FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/01
Reading Passages (Core)

Key Messages

- It is important to read both passages and questions carefully and to focus on the key words in the questions.
- The writer's effect question (**Question 1(h)**) requires concentration on defining the *word* in italics in the first part of the question, and explaining the overall effect of the *whole phrase* in the second part.
- Careful reading of introductions to the passages is important. It was necessary to read the information carefully in the introduction to **Question 2** to understand the role of Anil.
- Careful attention to basic punctuation and grammar is important when answering **Questions 2** and **3**.

General Comments

In general, candidates at all levels of achievement were able to engage successfully with the question paper. Nearly all candidates coped successfully with the revised format of the exam although a very small minority made the error of answering the questions in relation to the wrong text. The introduction of a discrete summary task based on a second reading passage meant that summary skills were tested more specifically than in previous examination series, and with added scaffolding for candidates' responses. The most successful responses showed clear awareness of the wording of the question and precisely selected relevant points as their notes to **Question 3(a)** and then turned these into a well organised summary clearly focused on conveying the key points concisely and objectively in **Question 3(b)**. The less successful responses identified relevant details in **Question 3(a)**, but appeared not to have grasped fully the principles of summary writing, resulting in lengthy and unfocused summaries for **Question 3(b)**. The two parts of the summary task are now worth 30 per cent of the total marks for this paper and Centres are advised to ensure that their candidates are well prepared with the techniques to answer this task successfully.

Most responses to **Question 2** indicated that candidates were interested in the subject matter of Passage A and were able to respond at sufficient length. The changes in the paper's format mean that twice as many marks are now available for Reading than are given to Written Expression. It is, therefore, important that candidates understand that this is a response to reading question and that the points that they make in their writing must refer to details in the original passage and any development of these points should derive from these points or other suggestions that can logically be inferred from the original. A significant number of candidates achieved this very successfully and produced convincing and interesting accounts of a day in the life of Anil and his thoughts about the job he was doing. Less successful responses, however, revealed an incomplete understanding of some of the basic details of the passage and question: in particular, the assumption that Bandhavgarh National Park was a zoo. A significant number of responses were written from the point of view of Kuttapan, the mahout, rather than from that of Anil, the guide (a few also wrote as if they were Gautam, without noticing that he was an elephant).

It is important to emphasise that although there is now a maximum of only five marks available for Written Expression for **Question 2**, candidates should, nevertheless, take care in structuring their writing through paragraphs and concentrating on making their writing technically accurate – in particular, ensuring that sentences are demarcated by full stops and not commas, and that elementary vocabulary is spelt correctly and consistently. A significant number of responses showed real quality of sophisticated thought and logic.

Most candidates managed their time well and produced responses of adequate length to all questions; there were, however, a minority who made no response to **Question 3(b)**, the last question in the paper, and others where the **Question 3(b)** responses were brief and rushed.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

(a) This proved to be an accessible question for the candidates, with the majority securing at least one mark. Most were able to identify that Kuttapan was the elephant driver or keeper, often in their own words, such as 'rider' or 'owner'. His expertise with tigers was less frequently identified or only expressed in general terms such as mentioning that he was an 'expert' without making it clear where his expertise lay. A question such as this that carries a maximum of two marks requires two distinct points to be identified for a fully correct answer.

(b) Most candidates were able to gain one mark by focusing on the imprint left by the tiger. Some candidates, however, thought that the passage referred to a dead tiger lying in the road, which indicated a misreading of the source material and could not be rewarded. Many candidates did not address the significance of '*recently*' in the question – those that were successful correctly identified that nothing had used the road/passed over the marks since they had been made.

(c) There were two possible six-word phrases which could have been chosen to gain the one mark for this question: 'announcing the presence of a predator' and 'the alarm call of the chital'. The second phrase was the more popular but many candidates identified the first phrase successfully. Candidates should be encouraged to read the wording of questions carefully; quite a significant number misread this question as 'six-letter word' and answered 'varoom' as a result. A few also responded with answers consisting of more than six words and therefore did not gain the mark, for example, 'bleep, bleep, the alarm call of the chital'. A few candidates offered a list of six separate words selected from the passage and not a six-word phrase.

(d) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly by focusing on 'fear', 'anxiety', 'tension' and other acceptable synonyms (such as 'frightened', 'anxious', 'terrified', 'petrified', 'tense', 'on edge'). Some, however, identified 'excitement' only. 'Excitement' on its own was not considered sufficient to convey the feelings of the visitors to the national park because the question clearly is related to the presence of the tiger and the tourists' feelings about it.

(e) Most candidates successfully gained one mark for this question, commenting confidently on the behaviour of the wolves. Correct comments on the wolves' attitude, however, were less frequent. Many said that the wolves were scared or upset but omitted to say how that fear was demonstrated by their behaviour. This question required candidates to use information from paragraph *four*. Not all followed this instruction fully and attempted to use information from the final paragraph, interpreting the wolves' behaviour as being prompted by an instinct to protect their young (aggressively) rather than suggesting fear. Some candidates described the behaviour of the tiger and not that of the wolves.

(f) This was the first question on the paper that asked for comment on the writer's use of words. The majority of candidates were able to identify that the people in the jeep were waiting to see the outcome of the meeting between the wolves and the tiger and were variously described as 'anxious', 'concerned', 'excited', and 'eager' to see the anticipated conflict between the animals. The more successful responses showed greater understanding of the 'silent drama' by referring to 'fascination' and 'intrigue' and the most successful showed full appreciation of the metaphor by saying that the experience was 'similar to watching a gladiator fight in Rome' or 'watching what was happening as if it were a TV drama'. Centres are advised to encourage future candidates to work on ways of appreciating the effects of imagery used by a writer.

(g) Most candidates were aware that this question required comment on specific physical behaviour and the majority gained the one mark available. Most were able to identify the twitching of muscles and/or the turning of the head. Some responses referred to the tiger turning but made no reference to his head. This information was insufficiently precise for a mark to be awarded as such a response could be attributed to the end of paragraph four where the 'the tiger spins around on the road'. It is important that candidates draw their answer from the paragraph or line(s) indicated in the question and by doing so make sure its meaning is specific and unequivocal.

(h) The format of the 'writer's effect' question has changed from previous examination series. The first part of the question tests a candidate's understanding of the meaning of specific words used in the passage. The words that should be explained are italicised in the phrases quoted at the beginning of the question and the candidate should explain their meaning in the context in which they are

used. The explanation may take the form of a one word synonym, an explanatory sentence or phrase or even an appropriate exemplification of their meaning. The second part of the question requires a comment on how the writer uses language *in the whole phrase* to create a particular effect in the mind of the reader (this is clearly stated in the wording of this part of the question). Centres are strongly encouraged to focus on developing future candidates' working vocabulary and understanding of how different words with similar meanings can carry a range of different associations and implications. The following comments refer to the specific words that candidates were required to explain for part **(i)**:

- *forays* – some answers did identify acceptable connotations such as 'scouting', 'expedition' and 'excursion'.
- *casual* – many candidates identified the 'normality' and the 'unconcerned', 'everyday' routine stroll of the tiger.
- *suspension* – although many candidates correctly identified the 'stopping' or 'withholding' of breath, quite a number misread 'suspension' for 'suspense' and answered accordingly. Answers commonly, quite acceptably, were given as sentences as opposed to single word answers and answers such as 'They took a deep breath because they were scared' were credited with the mark.
- *scampers* – many responses understood the 'hurrying' aspect of scampers with references to speed, running and so on. A significant number, however, thought it meant to 'creep up slowly'.

As mentioned above, a productive area of focus for all Centres is to explore how to respond relevantly to this type of question, by commenting appropriately on the reasons for the writer's choice of language.

Question 2: Reading

Most candidates responded well to the passage and were able to create a convincing voice for Anil. The more successful answers were those that dealt with each bullet point in turn in order to structure their response. Some candidates, however, were so concerned with creating Anil's voice that they focused on this rather than selecting appropriate details from the text. Relatively few candidates omitted to say why they found their job rewarding – working with animals – but quite a number merely said it was rewarding rather than give reasons for their feelings. There were many responses which successfully attempted a clever combination of material from the passage with the candidate's own ideas. Less successful responses addressed all bullet points in such general terms that it was unclear whether they had actually used the original passage in creating their answer. Quite a number of candidates wrote fairly generalised accounts which certainly developed ideas about tourists and visitors but frequently did not relate the assertions to particular examples. The least successful responses merely copied from or summarised the account in the passage. In preparation for future examinations, it would be worth Centres reminding their candidates that, although there is a certain amount of creativity involved in this response, the question is testing the extent of each candidate's understanding of the text. Of the 50 marks available on the paper, 40 (i.e. 80 per cent) relate specifically to Reading. It is therefore essential that their responses are firmly grounded in the texts under analysis.

