and compare how the texts' differences in purpose, context, and audience affect the creation of different meanings.

General Comments

Some candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. The carefully structured nature of most of their responses suggested that they used the fifteen minutes of reading time purposefully to begin to formulate their responses to the three texts presented to them (one in **Question 1**, two in **Question 2**) by identifying distinctive linguistic features that informed detailed plans found in their answer booklets. However, most candidates attempted little planning work or did not create plans at all. A sizeable proportion of the responses to **1 (b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than analysing the texts themselves in any purposeful way. A mere reiteration of the content of passages also produces a very limited response. Even so, very few candidates now resort to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1 (a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response *informed by* the style and language of the accompanying text, in this Session either a transcription of an interview on a local radio channel or an article in the online version of a national newspaper. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this Session these were a memo and the text for a leaflet. Careful consideration of the target audience (in both cases a general one which is more specifically defined by the contexts revealed by the transcriptions) and the requirement to clearly convey a personal perspective or opinion is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120-150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is invaluable in responding to **Question 1 (b)**, where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the memo or leaflet produced for **1 (a)** with the style and language of the respective transcription or online newspaper article. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference any evaluation of speakers' or writers' opinions. Recognition of the level of fluency and the range of lexical

choices exhibited in the transcriptions and comparing the effects they produced with those in the candidate's own reworking was a key discriminator in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics enables candidates to demonstrate several of the skills being assessed: a comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential differences between the Texts and the relative strengths of each. More candidates are now adopting a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

Many candidates still evaluate each Text in turn. In order to ensure comparisons are eventually made under this second approach, aspects of the first Text analysed on its own terms must be later selected and evaluated alongside those of the second Text as it is analysed on its own merits in the second part of the response. It should be recognised that the second approach thus leads to a degree of duplication of effort and candidates must work carefully to guard against rushed and superficial comparative analysis and conclusions that can be too pithy and do not offer any further insight.

Few rubric infringements were noted – most instances involved candidates producing responses to **1 (a) and (b)** only. It was apparent that some candidates devoted too much time and effort in composing their Directed Writing pieces for **1 (a)** and then produced brief responses to **1 (b)** and **2**. Centres and candidates need to appreciate that **Question 1 (a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **1 (b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

- (a) The pieces of directed writing candidates produced featured generally solid engagement with the form and style of a leaflet and suitably reworked references to the original material, an online article about an experimental drug made from the venom of the carnivorous cone snail and the discovery that its active agent, coxotoxin, numbs pain. Most candidates successfully focused on recasting at least some of the expected advantages of the new pain-killing drug of interest to patients and doctors: it blocks channels in the nervous system, so it is capable of relieving the most severe forms of chronic pain, which are currently difficult to treat; it is thought to be one hundred times more potent than drugs like morphine; it can manage neuropathic pain associated with many debilitating diseases (cancer, AIDS, diabetes) already affecting many people; and, unlike opioid painkillers, it is non-addictive. (A few candidates inferred that, as carnivorous cone snails are 'common in the western Pacific and Indian Oceans', there would be a plentiful supply of the new drug.) There was a marked tendency amongst a considerable number of candidates to also make indiscriminate use of ideas of, at best, tangential significance that could also mitigate against the purpose of the leaflet, to 'find volunteers willing to try the new drug': it is stated twice in the article that the drug has not yet been tested on humans and as it has only thus far been tested on laboratory rats, there is also a crucial admission: 'We don't know about the side effects yet'.

Less successful responses were often simply too brief (noticeably fewer than 120-150 words), although responses consisting nearly wholly of paraphrasing or duplication of the article could exceed 150 words. More frequently it was poor technical skills that prevented candidates from expressing themselves clearly: poorly executed changes of person, tense and point-of-view from the original article to suit the requirements of the text of the leaflet they were producing, and basic issues with word-ordering, many of which can be attributed to the struggle to achieve a balance between ensuring the leaflet conveyed an appropriate, clear message and a mature style commensurate with the medical subject matter.