Among the positive points noted in the candidates' performances were the following:

- Good use of idioms and appropriate jargon: 'When that's done I will do a ride through the park, scouting for any sick or injured animals'; 'my patience with them (tourists) runs thin'; (children) 'brimming with questions, thirsting for more knowledge on their favourite species'; 'Being allowed to view nature run its course on a daily basis is a fantastic sight to behold'; 'This job requires both a soft touch and a firm hand. These animals might be endangered, but they are far from domestic house cats.'
- Good use of facts from the text: 'A typical day of mine would consist of meeting the tiger expert, Kuttapan, for information on the possible locations of tigers that morning.'
- Good discussion of the various reactions of the tourists: some were irritating (e.g. more keen to take photos than to observe the wild animals), rude or snobby, whilst others gave more positive impressions (interested in/engaged or blown away by the wildlife/what they were seeing, etc.).
- Appropriate use of form and register.

Question 2: Written Expression

Most candidates wrote enthusiastically, managing to create a convincing voice for Anil. The focus of the descriptors for Written Expression is now on organisation of material, range of appropriate vocabulary, and

appropriate register and this enabled many candidates to score quite highly on this aspect even when there were serious errors in spelling and punctuation, for example. The majority of responses achieved Band 3 or above. Paragraphs, generally, were used confidently, particularly where the three bullet points were used as a structural guide and some candidates wrote eloquently and accurately throughout. The main limitation of candidates' linguistic expression was in sentence structure, largely as a result of comma splicing.

Question 3(a): Summary Points

Most candidates scored reasonably well on this task and successfully identified the reasons why tigers are endangered and what was being done to rectify the situation. The question did not require own words and accordingly many candidates copied sentences and phrases from the passage. Many candidates did not sequence points under the two sections or divide the ten points equally, which again was not asked for in the question but which might have been of help when writing their response to part **(b)**. Some candidates, however, did not write enough in their selected responses so the context of the point was unclear and resulted in the marks not being given. One/two word answers were rewarded if the context was clear such as in 'climate change' but 'save their habitat' and 'body parts' were not credited as they were considered to be too vague. Future candidates should be encouraged to make sure that they have identified the essence of a point when answering in their own words and that the point they have identified is not generic.

Candidates are advised to:

- Make a clear statement of points and not join them together.
- Avoid repetition – the statement of the same point twice, using slightly different words.
- Only make one point per line.
- Make sure that where an answer extends beyond the allocated space for a point, it is clearly identified that it is part of that point.
- Avoid adding extra points to the grid over and above the ten answer rows printed on the answer paper.

Some candidates tended to write as many points as possible on the first line, which was often detrimental to their score on this question.

In all, there were 13 relevant points that could have been made in response to this question:

Why tigers are an endangered species

- only 3,200 left in the world/population fallen by 95% in last hundred years
- they are hunted/killed (by poachers for their skins/body parts)
- ...because there is a demand in some cultures for luxury/medical items from tigers
- the tigers' food supply is reduced/poachers also kill natural prey of tigers
- the tigers' habitat is reduced/destroyed by the need for timber, agriculture, road building etc/tigers are forced into smaller living area
- climate change/rising sea levels

What is being done

- WWF intend to increase pressure
- to classify tigers as one of the (ten) most endangered species
- to increase patrols
- (work with governments) to eradicate poaching/illegal trade in tiger skins etc.
- (work with governments) to enforce better forest management/protect the environment
- (work with governments) to compensate farmers whose livestock are killed by tigers
- (work with governments) to discourage farmers from hunting tigers that kill livestock

Question 3(b): Summary

In general, the majority of candidates showed that they had a sound understanding of the passage, used the scaffolding provided in part **(a)**, and most achieved marks in the Band 3–2 range. It is important when answering this question that summaries are clearly focused on the specific points required by the question and that candidates avoid irrelevance, repetition and subjective comment in their responses. The most successful attempts at this question competently used the points identified in **Question 3(a)** to build a focused response which was concise and showed the ability to achieve synthesis of one point with another.

Although key phrases were often lifted from the passage, there was little evidence of indiscriminate copying from the text. It is hoped that in future examination series as candidates become more at ease with the requirements of this important skill, the number producing focused and concise responses will rapidly increase.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/02

Reading Passages (Extended)

Key Messages

This paper was mainly assessed for **Reading** (40 marks). In addition, there were up to ten marks available for **Writing**: five marks in **Question 1** and five marks in **Question 3**. Candidates are advised that in order to aim for high marks in this component they should:

- read the passages very carefully – avoid skim-reading
- read the questions carefully, paying attention to the guidance offered
- give equal attention to all sections of each question
- spend time thinking about and planning responses, especially in **Questions 1** and **3**
- use own words in **Questions 1** and **3(b)**; do not lift whole phrases or sentences from the passages
- select only the material that is appropriate for the response to the question
- only make a point once in a response
- give thought to the structure and sequence of the material in the response
- adopt a suitable voice and register for the task, different for each question
- make sure that responses to **Question 1** are sufficiently developed
- practise note-making, sequencing and concise expression.

General Comments

Candidates' responses to this paper indicated familiarity with the demands of each task and the format of the paper, along with an awareness of the need to use material from the passages to answer the questions. There were still some responses that depended too heavily on the wording of the passage in **Questions 1** and **3(b)**. Candidates are reminded that they are expected to adapt and modify the material in the passage to access higher band marks, and that copying from the passages is to be avoided.

Candidates appeared to find both passages equally accessible and engaging, and were able to finish the paper within the time allowed. Most candidates had been entered for the appropriate tier. There did not seem to be many significant misunderstandings of the content of the passages, although at times the situation was confused – an assumption that Anuja was the journalist, or that she was campaigning for a new hospital, for example. Careful reading is essential to ensure that the finer details are teased out and used to support ideas firmly and securely.

Copying was sometimes evident in **Question 1**, especially in response to the first and second bullet points: there is a significant difference between using textual detail in support of points and lifting whole sections of the text or key phrases. The description of the local people arriving at the meeting, and their responses to the two speakers, were often copied, in particular. There were also responses that included extremely long quotations from the two speakers; short precise quotations could be credited as helpful details to include in a newspaper report, but copying large chunks of the passage could not. Candidates must change the language of the passages in response to **Question 1** and **Question 3(b)** in order to achieve a higher Reading and Writing mark.

For **Question 2**, in order to achieve higher marks, candidates must make appropriate choices of words and phrases and need to make specific and detailed comments about these choices. To gain marks in the higher bands candidates need to write detailed explanations of the effects of their choices, demonstrating sound understanding of the writer's purpose. Weaker responses tried to explain the selected language in the same words as the language choice – ''cast heavy shade' means that the trees make the area shaded', for example. Candidates should avoid using a grid or table format to respond to this question, as it usually limits their ability to explore the choices they have selected and often leads to repetition.

In **Question 3** many candidates managed to earn a mark in double figures in **Question 3(a)** by finding a reasonable number of points, using the additional scaffolding provided in this revised question structure. Candidates do not need to use their own words in **Question 3(a)** but should use short notes rather than whole sentences. The majority of candidates used their own words in **Question 3(b)**, and attempted to summarise the ideas; however, candidates must be aware that the meaning must not change so that the summary is factually inaccurate. An example is changing 'reversible toes' to special or unique, which misses the precise point. Candidates are not expected to change key words and terms in **3(b)**, but should not lift whole phrase and sentences from the passage. Inclusion of material outside of the passage is also not rewarded and is distracting. There were many examples of excessively long responses, and this is still an area that sometimes leads to a lower Writing mark. Most lengthy responses were due to inclusion of unnecessary material, indiscriminate copying of the passage, or repetition.

Though Paper 2 is primarily a test of Reading, candidates need to keep in mind that 20% of the available marks are for Writing, split evenly between **Questions 1 and 3**. It is important that candidates do not lift from the passage and consider the quality of their writing – planning and editing their responses to avoid inconsistencies of style, imprecise meaning and awkward expression. Most responses were written in an appropriate register, but some Writing marks were affected by awkward expression or limited style, over-reliance on the language of the passages, or structural weakness and incoherence. Candidates are reminded that the word counts for questions are there for guidance, suggesting the length of response it is expected a candidate might need to address the requirements of the task within the time scale of the examination. Over-long and/or very brief responses are likely to be self-penalising.

A clear focus on the specific instruction and wording of a question during the planning of an answer will allow candidates to work to identify relevant detail in the text, cover all aspects of the task and target marks at the higher levels.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Imagine you are a journalist from the local newspaper at the meeting.

Write a newspaper report about the meeting.

In your newspaper report you should:

- **describe the atmosphere and the reactions of the crowd at the meeting**
- **give your impressions of the two speakers and the arguments they made**
- **suggest what will happen next**

Base your newspaper report on what you have read in Passage A, but be careful to use your own words. Address the three bullet points.