Based on a good appreciation of context and the ideas presented in the article, the most successful responses were persuasive in tone, regardless of whether a formal or a more personal register was used. Candidates were capable of making linguistic choices with clear internal consistency (either a

predominantly medical or marketing lexis could be utilised; occasionally both were used, to particularly good effect), extending to the creative use of headlines. Many achieved this via clearly introductory titles in the form of rhetorical questions, e.g. 'What if we could eliminate chronic pain?' or with a direct appeal, e.g. 'We need your help in the fight against pain'. Some also featured concluding statements suggesting that the reader ought to volunteer for clinical trials (and occasionally providing contact details). Such responses were convincing in their use of the material in their reworking, accurate and eloquent in their expression, and convincing in their awareness of audience.

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, the online article and the text of the opening section of a leaflet produced by each candidate in response to 1 (a). Few candidates simply paraphrased the contents of the article and their leaflet. A considerable number of candidates did not adopt an integrated approach to their response and sought to deal with each text separately. While it is possible to compare in this way, it is usually easier and far more efficient and fluent if an integrated approach is used. Textual references were often made without drawing conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Such approaches usually yielded thin and perfunctory responses.

Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect when candidates clearly identified the impact of lexical choices present in the article and then examined their own carefully chosen vocabulary in the text of their leaflet in a comparative fashion. By so doing, such responses achieved an equal, or very nearly so, comparative emphasis of 50:50 or 60:40 on the transcription and the leaflet.

The weakest responses were very brief, showing very little inclination to analyse language. In such responses, perfunctory comparisons were usually attempted, such as the suggestion that the article was written for informative purposes whereas the leaflet asks for volunteers to join in drug trials. In more developed responses the article was generally cited as being more formal, using more scientific jargon ('opioid painkillers' and 'morphine and hydrocodone' were the most commonly selected examples) and employing shorter paragraphs to concisely convey factual information to a general audience of adult, educated readers. The text of the leaflet was usually contrasted as being more informal, geared towards making an appeal for volunteers and therefore using simpler language so as not to exclude 'patients' especially. Headlines were frequently compared (where one was provided to open the text of the leaflet), especially to comment on the unexpected appearance of the preposition 'for' between 'venom' and 'pain' in an article reporting a medical breakthrough.

Stronger responses also commented on aspects of figurative language within the article – 'blueprint', 'gold standard', how a scientific discovery is likened to the conclusion of a 'hunt' – and thus how an important balance is struck with the scientific lexis in order to appeal to the article's dual readership simultaneously: patients and by extension their family members and closest friends as well as medical professionals. There was usually consideration of how the incorporation of quotations provided by Professor Craik lends greater credibility to the information reported; in the same vein it was frequently noted he is reported to be the 'lead researcher' from 'the University of Queensland in Australia', less frequently that he is expected to give a seemingly important 'presentation at an American Chemical Society meeting'. Some candidates could also select and analyse the use of present tense declaratives in the article to communicate information about scientific fact ('Animal venoms are poisons that can block certain channels in the nervous system...') and the use of past tense constructions to report research work already completed and note the cautious introductory claim made for the drug ('early signs of promise'). Such candidates could then form apt contrasts with a range of features in their own leaflets, such as a preponderance of second person pronouns and hyperbolic language (the 'new wonder drug' with 'astonishing' and 'tremendous' potential) and fixed expressions ('help your loved ones', 'the answer you've been praying for') – used in a deliberate attempt to persuade patients to volunteer for the trials.

Question 2

As was the case for 1 (b), candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts in turn and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating

a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A (perhaps as the candidates are themselves more accustomed to the form of guidance notes than the transcription presented in Text B). Some candidates concentrated too much on paragraph and utterance length and producing lists of the linguistic devices they could identify without the support of concise quotation and precise comments that would facilitate the communication of a more thorough appreciation of the effects produced in each Text. Such candidates usually demonstrated some ability to recognise the use of form and language to inform readers in each Text, but in isolation from each other. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in mode, purpose and audience between the two Texts, and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates could compare aspects of Text A's written mode with the spoken mode of Text B. Elements of Text A were often taken as evidence of its instructional purpose: its bullet-point list structure with a main heading; two emboldened abstract nouns ('Safety' and 'Communication') as sub-headings, dividing the text into nearly equal parts; and the accompanying diagram to introduce sailing terminology and somewhat compensate for the truncated explanations. There was some recognition of how the simple lexis used in the body of the text ('All children should get a go') clearly imparted advice that experienced adult instructors could easily access and readily impart to their young learners during practical instruction. Candidates were correspondingly able to point out some of the disfluency features, turn-taking, and use of sailing jargon in Text B's transcription, although often without fully appreciating that it also has an instructional purpose, albeit for a more mature beginner sailor capable of benefitting from another learner's errors and possibly without the benefit of a personal instructor providing tailored advice during practical sessions.

In stronger responses candidates undertook profitable exploration of the use of specific bullet points from each section of the guidance notes and the prevalence of imperative structures (e.g. 'At all times watch for.... Also beware of...') in Text A, a few also examining the occasional use of quasi-military ('the order of the day') and coaching idiom ('sensible hailing distance', 'Use whistle signals'). They were also able to consider the pragmatic purpose of many of Text B's adjacency pairs (the one instance of over-lapping was most often interpreted as cooperative and friendly in nature) and its *in media res* opening, as opposed to the clearly demarcated structure of Text A, and to compare the elevated status of the reader of Text A with Juan's decidedly subordinate one in Text B. The strongest responses maintained a linguistic focus combined with sustained appreciation of the context for each Text (especially how the events referenced in the transcription could be anticipated but not fully predetermined as demonstrated by the several topic shifts initiated by both speakers as they respond to the candidate's decisions and execution of various sailing manoeuvres).

In future candidates could refrain from using their conclusions to simply reiterate points made previously in their responses. There is no need for repetition and it would be more effective and efficient to emphasise the Texts' more significant similarities and differences in an evaluative manner instead.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/33
Text Analysis

Key Messages

Candidates should prepare for this Component by gaining a solid knowledge of linguistics which they can apply when producing a piece of Directed Writing, commenting on the style and language of that piece of writing in relation to an accompanying text, and when comparing two texts on the same subject for their different language use and styles.

For **Question 1 Part (a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their Directed Writing text. In producing their reworking of the original text candidates ought to concentrate on making carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis and register to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own reworking, with an emphasis on selecting suitable aspects of language from both texts to examine in an analytical manner the specific effects that are created.

For **Question 2** candidates need to identify specific features of each text's language and style, link these to supporting textual details to examine the specific effects produced and compare how the texts' differences in purpose, context, and audience affect the creation of different meanings.

General Comments

Some candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. The carefully structured nature of most of their responses suggested that they used the fifteen minutes of reading time purposefully to begin to formulate their responses to the three texts presented to them (one in **Question 1**, two in **Question 2**) by identifying distinctive linguistic features that informed detailed plans found in their answer booklets. However, most candidates attempted little planning work or did not create plans at all. A sizeable proportion of the responses to **1 (b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than analysing the texts themselves in any purposeful way. A mere reiteration of the content of passages also produces a very limited response. Very few candidates now resort to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1 (a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response *informed by* the style and language of the accompanying text, in this Session either a transcription of an interview on a local radio channel or an article in the online version of a national newspaper. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this Session these were a memo and the text for a leaflet. Careful consideration of the target audience and the requirement to clearly convey a personal perspective or opinion is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120-150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is invaluable in responding to **Question 1 (b)** where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the memo or leaflet produced for **1 (a)** with the style and language of the respective transcription or online newspaper article. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference any evaluation of speakers' or writers' opinions. Recognition of the level of fluency and the range of lexical

choices exhibited in the transcriptions and comparing the effects they produced with those in the candidate's own reworking was a key discriminator in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics enables candidates to demonstrate several of the skills being assessed: a comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential differences between the Texts and the relative strengths of each. More candidates are now adopting a topical approach – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

Many candidates still evaluate each Text in turn. In order to ensure comparisons are eventually made under this second approach, aspects of the first Text analysed on its own terms must be later selected and evaluated alongside those of the second Text as it is analysed on its own merits in the second part of the response. It should be recognised that the second approach thus leads to a degree of duplication of effort and candidates must work carefully to guard against rushed and superficial comparative analysis and conclusions that can be too pithy and do not offer any further insight.