Stronger responses to this question selected and condensed the events in the passage and modified the ideas to create a suitable style for a newspaper report, and a highly convincing voice for a local journalist reporting on a tense situation which has attracted a great deal of local interest. They were able to sustain the use of supporting detail throughout the response, firmly tethering any development to details in the passage. The first bullet allowed them to retrieve relevant material from throughout the passage to describe the atmosphere and reactions of the crowd. The second bullet allowed candidates to develop ideas from the passage in terms of how the speakers came across to the audience and also what arguments they presented. The best responses firmly linked their ideas for the third bullet to details in the passage: Rufus Carmichael's departing threat that Foodfreight would get their way, Anuja's desire to clear the land and restore the area, the unity of the local people by the end of the meeting, the suggestion of a fight ensuing, and the need for economic improvement in the area are some examples of ideas used as suggestions of how the situation may develop in the future.

A feature of better responses was even attention paid to the three bullet points with clear modification of the ideas, but the responses always remaining firmly tethered to the passage. Middle-range responses made reasonable use of the passage, with some attempt at own words, but tended to stick closely to the events and ideas in the passage, and to present them in the same order as in the passage, often using some of the same words. A noticeable feature of such responses was far more attention paid in the first bullet to the atmosphere and facial expressions at the beginning of the meeting, ignoring the way that the crowd changed

their loyalties as the meeting progressed. This often led to a rather limited response to the first bullet as the second part was ignored. The second bullet posed fewer problems, although again some candidates focused too heavily on the arguments put forward, rather than developing their impressions of the speakers. In the third bullet, some candidates missed opportunities to tether their suggestions to clues in the passage, instead writing at length about attracting tourists to the area, or the building of a new hospital by Anuja instead of Foodfreight's plans being realised. A number of candidates did not address the third bullet point at all, ending on the meeting breaking up.

Many candidates wrote in a convincing style for a newspaper report, but some candidates took the form of an unselective narrative retelling of the events of the meeting – without developing a journalistic stance. Such responses lacked a sense of purpose. Some less careful reading was evident in the confusion about Anuja's identity or gender, the promise of a medical centre or hospital and the significance of the storm and grey-footed falcon at the end of the passage.

The least successful answers were often thin, simple or short. They offered a very general view of the situation but few ideas and details in response to the bullet points. Some did not move beyond the first bullet point.

The Writing mark reflected the clarity, fluency and coherence of the response and how well it used language to capture the journalist's view of the meeting. The better written responses adopted a discursive investigative tone and judiciously used the evidence in the passage to support the purpose of the newspaper report through concise quotations or opinion on the events of the meeting and the arguments of the speakers. These responses used language appropriate for a local newspaper and established a sense of involvement and interest in the issues being reported on. Less successful responses were less organised and should have adopted more features of newspaper reporting.

Advice to candidates on Question 1

- ensure that you adopt the correct voice by reading the question carefully
- think carefully about audience and purpose
- answer all parts of the question, covering each of the three bullet points in reasonable detail
- answer in your own words and adapt material from the passage to make it an appropriate response written in the required style
- plan your answer to ensure that the material is sequenced logically and to avoid repetition
- select the most appropriate ideas from the passage
- develop and modify some of the ideas relevantly
- use relevant details from the passage to demonstrate close reading.

Question 2

Re-read the descriptions of:

(a) the common land in paragraph 6, beginning 'The meeting resumed...';

(b) Rufus Carmichael in paragraph 13, beginning 'Rufus' face tightened...'.

Select <u>four</u> powerful words or phrases from <u>each</u> paragraph. Your choices should include imagery.

Explain how each word or phrase selected is used effectively in the context.

It was expected that the response would take the form of continuous prose to allow candidates to explore their choices fully. Marks are given for the relevance of the words and phrases chosen to answer the question, and for the quality of the analysis. Credit is given in **Question 2** for the ability to select a range of interesting or unusual examples of words and phrases relevant to the focus of the question in each section. Responses that go on to explore and explain meanings of the words are awarded further marks. Responses that also explore the effects of the use of particular words and phrases on the reader can score up to the highest mark of ten.

The majority of candidates found this question the most demanding of the three, as it requires a wide vocabulary, close reading, and an ability to relate to subtleties of language beyond explicit meaning. It was pleasing to note in this series that few candidates approached **Question 2** using a grid or table format. Grid approaches tend to limit the success of responses. When using a grid, candidates can easily duplicate the same material in two of the three columns. The grid approach also often forces responses to be expressed

very briefly or in note form and doesn't allow for varying development of comments according to the complexity of the language choice being discussed. It is also rare for responses offered in a grid format to consider meanings.

The most successful responses to **Question 2** showed precise focus at word level and were engaged and assured in their handling of their appropriate choices. They selected carefully, including images, put the choices in context, and answered both parts of the question equally well. They were able, for example, to explain the rising tension indicated in 'his lips compressed' and the promise of an outburst implied in 'a dark cloud passed across his face'. Many candidates were very secure on meanings and could explain words such as 'noxious', 'choked' and 'lair'. There was some misinterpretation of words such as 'haven', which a number of candidates read as 'heaven'.

The following response was written by a candidate in this examination series and is given as an indication of what constitutes an appropriate type of response to the question. It is not intended to be a model answer.

(a) the common land in paragraph 6

Rufus Carmichael manages to create the image of the common land being a dangerous and ugly hell-hole. He says "noxious weeds choke the ground". The word "noxious" means poisonous and it almost implies evil with the word "choking", meaning to kill someone through suffocation. He portrays the weeds as evil forces trying to kill and suffocate the ground beneath them. It implies that the weeds are physically supressing the common land. He describes the area as an "impenetrable thicket". The word impenetrable means that it cannot be broken into and a thicket is a bush. This gives the idea that it has grown so wildly out of control that it can no longer be entered by man and is almost like a fortress protecting the evil creatures that lurk in the area. He describes the place as a "haven for vermin" and a "lair for undesirables". A haven is a safe protected place and a lair is a dwelling place, or a hideout for dangerous beings. The word haven suggests that rats and other dirty creatures are attracted to this place and lair implies that it is full of society's unwanted creatures. Rooks are described to have taken over with their "raucous unending cries". This means the noise never stops and incessantly surrounds the villagers, making the area sound deeply unpleasant and unwelcoming.

(b) Rufus Carmichael in paragraph 13

Rufus's anger is described in an exaggerated and almost comical manner to show how he appears as ridiculous to the town members at the ned of the meeting. "His lips compressed into a thin line of anger" denotes his fury, showing how he is becoming tense with anger and could blow at any moment. The word compressed sounds quite mechanical, which shows how he has put up a fake front at the meeting and is struggling now to control it. He is described as "dots of perspiration sprang out on his forehead. The word "sprang" means to quickly jump showing how quickly his anger is escalating. This paints him as a volatile man. "A dark cloud passed across his face" is used to show how swiftly his facial expression changes to displeasure. It is also symbolic as the cloud presages a storm brewing meaning he is about to become very angry. He is described as "panting" meaning that he is breathing rapidly and finding it hard to control himself. The comparison to running a "race" shows that he has been competing with Anuja for the people's attention but has lost.

Less successful responses sometimes adopted a 'technique spotting' approach identifying literary techniques, such as pathetic fallacy in 'dark cloud'. This approach often led to rather generic comments about the effects of the techniques rather than the words themselves which limited the response. Other candidates repeated the same explanation after each choice, for example, that the forest is unpleasant in part **(a)**, or that Rufus is extremely angry in part **(b)**. These less successful responses often took the form of a commentary on the entire paragraph for each half of the question, containing some relevant choices and some brief explanation of them. Occasionally candidates offered an extremely sparse number of choices or simply lifted the whole paragraph and offered a general comment, providing little evidence of understanding.

Advice to candidates on Question 2

- focus on the question carefully to ensure that all your choices are relevant
- re-read the whole paragraph before making selections; choose the best and not those which happen to come first
- choose a range of words and phrases that seem powerful. Do not write out whole sentences, but also do not offer only one word if it is part of a descriptive phrase

- do not write out the beginning and end of a long quotation with the key words missing from the middle
- remember to put quotation marks around your choices. This makes it easier for you to focus on the exact wording
- treat each of your choices separately and do not present them as a list or give a general comment which applies to all of them
- avoid general comments such as 'this creates a strong visual image', or 'this draws the reader in and makes them want to read on'. Such comments will not earn any marks at all
- if you are not sure about effects, try to at least give a meaning, in context, for each of your choices
- remember you do not get any marks for identifying techniques unless you focus on the meaning and effects of the words you have chosen
- to explain effects, think of how the reader's understanding is enhanced by the use of language when reading the word or phrase, because of its connotations and associations
- include images from each paragraph, and try to explain them.

Question 3

(a) Notes

How is the osprey adapted to ensure its survival and what threatens its continued existence, according to Passage B?

Write your answer using short notes. Write one point per line. You do not need to use your own words.

Up to 15 marks are available for the content of your answer.