Few rubric infringements were noted – most instances involved candidates producing responses to **1 (a) and (b)** only. It was apparent that some candidates devoted too much time and effort in composing their Directed Writing pieces for **1 (a)** and then produced brief responses to **1 (b)** and **2**. Centres and candidates need to appreciate that **Question 1 (a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **1 (b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

- (a) The pieces of directed writing candidates produced featured generally solid engagement with the form and style of a memo and suitably reworked references to the original material. The central idea of the product (Hat Gripz) presented in the transcript by its inventor, Lorraine Sullivan, was usually recast briefly although some candidates unnecessarily belaboured explanations of how the product worked at the expense of explaining why its adoption by all on-site construction company employees could help prevent severe head injuries. Most candidates enthusiastically assumed the role of a manager ('boss' and 'Supervisor' were popular synonyms) concerned with their employees' health and safety on the construction site. Most responses incorporated some form of an appropriate anecdote in which use of the product by someone else prevented a serious head injury (and in some cases, a fatality) from occurring. More fluent recasting was usually achieved through the incorporation of personal recommendations focusing on how easy it is to fit Hat Gripz to a standard construction helmet and how comfort is in no way compromised by its use. Candidates perceived how differing levels of formality could function in the memo form equally well, entirely dependant on how personal or impersonal they imagined workplace hierarchical relationships might be in the first place.

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

Strong responses included purposeful, focused and concise re-working of a range of detail drawn from the transcription in a consistent memo style that took account of its specific audience, usually by careful use of the plural first person and a firm but encouraging tone. Weaker responses lacked fluency and accuracy and featured very little or insecure re-working of the transcription's content and an uncertain conception of audience (use of a hectoring tone and threats of financial penalties being applied if, upon inspection, the product was found not to be in use by a specified date).

- (b) This question challenged candidates who did not attempt to analyse style and language or to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, the transcription of the radio interview with Lorraine Sullivan (the inventor of a new product called Hat Gripz) and the memo produced in response to 1 (a). Few candidates simply paraphrased the contents of the transcription and the memo. However, a number of candidates might have improved their responses by recognising the nature of the transcription, and providing evidence of understanding the methodology required to analyse it. Such candidates might also have appreciated the purpose and hence the conventions of a transcription consisting of utterances with regular pauses and turn-taking between speakers, rather than attempting to compare the punctuation and grammar of their memo to the transcription, often at considerable length but little analytical effect. Simply using the comparative words 'spoken' and 'written' in the opening sentence of their responses ought to have ensured these candidates were immediately on the correct analytical track. Overall it was apparent that most candidates had been adequately prepared to analyse a transcription of semi-spontaneous speech.

A considerable number of candidates did not adopt an integrated approach and sought to deal with each text separately. Textual references were often made without drawing conclusions concerning their functions and lexical properties. Such approaches usually yielded thin and perfunctory responses.

Integrated approaches were almost invariably used to good effect when candidates clearly identified the impact of lexical choice exercised by speakers in the transcription and then examined their own carefully chosen vocabulary in their memo in a comparative fashion. By so doing such responses achieved an equal, or very nearly so, comparative emphasis of 50:50 or 60:40 on the transcription and the memo.

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate or better knowledge and understanding of the conventions of local radio broadcasting and the purposes of both informing and entertaining an audience primarily consisting of the adult general public. It was usually clearly appreciated that only one participant was an expert on the topic being discussed and that the Interviewer's function was to pose open-ended questions to facilitate Lorraine's detailed and lengthy expository responses concerning the product's usefulness and how she intends to market it (possibly with the aid of notes that may account for her more fluent utterances e.g. lines 10-12).

Most candidates could at least briefly examine the degree of formality exhibited by the transcription and that of the memo (whether the memo was written with an informal or formal register). Usually it was observed there is a clear distinction between Lorraine's unequivocal promotional stance and the manager's authoritative urging, or strong recommendation, for the employees to accept that Hat Gripz enhanced workers' safety. There was also usually some consideration of the relationship between interviewer, interviewee and a distant radio audience being different from that between a manager and employees. This last point was often fruitfully explored regarding lexical choices as well, with language carefully selected to demonstrate that a manager personally knows the employees and would be able to persuade them that the recommendation was made out of true concern for their well-being.

In more substantial commentaries candidates usually made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They examined the way in which the Interviewer's open questions allowed Lorraine to extend her explanations through the use of detailed anecdotes and, periodically, a corresponding increase in the incidence of speech disfluency (repetitions that are not intended for effect, voiced pauses and repairs). Lorraine was found to be an accommodating speaker through her use of a dialect feature, *shake it like billyo*, to cater for her Australian radio audience; some candidates noted that this was a light-hearted, visual simile used to market her invention: a helmet secured to the user's head with Hat Gripz would not easily be displaced even through determined effort. It was noted that Lorraine also makes use of a tag question ('it couldnt get off the slippery head could it'), the colloquial use of 'you know' and plural first person pronouns ('our heads', 'how can we') to include her listeners. She also places a stress on some syllables to help her listeners appreciate the most salient features of the product and what it prevents the helmet doing ('through the hair' and 'directly on your head'; 'doesnt slip...'fly off') and used a string of ameliorating adjectives ('soft, flexible, comfortable') to encourage its use. In discriminating responses the Interviewer's status as a professional radio broadcaster was successfully posited through examination of the speaker's regular use of low-frequency lexis in introducing Lorraine and

her 'contraption', enquiring how she intends to encourage merchants to 'stock' it and concluding the interview by praising Lorraine for her 'testimonial'.

Question 2

As was the case for 1 (b), candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts in turn and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A (perhaps as the candidates were better accommodated by an entertaining style designed to accommodate a wide audience with its variety of figurative language features). Some candidates concentrated too much on punctuation, sentence and paragraph length and producing lists of the linguistic devices they could identify without the support of concise quotation and precise comments that would facilitate the communication of a more thorough appreciation of the effects of the writing. Some ability to recognise the use of form and language to inform readers in each Text, but in isolation from each other, was usually demonstrated. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates could establish the difference in audience, between those who wish to read an expert's perspective on turbulence (Text A is written by a pilot) and those who consult a reference site for information about the basic physics of flight (Text B), the way in which Text B features a helpful diagram and Text A does not, and differences in the technical language used (Text A's encompasses engineering and meteorology whilst Text B confines itself to the terminology of aerodynamic forces). In stronger responses candidates also tended to observe that both Texts make use of figurative devices to describe how a plane in flight behaves – e.g. 'a helpless dinghy in a stormy sea' and 'like the downhill skier' respectively – in order to explain concepts to a common general Internet audience. There was a ready recognition of the use of personification in the opening sentence of Text A – 'Turbulence: 'spiller of coffee, jostler of luggage...' – that establishes its jocular tone and entertaining style whilst in Text B imperatives ('drop', 'chuck') and the second person pronoun are used to involve the reader from the beginning. Text A's low frequency language ('poignant', 'aggravating', 'innate precariousness') and dramatic colloquialisms ('a good walloping', 'dashed into reefs') were usually compared to Text B's clichéd verbs ('squeeze down', 'zip faster') and frequent use of denotation (e.g. drag is 'the friction that resists the motion of an object moving through a fluid').

In the strongest responses candidates analysed language more efficiently as well as exploring the structure of the Texts. The structure of Text A was perceived as sophisticated: the opening paragraph concludes that turbulence is prevalent and dangerous which is directly juxtaposed with a blunt refutation at the end of the first sentence of the second paragraph ('...it's not'), piquing the reader's interest and sustaining it by frequent professional observations made throughout the rest of the passage (e.g. 'Predicting turbulence is more of an art than a science'). In contrast the structure of Text B was found to be clear and simple: the four aerodynamic forces are listed in the opening paragraph and then the main two forces to be considered are signposted in the first sentence of the second paragraph ('First, let's examine thrust and drag'); thereafter, explanations are reinforced with analogies that are familiar to most readers (kite flying and 'stick[ing] your hand out of a car window' to demonstrate drag). In addition, candidates noted how Text A contained alliteration ('cotton-ball cumulous clouds') and sibilance ('a sprinkling of severes'), qualifiers ('by and large') and fixed expressions ('lack of a better term') to maintain the reader's interest and that, like Text B, it resorts to using clichéd verbs ('pulled snug'). The transactional purpose of Text B was usually thoroughly examined in the context of its source being a website entitled 'How Stuff Works'.