(b) Summary

Now use your notes to write a summary of what Passage B tells us about how the osprey is adapted to ensure its survival and what threatens its continued existence.

You must use continuous writing (not note form) and use your own words as far as possible.

Your summary should include all 15 of your points in Question 3(a) and must be 200 to 250 words.

Up to 5 marks are available for the quality of your answer.

Almost all candidates had understood the need to identify just 15 points in **3(a)** and that points added after the 15 would not be credited unless replacing a crossed out answer earlier on. Selecting and identifying points meant that candidates had to read and plan their answers carefully both to avoid repetition and to organise their ideas sensibly. There was more than one way in which points could be logically grouped and these options were reflected in the mark scheme. There were a total of 20 potential points available from this one passage allowing generous leeway for candidates looking for 15. Most were able to identify at least seven points from the passage. Better, more focused, answers typically scored two thirds or more of the available content marks.

Question **3(b)** responses that did well had used their points from **3(a)** carefully – organising them purposefully into a concise, fluent prose response rather than relying on repeating points in the order or language of the passage. There was some suggestion that answers at the top end had revisited points in **3(a)** during the planning stages of **3(b)** in order to edit and refine points in this part of the question – leading to clearer more distinct points in **3(a)** and an efficient and well-focused response in **3(b).** The two parts of this question are designed to work together, to provide candidates with a clear structure for their response in **3(a)** and an opportunity to revisit points selected when working on **3(b)**.

To answer this question successfully, candidates needed to first identify 15 points that were relevant to the question, listing them clearly – one per numbered line, in note form. Candidates are reminded that they are only credited with a maximum of one mark per line. Candidates are not required to use their own words in this part of the question, although copying out chunks of the passage is not recommended and can deny the mark. Answers, though in note form, needed to be sufficiently clear and focused to identify the point in hand. The question had two strands: how ospreys have adapted, and what threatens their existence, and the best responses organised their points to acknowledge the different strands. Better responses tended to include

verbs with each point to help focus the notes – for example, 'colliding with overhead wires' or 'collecting specimens and eggs'. Errors of number when noting some ideas (often incorrect use of singular or plural) served to blur points on occasion too. Ospreys have more than one toe and climbing animals steal more than one chick or egg, for example. There are no marks to be scored for Writing in **3(a)**; however, checking responses for accuracy in spelling and grammar is clearly essential if candidates are to avoid the potential danger of negating points through careless slips. Candidates should pay particular attention, for example, to correct any spelling errors that might change meaning. 'Naval passages' are not the same as 'nasal passages'. Care needs to be taken too if using an example to make a point that it remains factually accurate: owls and eagles are not climbing animals who steal chicks and eggs.

The majority of candidates demonstrated an awareness of the appropriate style for a summary, with very few examples of wholesale copying, though occasionally some added in further speculation and detail, resulting in less concise answers. The most successful responses used the notes from **3(a)**, re-ordering and regrouping the relevant information with a clear focus on the question. The best answers had considered carefully both the content and organisation of their answer, writing in fluent sentences, within the prescribed length and using their own words as far as possible. They avoided writing introductory statements and making comments, and concentrated on giving a factual objective summary. In a number of answers, the inclusion of irrelevant and/or repeated material diminished the focus and depressed the Writing mark.

Advice to candidates on Question 3

- read the question carefully and underline the key words
- re-read the passage after reading the question, in order to identify precisely the content points required
- list relevant points clearly in as few words as possible
- read through your list of points in **3(a)** checking each is distinct and accurate and that there are no repetitions or very similar points
- plan the structure of your response in **3(b)** – for example organising and sequencing content logically
- write informatively and never comment on the content of the passage.
- be careful to give only information from the passage that answers the question
- you can choose to use your own words in **3(a)** and must use your own written expression in **3(b)** although you do not need to change key words
- do not add further numbered points in **3(a)** beyond the 15 required as they will not be marked
- pay attention to the guidance for length in **3(b)**.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/03

Directed Writing and Composition

Key Messages

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

In order to achieve high marks, candidates were required to:

- use an appropriate form and style, adapted for the intended audience and genre
- structure ideas logically and organise their writing effectively
- create thoughtful and well-structured arguments, produce detailed and evocative descriptions and engaging, credible narratives
- construct sentences accurately and vary sentence types to create effects
- select appropriate and wide-ranging vocabulary with precision

General Comments

Most scripts showed a good grasp of what was expected in both the directed writing and the composition. Responses were substantial and purposeful, on the whole, with relatively few brief or undeveloped answers. There was evidence in many scripts of a clear awareness of how marks were awarded in the different questions and writing genres, and most followed the rubric.

Most responses showed an understanding of the topic in **Question 1** and made sensible use of the reading passage in their responses. Better answers engaged with the writer's arguments, demonstrated understanding of the older generation and recognised that the older generation were neither backward nor deliberately awkward but simply people who had grown up in different times and had not experienced the growth of technology during their working lives and formative years. Most responses in the middle mark range tended to reproduce the points made in it. Weaker answers drifted away from the material or listed some points simply.

In the compositions, better responses showed a clear understanding of the features of descriptive or narrative writing and in both genres there was developed and structured writing. Some weaker descriptive writing tended to slide into narrative or in some cases was entirely narrative in character; these responses would have benefited from a clearer grasp of the features of good descriptive style, such as a focus on detail and a more limited time span.

The best responses in both questions were characterised by the careful selection of precise vocabulary and sentence structures to create specific effects. The reader was often intrigued in the early stages of compositions and the writing was consciously shaped in both genres in order to engage and sustain the reader's interest. In weaker responses, an appropriate register and effective style was more difficult to achieve. In **Question 1**, for example, the required formal tone was sometimes forgotten. In this question and in the compositions, there was insufficient attention paid to basic punctuation in weaker answers. Capital letters were sometimes used rather indiscriminately, appearing frequently where not required but not used for proper nouns, in speech or at the beginnings of sentences. Semi-colons were much in evidence but only quite rarely used accurately.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section 1: Directed Writing

Question 1

Imagine that you are interested in becoming a volunteer for Age Campaign's project, as described in the article.

Write a letter to Age Campaign, applying for a place as a volunteer in the project.
In your letter, you should:

- **identify and evaluate the skills and qualities needed as a volunteer**
- **explain why you want to volunteer and why you consider yourself to be a suitable applicant.**

Base your letter on what you have read in the passage, but be careful to use your own words.

Address each of the two bullet points.

Begin your letter, 'Dear Age Campaign...'

Write about 250 to 350 words.

(25 marks)

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

Most responses adhered to the letter writing structure using a clear introduction and were able to bring their letters to a logical conclusion. They showed understanding of the basic requirements of a letter of application for employment, even though the work was of a voluntary nature and in better responses the writer's arguments were scrutinised and commented on purposefully. Good answers evaluated ideas successfully and explored the skills and qualities needed for this particular task of working with the elderly as identified in the passage. They also wrote fluently and used vocabulary to good effect. Many, however, simply listed and agreed with the writer's views on the different points and did not adopt the critical stance which is required for marks in the higher bands. Weaker responses focused on only a few points and often produced a response about the problems of the elderly in general, rather than covering the range of points made in the article.

The marks for reading

Good responses followed the bullet points but also adopted the evaluative stance required for marks above Band 3. Better responses identified and explored the subtleties of the passage, such as the need to treat the elderly as individuals and not to take a stereotypical and patronising approach. They were also able to appreciate that they too would learn from the experience and from working with the elderly. These better responses recognised that older people were not senile and might want to develop a diverse range of technical skills. These higher band responses used the detail of the passage well: this was a local campaign, arriving next month, local businesses had lent support, a professional trainer would be teaching the course and acknowledged the previous contributions of course participants to society. However, very few attempted to challenge the basic ideas contained within the passage. Most accepted the stated need for respectful tuition and a calm approach, for example. Some did argue that too formal an atmosphere could be counter-productive and inhibit the relaxed and friendly approach in which people of all ages might learn best. This kind of evaluative approach to the material in the passage was required for marks in Band 2 and above. A mark of 7 was given where there were glimpses of evaluation of some of the points but a more consistently critical stance was required for higher marks. Where responses reproduced the points made in the passage, often with straightforward agreement, Examiners could not award marks above Band 3.

Mid-range responses often recognised the pitfalls of over-simplified generalisations about older people while not presenting a range of, or using, supporting detail from the passage to qualify for the top bands. The majority of these responses claimed to have either lived with their grandparents or recently helped their grandparents engage with modern technology such as an iPad or smartphone, or learning how to use Skype or Facebook; they did not always explain or further develop why this was important for Age Campaign's project. These answers often seemed to explain the meaning or give examples of, for example 'patience and perseverance', rather than seeking to move beyond the text in evaluating why these qualities would be

important for working on this project with the elderly. There were quite a few responses that seemed unsure of the difference between skills and qualities; there was a tendency to use the two interchangeably.