In future candidates could refrain from using their conclusions to simply reiterate points made previously in their responses. There is no need for repetition and it would be more effective and efficient to emphasise the Texts' more significant similarities and differences in an evaluative manner instead.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/41
Language Topics

Key Messages

In order to achieve marks in the higher bands, candidates should make good use of embedded quotes from the passage whilst arguing their points and provide a full, balanced, articulate and developed explanation of any appropriate theoretical examples.

General Comments

Candidates engaged well across the three topic areas. Responses were expected to refer to the extracts provided and to candidates' own wider research and reading. At times there was evidence that responses were theory-led with less emphasis on linguistic analysis. This was particularly evident in responses to **Questions 2 and 3**. **Question 1** responses occasionally demonstrated engagement with less important features and some showed lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription of conversation analysis.

On occasion, shorter responses evidenced 'running out of time': in such cases candidates may benefit from making briefer essay plans and spending a longer amount of time on their full written responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1: Spoken language and social groups

Responses on the whole were carefully constructed, with appropriate reference to relevant language theories. Examples from the text supported points and were suitably punctuated. Those candidates who were unfamiliar with the conventions of transcription (lack of punctuation, for example) were at a considerable disadvantage. Understanding of language theory is best exemplified when a text is analysed by considering the purpose of the text and applying theory to what is being said or written. Answers that work through the text making comments can become repetitive and are often judged to be 'feature-spotting'.

This question presented a context less familiar to many candidates but was well understood and most candidates appreciated the humour and good nature of the interaction. Opportunity was given, and often taken, to explore the range of genderlect theory. Some candidates did not appreciate the ironic interruptions of Alan, while stronger responses commented on the contributions from the male as well as female interactants.

Strong candidates appreciated the highly co-operative nature of the conversation and pursued a line of argument in a balanced and coherent fashion. Commenting on the light-hearted and diffuse nature of the conversation was an appropriate way in which to begin a response. A productive theoretical approach was that of Labov's Oral Narrative Structure.

Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron and strong candidates developed a counter-argument to these by referring to Beattie and Zimmerman and West. Some responses could be improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists. Many candidates also referred to Grice. When doing so, candidates could improve by further explanation and development.

Responses could be improved by maintaining linguistic rather than sociological analysis. Some discussion on the interlocutors' socioeconomic status was evident, yet was not required by the question. Some responses demonstrated focus on inferences of personalities and relationships, with assertions on dominance. Candidates should be aware that this may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2: English as a global language

This question gave candidates an opportunity to explore the subject of 'Globish'; on the whole, most candidates confined their response to the context with stronger candidates being those who also considered wider issues. Some students made good reference to the extract, whereas others did not mention Obama or Globish. Some responses gave focus to language death, language complacency and language power, which were not closely linked to the issue of Globish, or the idea of code-switching between a first and second language.

Stronger and more confident candidates engaged with the ramifications of bidialectalism and the concept of Globish, making appropriate and sustained connections with the passage provided. Many candidates had made use of the 'Relevant areas for study' in the syllabus. Stronger candidates had made explorations outside these and were able to integrate them into articulate responses. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response. A more appropriate response will describe 'standard' and 'non-standard' language and argue in a balanced manner the relative advantages of these forms. Candidates should be aware of the differences between pidgins and creoles and the manner in which they are created and used.

Some candidates chose to include long discussions on the history of the English language, which meant that more relevant discussion did not demonstrate as much focus.

Theoretical examples tended to focus on Kachru, Crystal and Diamond although the work of other theorists was occasionally referred to, which provided depth and colour to examples from candidates' wider exploration.

Question 3: Language acquisition by children and teenagers

This question allowed for a variety of opinion on the nature of the interaction between parent and child. Comments on behaviour were not relevant, but some contrast of language learning theories was successfully made. The word 'poorly' was used in a variety of constructions – "a poorly"/"it's poorly". Stronger responses focused on this to exemplify the nature of the child's language being used. Some candidates gave focus to Lara's behaviour, possibly because Lara's mother was not overtly correcting Lara's language in the way that candidates were expecting. In such cases, the focus of the response became behavioural rather than linguistic. Stronger responses were those which could link the purpose and context with their comments about language.