Weaker responses identified few qualities and skills; they were not always able to consider why these qualities and skills were valuable in relation to the Age Campaign's scheme. Some responses veered away from the text and explored skills and qualities that they believed to be important for a volunteer, for example team work. Details explored were therefore not rooted in the text, were often very generalised and not closely referenced to the elderly. Weaker responses also tended to take a simplistic approach about what the elderly would need to learn, or were capable of learning.

At this level, there were occasional examples of misunderstanding or literal interpretation. For example, many students misunderstood the need for creativity and assumed that a volunteer needed to be artistic rather than adopting a flexible approach for working with the elderly; one response argued that, 'my ability to draw, act or write, would make me more suited to the task than someone who prefers science.' Some of these responses wrote a great length about the volunteers' IT capabilities, often quoting that they had advanced qualifications in this area. This was in contradiction to the desired skills requested. Some responses further strayed from the brief and forgot they were to write as 'young volunteers…local teenagers'.

The marks for writing

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

Style and audience

Most, across the mark range, wrote an introductory paragraph making clear the purpose of their letter. Responses made an attempt at a persuasive style, with varying degrees of success. Better answers sustained the sense of audience throughout, with regular allusions to the article and Age Campaign. Phrases such as 'As you mentioned...' or 'As mentioned in the article...' worked well here. Weaker answers suggested a sense of audience in the opening paragraph only, if at all. Generally, even in weaker answers, the responses were aware of the need for a formal and respectful tone in addressing the intended audience. Very occasionally this led to writing which was too formal, and rather over ambitious in vocabulary and expression. Some responses criticised the charity about how their criteria did not go far enough, or had asked for the wrong qualities, which is inappropriate for a letter of application. There was some inappropriate word choice when referring to the elderly, such as 'olds', 'elderlies' and 'these people'. This had a detrimental effect on the tone of the letter.

Structure

Some accomplished responses, awarded high marks for writing, handled the material confidently and presented their arguments cogently. The issues addressed were combined into a persuasive application which was clearly derived from the ideas in the passage but was not dependent on its structure and sequence. Some stronger responses did not base their structure around the bullet points. For example, some considered what had driven them to volunteer as a strong persuasive tactic at the start of the letter. At the highest level, an overview of the issues involved was given rather than a list of desirable attributes. Some fluent responses with effective sentences did not give full attention to sequencing, so ideas within and between paragraphs were not linked as smoothly as they could be. Moreover, there was some tendency, even among stronger responses, to neglect the use of paragraphs. Many middle band responses used discursive markers which provided effective structure. Some responses were structured according to the bullet points, occasionally devoting one long paragraph to each. Weaker responses lacked a clear introduction and conclusion to the letter and ideas were presented in a jumbled way, often without paragraphs. Responses given marks below Band 3 were characterised by brief or no introductions and a simple list of some of the writer's points in sequence.

Accuracy

Accomplished writing which was accurate and controlled was given a writing mark in Band 1. These responses were not only authoritative in style and convincing in their arguments but fluent and virtually free of error. Responses given 7, 8 or 9 were usually purposeful and clear, though not as ambitious and wide ranging in vocabulary and style as those given higher marks. Responses given marks in Band 4 sometimes showed some clarity in conveying meaning but there was a wide range of quite basic punctuation errors which precluded Examiners from awarding Band 3 marks and in addition, there was sometimes a simplicity

of language and style. Sentence separation errors also appeared at this level and the frequency of errors became self-penalising, as did insecure grammar and awkward phrasing.

There was some overuse of informality for example 'like' instead of 'as if', or 'such as' and also 'that' or 'which' instead of 'who'. The joining of separate words, for example 'aswell', 'infront', 'atall' and particularly 'alot' was prevalent.

Ways in which this type of answer could be improved

- Use the details in the passage but think about the attitude of the writer to the topic as a whole also.
- Try to develop ideas from the passage concisely, using inferences that are suggested in it, but without drifting beyond it.
- Be aware of the genre you are using for your answer. Think carefully about the right style for a letter, an article or a speech for example.
- Use paragraphs to structure responses.
- Check your writing for basic punctuation errors that will inevitably reduce your mark.

***Section 2*: Composition**

Write about 350 to 450 words on one of the following questions.

Up to 13 marks are available for the content and structure of your answer, and up to 12 marks for the style and accuracy of your writing.

Descriptive Writing

Question 2

Imagine you have moved house. Describe your new home and your thoughts and feelings as you enter it for the first time.

(25 marks)

OR

Question 3

Describe a town or city centre in the early hours of the morning. (25 marks)

The second question was the most popular of the two options.

The first question provided a great variety of responses across the range. The best responses not only demonstrated linguistic and stylistic skills but used a variety of devices to create atmosphere. Complex atmospheres relating to thoughts and feelings experienced were developed. Good responses were often shaped by the movement through the house. This gave a structure which suited even less confident candidates. Some responses felt as if they had the validity of lived experience and these remained focused on the description. Another successful approach was the use of extended metaphor to give a house an underlying feeling.

Weaker responses drifted into narrative as the need to move house and the journey there was explained. At this level, the thoughts and feelings described contained a narrative background. Some responses made the house the scene of a crime or a ghost story. Weaker responses tended to list expensive and ostensibly impressive features of a dream home, rather than more realistic details.

The second question also produced responses across the range of marks and encouraged close observation of detail, even though the definition of 'morning' ranged from just after midnight until noon. A common feature was personification of the sun and the majesty of the sun rising over a sleeping city. Other common features included the smell of bread baking through the early morning hours and of birdsong. More accomplished responses personified the city waking up and used interesting imagery linked to cars, sound, smog and the sound of footsteps. Some responses focused on a journey through the city but without straying into narrative or allowing character or events to overcome description. Others created links which united the structure and anchored their ending firmly to the rest of their writing. Responses which took a specific vantage point, or explored one or two specific locales, were more successful than those which tried to include many different areas in the locality, such as a park, beach or shops. The use of specific detail to evoke particular scenes

was more effective than general images, such as sunrises, although these were successful if used as part of a range of details.

Some responses which included formulaic use of detail from each of the five senses could lead to the details and images being presented in a disjointed way. This approach can weaken the structure and overall picture formed in even the strongest of responses. For example, one response focused fairly effectively on the scene observed from a bedroom window, before veering off to write about the texture of the morning attire that the narrator happened to be wearing.

Marks for Style and Accuracy were often lower than those for Content and Structure. Better responses chose precise and varied vocabulary and controlled complex sentences with secure punctuation within and between sentences. In weaker responses, tenses were used insecurely, and incomplete or poorly separated sentences adversely affected candidates' marks. Although there were fewer examples than previously of strings of incomplete, verbless sentences, this was often because there was more narrative than descriptive content in the weaker responses**.**

Ways in which the writing of descriptions can be improved

- Avoid too much narrative preamble and remember to provide descriptive detail.
- Try to avoid clichéd scenarios and consider a more individual and original selection of content.
- It is good practice to write in the present tense, but do not change tense once you have started your writing.
- Write sentences with proper verbs. There are no special sentence structures for a description.

OR

Narrative Writing

Question 4

Write a story entitled 'The Lesson'. **(25 marks)**

OR

Question 5

Write a story which ends with the words, 'I knew things would be different from now on.'
(25 marks)

Both questions were equally as popular.

There was quite a range of subjects in response to **Question 4**.

Those who chose the metaphorical approach offered a variety of 'life lessons'. Very often, these responses created rather dramatic scenarios in which the protagonist was taught some kind of lesson, often involving the need to listen to the advice of parents or not to get involved in the wrong crowd. These higher band responses were sophisticated and convincing in their portrayal of the lesson learned. Some adventurous ones chose to interpret 'the Lesson' as revenge, which led to more elaborate and dark tales which were more than often successful.

Generally the morality tale approach provided a sound structure for middle band responses, often presenting a character and hinting at their fall from grace, then going on to explore this 'fall'.

The responses to this question were sometimes straightforward accounts of school lessons. These were effective on some occasions through attention to character and setting, both of which were familiar territory. Others relied on over-use of dialogue which were less successful. Weaker responses which focused on a straightforward story were often able to control this approach effectively. Such responses often tended to record a long sequence of biographical details about what had gone wrong in the life of the main character, leading to rather a poor structure.

The scope of the second narrative question was wide and responses offered a huge variety of plots not always linked to the final line 'I knew things would be different from now on'. The best were those which were rooted in personal experience and which painted convincing pictures of those involved, building towards a climax, often of personal enlightenment. The question required an indication of change as demanded by the

final sentence. Stronger responses recognised this requirement and incorporated it seamlessly into the story. These higher band responses often provided a detailed setting and short time-span. One successful response detailed reflections of the narrator on his family following the death of his father and the impact on those left behind after the reading of the will; another explored a traumatic betrayal between friends.

Middle and lower band responses did not convey the sense of some kind of important, life changing event in their narrative, or the potentially life changing event. For example the discovery of being adopted was conveyed by the recording and reporting of events with lack of focus on the human impact. The endings of lower band responses were often contrived in an attempt to include the final line.

High marks for Style and Accuracy were given for responses where the writing was lively and varied in vocabulary and where different sentence structures were controlled and used to create particular effects. Errors in sentence control and separation, as well as lapses in tenses, if persistent, limited even competently told stories to Band 4, as did frequent errors in basic punctuation. Speech was over-used only in weaker responses but there were many scripts where the punctuation of direct speech was insecure, even when the story itself was quite well-structured. Again, basic punctuation errors with capital letters, the spelling of simple words and misused homophones appeared in otherwise competent writing and were sometimes so frequent as to affect the mark for Style and Accuracy.

Ways in which the writing of narratives can be improved

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

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/04
Coursework Portfolio

Key messages

In this component, candidates should aim to:

- reflect in their writing their original, personal ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world about them;
- choose assignments that challenge them to write at the highest standard of which they are capable;
- write independently of undue guidance from published materials or from teachers;
- demonstrate variety of style, use of language and genre in the three assignments;
- write in fluent and varied sentences separated by full stops and clarified by the appropriate use of commas and other punctuation;
- revise, edit and correct first drafts in their own handwriting;
- proof-read their work carefully, as marks may be deducted for typing errors.

General comments

There was a significant increase in candidate entries for this component. Many Centres followed the advice given in the key messages, and teachers understood that coursework was an educational experience and an opportunity for candidates to develop their writing skills and to learn to express their own thoughts.

Many Centres provided excellent samples and their marks were accepted or in some cases increased. This general report identifies a number of weaknesses in other samples and suggests ways in which marks may be improved.

The best results were obtained when teachers provided assignments that were suited to their candidates and where the candidates were given some say in deciding what they wished to write about. It is not necessarily a good idea for all candidates in a set or even a Centre to attempt the same assignments, simply because they do not fit the abilities and interests of everyone who undertook them.

The best folders were from those who wrote with originality. Some stimulus material was, however, followed too closely, so that at least parts of the content and even the structure were provided for the candidates, so that it was very difficult to apply the marking criteria.

While it was often clear that candidates understood how to respond to the reading texts exactly as intended by the syllabus, there was also a frequent misunderstanding of how the reading assessment worked. Candidates were expected to select ideas and opinions from the reading text and to evaluate them. Guidance is given below as to what constitutes evaluation. Too often, the selection of ideas and opinions did not give enough opportunity to candidates to carry out an evaluation of the writer's views and attitudes, and there was a tendency to address the topic rather than the arguments.

The quality of the assessment varied, but many Centres over-marked candidates both for reading and for writing. Centres which used the whole range of the marks were generally more realistic than those who assessed in the narrow range in Bands 2 and 3, there being too few candidates placed in Band 4. The assessment of writing was often made according to content and structure and not enough account was taken of accuracy (SPAG) which had to be given equal weighting with content, structure and style.

Nevertheless, a good deal of hard work went into the completion of the folders which were well presented. Most of the administration by Centres was satisfactory and, in some cases, very usefully presented for the Moderator's use. Some Centres presented work of an exceptionally high standard and the effort put into the work by the candidates often resulted in high marks. It was noted that candidates working in the top bands

were given challenging tasks, while some candidates were prevented from achieving their best through lack of challenge.

There were some examples of collusion and plagiarism which were identified by Moderators. These were sent to the Regulations team in Cambridge for further action. Centres are reminded that they must set up and monitor the work so that it is not possible for this to occur.

Good Practice

Some of the good practice has been outlined above, but the following list illustrates the features of the best of the work:

- The writing illustrated the candidate's own views and feelings.
- It demonstrated originality of thought and was not dependent on information and ideas from websites.
- Argument was progressively structured with well-sequenced sentences within paragraphs.
- The folders illustrated the ability to write in three different styles to fit three different genres.
- There was an enthusiasm in the writing that was communicated to the reader.
- Care was taken to eliminate errors, including accidental ones, when word-processing.
- Candidates understood punctuation, particularly the use of full stops and semi colons.

Areas for improvement

- Tasks that offer sufficient challenge to achieve the targeted mark bands.
- Use of secure structure with appropriate paragraph order that does not rely on lists or repetition.
- Awareness of the range and choice of language.
- Appropriate use of drafts to develop work by editing, revising and correcting.
- Assignments that are suited to this component, and avoid long, controlled conditions assessments.

Task setting

In general, task setting was appropriate and there were few examples where the task did not meet the requirements of the syllabus. Some Centres set assignments where the genre of Assignment 1 was too similar to that of Assignment 2. This was usually where two accounts of different events were offered in a similar style. There were also Assignment 1 tasks which were responses to a text, very similar to the requirements of the third assignment.

Many tasks offered a satisfactory level of challenge, but there were some that were only suitable for candidates at Bands 3 and 4. The best tasks were those that appealed to candidates' senses of imagination and adventure. Some of these are listed later in this report.

Assessment of coursework

Writing

Most Centres provided a reliable rank order and many marked accurately. Centres should take care to reward assurance in style and a high degree of accuracy. Moderators saw a number of Centres where the standard of literacy was so high that accuracy was complete or almost so across all three assignments.

On the other hand a significant number of Centres marked leniently as insufficient weighting was given to accuracy, particularly punctuation, or where the range of language and sentence structure was not sufficiently wide.

Centres are asked to be sure to annotate errors in writing in the final draft. It was not always clear whether missing full stops, apostrophes and the wrong use of semi colons had been noticed when assessing the writing. Some comments made at the end of an inaccurate piece of work suggested that there were very few errors. Some pieces of writing had been assessed on the basis of their content and little or no weighting had been given to accuracy or to style.

The commonest error was that of the missing full stop. Simple sentences were wrongly punctuated with commas. Commas were often not used in more complex sentences to show the division between clauses. One of the most serious errors was the inappropriate use of the semi colon and colon. Some candidates placed semi colons in the middle of sentences where there should be no break at all. Colons were commonly used to preface short lists of single words where commas were more appropriate. There was no reason why candidates who did not use semi colons or colons at all should not be placed in Band 1. Moderators recommend that candidates should firstly be made secure in their use of full stops and commas.

Many candidates who scored high marks for writing were immediately recognisable for the assurance with which they used language and sentence structures. Candidates in Band 2 typically wrote complex sentences to communicate meaning and to vary their construction and length for effect. Those working at Band 2 and particularly at Band 1 used a wide range of appropriate language to communicate detail and shades of meaning. However, there were many examples where the range of language was quite limited or where language was used awkwardly. This was particularly so with imagery, where it was very common to find simple images relating to animals that did not give any additional meaning or interest. Where the language was repetitive and straightforward it was typical of a low Band 3 or of Band 4.

The mark for writing was sometimes affected where an assignment had been set that did not give sufficient challenge to candidates.

Assessment of reading

Most candidates understood how to respond to their text correctly. They made a sensible selection of ideas and opinions from the text. These ideas and opinions illustrated the writer's message and attitudes and were ones that could be explored and evaluated. Differentiation was achieved by the quality of the comments made in responding to these ideas and opinions. In order to access Band 2, candidates had to evaluate the items they had chosen. To evaluate they identified fact from opinion, explored the writer's inconsistencies and explained bias. The best candidates provided a convincing overview of the text and integrated their selected ideas and opinions in a structured response. This was worth a mark in Band 1. Candidates who summarised the text did not score above 6 marks.

Some candidates made a satisfactory selection of ideas and opinions but provided very limited responses, for example doing little more than to agree or disagree with the writer. They did not apply their reasoning to the writer's attitudes. Some texts were also quite weak and did not give enough for candidates to engage with fully. This is also dealt with below.

An increasing number of candidates responded by writing about the topic rather than the views expressed in the text. This often provided a decent writing mark, since the response was frequently well structured, but was not sufficient for a reading mark above Band 3.

Administration by Centres

Summary of the contents of the folder

1. The folders required from each Centre by CIE
2. In addition, the top and bottom folder in the Centre's mark range
3. The CASFs (WMS) for all the candidates in the Centre with changes to marks made at internal moderation.
4. The Moderator's copy of the MS1 or electronically submitted mark list.
5. An early draft (see below) of one of the assignments
6. A copy of the article used for Assignment 3, preferably with the candidate's annotations.

Most of the administration was excellent, although not all Centres provided the top and bottom folder in their range.

Some Centres only provided the CASF (WMS) for the sample. This was required for all candidates as it had to be checked against the MS1. A number of errors in transferring the marks were discovered. The CASF showed the definitive mark awarded by the Centre and give the breakdown of the marks and any changes made at internal moderation.

Internal Moderation was often carried out very thoroughly and effectively by Centres. Some, however, appeared only to have internally moderated a small number of their candidates, and this was apparent when the sample was moderated. Moderators often had to look at the folders to find the results of internal moderation because the new marks had not been entered on the CASF.