Many responses attempted to provide a 'deficit' model, describing the child's non-standard forms as 'mistakes', with some referring to these as evidence of limited intelligence or low social status. Stronger candidates commented on the on-going process of language acquisition and the state of achievement demonstrated in the script, including tense, pronoun, turn-taking and object permanence.

Theorists, such as Skinner, Bruner, Chomsky, Piaget and Vygotsky, were incorporated into most responses, with stronger responses selecting examples from the text, providing a linguistic discussion on the example, and then explaining why and how this example tests the theory. Strong and confident responses demonstrated knowledge of child directed speech and how it was being used in the extract provided.

Strong answers considered the context and purpose of the talk rather than an overview of subjects covered in the conversation. Candidates should maintain a linguistic stance in relation to what is required in the question.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42
Language Topics

Key Messages

In order to achieve marks in the higher bands, candidates should make good use of embedded quotes from the passage whilst arguing their points and provide a full, balanced, articulate and developed explanation of any appropriate theoretical examples.

General Comments

Candidates engaged well across the three topic areas. Responses were expected to refer to the extracts provided and to candidates' own wider research and reading. At times there was evidence that responses were theory-led with less emphasis on linguistic analysis. This was particularly evident in responses to **Questions 2 and 3**. **Question 1** responses occasionally demonstrated engagement with less important features and some showed lack of familiarity with the conventions of transcription of conversation analysis.

On occasion, shorter responses evidenced 'running out of time': in such cases candidates may benefit from making briefer essay plans and spending a longer amount of time on their full written responses.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1: Spoken language and social groups

Responses on the whole were carefully constructed, with appropriate reference to relevant language theories. Examples from the text supported points and were suitably punctuated. Those candidates who were unfamiliar with the conventions of transcription (lack of punctuation, for example) were at a considerable disadvantage. Understanding of language theory is best exemplified when a text is analysed by considering the purpose of the text and applying theory to what is being said or written. Answers that work through the text making comments can become repetitive and are often judged to be 'feature-spotting'.

Question 1 allowed for candidates to comment on the co-operative context of students talking together. Those who appreciated the conventions of story-telling/jokes/narration were best able to appreciate the context for all participants. A minority of students seemed quite frustrated by this question, reporting that the 'standard' of the students' speech was very poor, and not worthy of serious analysis. The gender of the speakers in the transcript was not stated, which caused problems for some candidates.

Strong candidates appreciated the highly co-operative nature of the conversation and pursued a line of argument in a balanced and coherent fashion. Commenting on the light-hearted and diffuse nature of the conversation was an appropriate way in which to begin a response. A productive theoretical approach was that of Labov's Oral Narrative Structure.

Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron and strong candidates developed a counter-argument to these by referring to Beattie and Zimmerman and West. Some responses could be improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists. Many candidates also referred to Grice. When doing so, candidates could improve by further explanation and development.

Responses could be improved by maintaining linguistic rather than sociological analysis. Some discussion on the interlocutors' socioeconomic, regional or intellectual status was evident, yet was not required by the question. Some responses demonstrated focus on inferences of personalities and relationships with

assertions on dominance. Candidates should be aware that this may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2: English as a global language

The stronger responses to this question were those who could appreciate the complexities of language elitism and bidialectalism; not all candidates wrote about these aspects. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response; a more accurate response will describe 'standard' and 'non-standard' language and argue in a balanced manner the relative advantages of these forms. However, conclusions in favour of 'Standard English' were often those most cogently argued.

Stronger and more confident candidates engaged with the ramifications of bidialectalism and the concept of Globish, making appropriate and sustained connections with the passage provided. Many candidates had made use of the 'Relevant areas for study' in the syllabus. Stronger candidates had made explorations outside these and were able to integrate them into articulate responses. Candidates should be aware of the differences between pidgins and creoles and the manner in which they are created and used.

Some candidates chose to include long discussions on the history of the English language which meant that more relevant discussion did not demonstrate as much focus.

Theoretical examples tended to focus on Kachru, Crystal and Diamond although the work of other theorists was occasionally referred to, which provided depth and colour to examples from candidates' wider exploration.