There were a few cases where the article used for Assignment 3 was not supplied.

Annotation

Some Centres clearly annotated errors on the final assignments but many did not. Centres are asked to annotate errors because they have to be assessed along with the content, structure and style.

Annotation in the margin where objectives had been achieved was sometimes unreliable because such achievements were not necessarily sustained. It was much better to assess the different objectives at the end of the work to show which were typical of the whole assignment.

Some work was carefully assessed on forms invented by the Centre, but some pieces of work bore no indication that they had been read or assessed.

Drafts

Only one early draft was required and it was generally understood that it was not allowed for a teacher to indicate individual errors on the draft. Teachers were asked to write their comments of a general nature at the end of the work and not in the margin or in the body of the work. There were few Centres where the habit of correcting was general throughout the department, but there were individual teachers who did not understand the rule. Heads of Department are asked to make this clear to all staff and to check the work.

There were few Centres where candidates had worked on their drafts, often with excellent results. Those who did edited by adding, deleting and changing words and phrases, revised by re-ordering sections, especially endings and beginnings (or adding extra detail) and, of course, corrected their errors. They did this by using their own handwriting and different colours where appropriate. This was excellent practice and one of the reasons why a draft is included in the folder.

Some first drafts were short forms of what would become the final response and usefully showed teachers the beginning of the work and the course of the argument. The teacher was able to advise which areas were worth exploring and extending. This was a proper use of drafting.

Many first drafts were the same word-for-word as the final version and no work had been done to improve them by the candidates.

Authenticity

The work of most candidates was clearly original, often clearly so because of the inclusion of personal views and feelings. However, some of the assignments were written in such a different style from the rest of the work that it prompted Moderators to trace the material to the internet. This was a serious matter and Centres are reminded that candidates cannot copy work from a source that is not their own.

Work is not considered authentic where too much help had been given to candidates. This included giving writing frames, telling candidates what to write and providing a stimulus and asking candidates to write their own version. It is very difficult to carry out a realistic assessment of content (which was not strictly original) and structure (which followed someone else's pattern). Teachers are again reminded that coursework demands that all work should be original. It is in order to use a stimulus, but the stimulus must not become a template.

Assignment 1

The best, and most common, responses were made to single issues and were clearly personal to the candidate. Sometimes, this quality of being personal was best achieved by presenting the issue as the words

of a speech, but there were many successful forms, for example a letter to a head teacher advocating a shorter school day.

The three standard topics of the death penalty, euthanasia and abortion were occasionally done well, but generally lacked energy and originality. Here are six topics that were done well by individual candidates, all of whom wrote with conviction and some imagination:

Political correctness
Banksy – jerk or just a clever marketeer?
Are parents too controlling?
Women in the media
Valentine's Day
The band that I helped to form (on the occasion of its first gig)

Several Centres continued to rely on *Do not get me started on… .* This was not generally a challenging assignment, although one candidate wrote a connected and persuasive piece on the National Health Service. The problem with it lay in its nature as a rant. Topics were rarely sufficient to produce a convincing argument and some of them were familiar internet themes such as slow walkers, chavs and creepy crawlies. Candidates rarely had much to say and their work was sometimes repetitive. They also frequently confused formal and informal language. Hence in terms of content, structure and style there were often weaknesses, and as a task it was generally suitable for candidates expected to score Band 3 or Band 4.

There were also a number of reviews both of restaurants and of films. The film reviews were sometimes very similar to ones on the internet and also tended to devote too much space to retelling the story. Stylistically, there was a tendency to copy the style used by film reviewers. The restaurant reviews were better when they were based on what was clearly an actual visit to a restaurant rather than a piece of objective writing in media style.

Assignment 2

Some of the writing for this assignment was particularly good. An appealing title was essential and it was surprising that some candidates did not give a name to their work. The fiction was probably the best, especially where there was a convincing twist at the end, a turning point, or devices such as two narrators or time lapses. This added interest to the narrative and indicated that the writer was in control.

It was not necessary for a narrative to consist of gratuitous violence. The narratives based on *Saving Private Ryan* were not particularly original and made unpleasant, unengaging reading.

Another assignment set was based on *Out of the Blue.* This has now been used for a number of years and although some candidates recreated the horror well, others wrote unconvincing narratives.

There were many First World War stories, diaries and letters, some of which were very moving, including a set of letters culminating in the last before the death of the writer. Others were too concerned with blood and war wounds to be very appropriate.

Some care should be taken in deciding on the content of stories. The following titles were in themselves engaging to the reader and suggested some imaginative responses:

It's elementary, Mr Detective
Point of no return
Whistles of the wind
Land of the lost
Red does not go with blue
The yellow palm
The launching
The house of eyes

Many responses were in the form of monologues which are difficult to sustain. Many started well but ran out of content because they only covered a state of mind that was often too static. They needed a structure, and the fact that they were spoken sometimes inhibited the use of a wide range of language. Those that included at least some short-lived events were the most successful, but they were rarely as effective as fiction.

There were few examples of personal writing apart from travels to other countries (which were done well) and versions of *The worst/best day of my life.* Those who wrote autobiographical fragments generally did so with conviction and honesty and their accounts were original.

There were also a large number of descriptions, particularly of *The beach, The theme park,* and *A walk through the woods.* Better descriptions used a change of viewpoint or time passing and avoided repetitive lists. So a piece described at morning, noon and night, or the approach and passing of a cycle race, or an eclipse would produce some interesting work. Where descriptions were not static but progressive, the writing worked well.

Good topics were:
Underwater
On the moon
Afternoon in the favela
The little giant (a tornado)
Making my teacher cry

Assignment 3

Texts where candidates could disagree with the writer's attitude, where the writer was writing from one viewpoint without thinking of other people's opinions, worked well. So, in the following topics, it was easy to find arguments that were inconsistent and biased:

Katie Hopkins' views on how to control who plays with her children
Children ruin Christmas
Re-introduction of National Service
Voting for sixteen-year-olds
Teenagers are the dumbest generation
Should girls play with Barbie?
The ban on Saudi women driving

Some texts did not give candidates opportunities to select appropriate ideas and opinions. Centres should avoid texts where the issue was one that no one could disagree with, texts where most of the writing was reportage and narrative and repetitive texts taken from the internet, badly ordered with a shortage of argument. Texts had to contain sufficient ideas and opinions with which candidates could engage.

Some of the best choices were from articles written by Jeremy Clarkson. Most of these articles started with some opinions intended to shock, but later on, contained some ideas that were worth considering even if the reader did not agree. The articles differentiated well because better candidates understood the different layers of argument while less able candidates could only appreciate what was literally on the page.

There were several texts that were used by many Centres. These were not necessarily successful, and candidates who used them sometimes scored fewer marks. They included the following:

Educating Essex: this text has been used for several examination series and has very weak arguments.
'I see a killer die': this is not a pleasant piece to give candidates, and it is mostly reportage so there are very few ideas or opinions to be selected and very little to evaluate.
The death penalty article by 'Flamehorse': this was not a bad piece of argument, although not many candidates took issue with it successfully. The fact that it had headings that worked as a writing frame did not help candidates who tended to use the headings in lieu of ideas and opinions they had found for themselves.

It was frustrating for Moderators to see the same texts used so frequently when with some imagination and ingenuity a wider range of original writing could have been discovered.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/05
Speaking and Listening

Key messages

The main messages:

- **Compliance.** Read carefully and thoroughly the instructions in the syllabus relating to how this component should be carried out. For example, in the syllabus, the required timings of both parts of the test are clearly stipulated. There is also detailed guidance and support in the *Speaking & Listening Handbook* which should be consulted. We recommend that Centres using more than one Examiner utilise this as an aid to train and standardise the examining team.
- **Using scripts.** Please ensure that candidates do not rely on scripts or extended notes. Reading entirely from a script is not permitted and it is contrary to the ethos of this test. Centres should discourage this at the planning stage and insist on candidates using a variety of prompt material instead. The syllabus suggests a postcard size prompt card, but other aids could be used, for example, a brief PowerPoint slide, or a flip chart. Awareness of audience and an attempt to use a range of devices to engage the audience are key skills being tested in **Part 1**.
- **Speaking not reading.** The test is an assessment of speaking skills in **Part 1**. Over-reliance on scripted material and the use of extended notes promotes reading and writing skills over speaking skills. In cases where Moderators detect that full scripts have been used, or extended notes have been read out, it is likely that the Centre's work will be regarded as maladministration and passed on to the CIE Regulations Team to investigate further. In some cases, this may result in candidates' marks for the component not being accepted.
- **Safeguarding.** There were some instances where candidates spoke about topics which are inappropriate in the context of a public examination. It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that such topics do not feature in this examination – we refer to areas involving drug-use, alcohol use, themes of a sexual nature, self-harming, etc. Cambridge does not issue a list of inappropriate topics; but Examiners need to be aware in **Part 2** of areas not to pursue (e.g. a candidate's personal experience of any of the above) and to re-focus the discussion on general matters which surround the topic.
- **Out of window tests.** The syllabus is very clear about when this speaking and listening examination can and should take place. The 'test window' is two months. For this session, this was March 1st to April 30th. Any tests conducted before or after this period will have been investigated by the CIE Regulations Team for non-compliance.
- **Absent candidates**. When a candidate is absent, an A must be recorded on the mark sheet (MS1) and not a zero. The latter implies that the test was indeed conducted and no marks were awarded. In such cases, we would expect an explanatory note and the candidate's recording.