Question 3: Language acquisition by children and teenagers

This question allowed for a range of language acquisition theory to be applied and was, on the whole, well answered. Stronger responses were those which considered the context and purpose of the talk rather than an overview of subjects covered. Some candidates, however, were not clear about the purpose of the conversation, and were confused by the role of the 'adult helper' and her relationship with Dee.

Many responses attempted to provide a 'deficit' model, describing the child's non-standard forms as 'mistakes', with some referring to these as evidence of limited intelligence or low social status. Stronger candidates commented on the on-going process of language acquisition and the state of achievement demonstrated in the script, including tense, pronoun, turn-taking and object permanence.

Theorists, such as Skinner, Bruner, Chomsky, Piaget and Vygotsky, were incorporated into most responses, with stronger responses selecting examples from the text, providing a linguistic discussion on the example, and then explaining why and how this example tests the theory. Strong and confident responses demonstrated knowledge of child directed speech and how it was being used in the extract provided.

Some responses detailed the behavioural rather than linguistic aspects demonstrated in the response. Candidates should maintain a linguistic stance in relation to what is required in the question.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/43
Language Topics

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This question presented a context less familiar to many candidates but was well understood and most candidates appreciated the humour and good nature of the interaction. Opportunity was given, and often taken, to explore the range of genderlect theory. Some candidates did not appreciate the ironic interruptions of Alan, while stronger responses commented on the contributions from the male as well as female interactants.

Strong candidates appreciated the highly co-operative nature of the conversation and pursued a line of argument in a balanced and coherent fashion. Commenting on the light-hearted and diffuse nature of the conversation was an appropriate way in which to begin a response. A productive theoretical approach was that of Labov's Oral Narrative Structure.

Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron and strong candidates developed a counter-argument to these by referring to Beattie and Zimmerman and West. Some responses could be improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists. Many candidates also referred to Grice. When doing so, candidates could improve by further explanation and development.

Responses could be improved by maintaining linguistic rather than sociological analysis. Some discussion on the interlocutors' socioeconomic status was evident, yet was not required by the question. Some responses demonstrated focus on inferences of personalities and relationships, with assertions on dominance. Candidates should be aware that this may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2: English as a global language

This question gave candidates an opportunity to explore the subject of 'Globish'; on the whole, most candidates confined their response to the context with stronger candidates being those who also considered wider issues. Some students made good reference to the extract, whereas others did not mention Obama or Globish. Some responses gave focus to language death, language complacency and language power, which were not closely linked to the issue of Globish, or the idea of code-switching between a first and second language.

Stronger and more confident candidates engaged with the ramifications of bidialectalism and the concept of Globish, making appropriate and sustained connections with the passage provided. Many candidates had made use of the 'Relevant areas for study' in the syllabus. Stronger candidates had made explorations outside these and were able to integrate them into articulate responses. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response. A more appropriate response will describe 'standard' and 'non-standard' language and argue in a balanced manner the relative advantages of these forms. Candidates should be aware of the differences between pidgins and creoles and the manner in which they are created and used.

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Question 3: Language acquisition by children and teenagers

This question allowed for a variety of opinion on the nature of the interaction between parent and child. Comments on behaviour were not relevant, but some contrast of language learning theories was successfully made. The word 'poorly' was used in a variety of constructions – "a poorly"/"it's poorly". Stronger responses focused on this to exemplify the nature of the child's language being used. Some candidates gave focus to Lara's behaviour, possibly because Lara's mother was not overtly correcting Lara's language in the way that candidates were expecting. In such cases, the focus of the response became behavioural rather than linguistic. Stronger responses were those which could link the purpose and context with their comments about language.

Many responses attempted to provide a 'deficit' model, describing the child's non-standard forms as 'mistakes', with some referring to these as evidence of limited intelligence or low social status. Stronger candidates commented on the on-going process of language acquisition and the state of achievement demonstrated in the script, including tense, pronoun, turn-taking and object permanence.

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Strong answers considered the context and purpose of the talk rather than an overview of subjects covered in the conversation. Candidates should maintain a linguistic stance in relation to what is required in the question.