Other messages:

- Moderators suggest that some candidates need to prepare more thoroughly for the examination. Success in **Part 1** is clearly linked to researching the chosen topic, planning for a confident and assured delivery, practising the delivery, but also preparing for a strong contribution in **Part 2**.
- Generally, candidates should try to make their **Part 1** presentations more lively, by perhaps incorporating more creative presentational styles, but certainly by relying less on reciting factual information. There is scope for further creativity in **Part 1** – e.g. taking up a 'voice' or presenting a dramatic monologue. Presenting empathic work using literary texts often leads to quality work.
- In **Part 2**, Moderators would like to hear stronger evidence that candidates are aware of their expected role in the discussion. The candidate's role should not be that of a passive interviewee, but should be one which is more proactive and seeks to engage with the listener in a collaborative manner.
- It is permissible for teachers to work with their students (once the student has decided upon a topic) to help enhance the content and to advise upon the approach taken for the delivery. Differentiation by task setting is therefore encouraged for this component. A more capable student is likely to attempt a more

ambitious presentation and to engage with more sophisticated content – and such a student should be encouraged to do this. Moderators recommend more teaching of general speaking and listening skills in the context of a topic-based presentation and subsequent discussion. Over-rehearsal with students is not encouraged, but broad-based coverage of useful methodologies is encouraged.

- Please restrict **Part 1** to four minutes, and **Part 2** to between six and seven minutes – as specified in the syllabus. It is difficult to justify the awarding of high marks to **Part 1**s which are short (under three minutes) and it is counter-productive to allow **Part 2** to run over 7 minutes. This session again saw problems at some Centres with timings, and problems here often lead to problems elsewhere. The timings for the two parts of the test are distinct – i.e. short **Part 1**s cannot be compensated for with longer **Part 2**s (or vice versa).
- Please would all Centres use digital recording equipment to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or a USB drive. Please use recognised audio file formats that can be played by common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav, wma). A list of the candidates in the sample, their numbers, and the mark given to each, either on the CD cover (but not on the CD itself please) or on a separate sheet is appreciated. Please re-name the individual audio tracks to the candidate number and name only (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.).

Messages relating to assessment:

- In **Part 1**, Moderators advise Examiners to be sure that a candidate has met the criteria for Band 1 fully before awarding 9 or 10 marks. If an individual presentation is of the standard, factually-based, reportage style, even if well done, then a low Band 2 mark is likely to be the highest available, and a Band 3 mark perhaps more appropriate.
- More mundane and pedestrian presentations should be placed in Band 3.
- Candidates who present very short **Part 1**s or those who rely too much on notes are not likely to achieve higher than Band 4, where 'delivery is not secure, resulting in some loss of audience interest' is the most likely and appropriate descriptor.
- Extremely short **Part 1**s (under one minute) are likely to satisfy only the Band 5 criteria: 'Content is mostly undeveloped....and the audience is generally lost'.
- Very long **Part 1**s do not satisfy Band 1 requirements, as they lack the required control, structure and poignancy. An over-long **Part 1** is one that runs for beyond five minutes.
- Examiners are reminded not to award marks for content *per se* – it is the development of the content which is being assessed; in both **Parts 1** and **2** of the test. For example, 'What work experience did for me...' could achieve a Band 1, or indeed, a Band 5, depending on how the content has been planned, is introduced, is organised, and then presented and developed.
- We recommend that Centres with more than 30 candidates conduct internal moderation – i.e. a systematic revision of a sample of candidates, covering a good spread of marks. This is often successful when completed as a team effort, and should achieve consistency among assessors and highlight any outlying marks for specific candidates.

An important message relating to protocol:

- The test should be conducted only once. It is a formal examination and, as such, candidates must not be given a second attempt. If a test has been conducted twice, the Centre should inform Cambridge directly of the rationale and reasons for this.

A message relating to preparation by the Teachers/Examiners

- It would be a good idea for Examiners to obtain a list of the topics that candidates are planning to talk about in advance of the examination, perhaps the day before. This would allow the Examiner to 'think ahead' and consider areas which might be productive in **Part 2**. However, these must not be shared with the candidates prior to the examination. The aim in **Part 2** is for both parties to be involved in an organic discussion – if scripted or practised material is found to be present in this part of the examination, this is likely to result in maladministration of the test.

General Comments

The more interesting and successful individual tasks were from candidates who spoke from brief notes rather than scripts, and about a topic they felt passionately about and which they had researched thoroughly. Some successful tasks included some kind of visual presentation to the Examiner, such as sharing a PowerPoint slide or some photographs. The most successful standard presentations were given by candidates fired by a passion who also utilised a variety of devices to maintain their listener's interest. In all the best examples

there was a real sense of engagement with the topic. Where candidates chose well, prepared thoroughly and were fully committed to the task the results were usually good.

Conversely, where Centres were ill-prepared for the test and Examiners were not fully aware of their role, the candidates were not as successful. In these Centres, the candidates' preparation of their topics was not always conducive to performing successful speaking tasks, and they were often ill-prepared for the discussion part of the examination – and these factors were usually more significant than the choice of topic. Less successful tasks were usually read from notes and this tended to detract from the overall effect – appearing to be rather lifeless and certainly monotonous. Some less able candidates relied heavily on a script and talked in a monotone about a subject they had not researched sufficiently or which they did not feel particularly strongly about. There was certainly too much reliance on Wikipedia in cases where topics had been chosen with less care. Every candidate is encouraged to choose a topic of personal interest and to talk as freely as possible about this. Some candidates will perform better by taking this approach rather than relying too much on notes.

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

Please note that this is a formal examination and as such an appropriate examination room is required. Candidates should not be examined in the presence of other candidates. A quiet, secure room is crucial for the success of the examination. Some Centres are reminded that the test should be conducted by a single Examiner. While a second person may be present, the test itself must be conducted entirely by one Examiner – i.e. it is not permissible for two people to be asking questions or discussing matters with the candidate.

Materials required by the Moderator

As a reminder to Centres, Cambridge requires three different items in the package sent to the Moderator: **1** all of the candidates' recordings on as few CDs/DVDs as possible (or preferably, on a single USB drive) and using separate re-named tracks for each candidate, **2** the Summary Forms for the entire entry, and **3** a copy of the Mark Sheet that has already been sent to Cambridge confirming the final marks. In addition, any letters relating to the work undertaken by the students or regarding issues experienced by the Centre should also be placed in the package for the attention of the external Moderator.

1 Please note that without the recordings, Cambridge is unable to moderate the work from a Centre and this will affect the results issued to candidates.

2 The Summary Form is the form that records the separate marks awarded to the two parts of the test, in addition to the total mark. The Examiner who conducts the examination is responsible for filling out the summary form. He or she should sign the form and date it – in effect this is the form which is the working record of the examining undertaken, and is therefore of most use to the external Moderator. It would be very useful if the candidate numbers can be recorded on the summary forms as they appear on the mark sheets.

3 The Moderator needs a copy of the mark sheet in order to verify the accuracy of the transcription of the marks from the summary forms.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part 1 – The Individual Task

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

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

Candidates sometimes attempt to use techniques such as addressing the listener and using rhetorical devices, but care needs to be taken so that these approaches are effective and not just a gesture.

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

Some examples of productive Part 1 tasks from this session:

- Real life heroes v cartoon character heroes
- The pros and cons of education abroad
- Phobias and how they are all created by the brain
- My favourite author
- 'The Male Gaze'
- Juggling (including a brief demonstration)
- Effects of social media on teenagers that adults may not know
- Why it is now time to ban the mobile phone
- Prison and punishment for the 21st century
- My favourite memory
- Mass surveillance – pros and cons
- Images of the Third World in today's media
- Five things I would like to do in the next five years
- Bush craft
- I Have A Dream…
- Arguing for lowering the voting age
- Gaming – it's not as bad as you all think

Part 2 – Discussions

Moderators are happy that in many cases, Examiners were very much part of the discussions, entering into the spirit of the occasion, and that the conversations were generally productive extensions of the individual tasks. This is clearly a strength of this examination.

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

However, where this had not occurred, Moderators felt the discussions were lacking. It is not the sole responsibility of the Examiner to work hard to sustain discussion – the candidate needs to plan for this and this element of **Part 2** has indeed been built into the assessment criteria for both listening and speaking. It is, however, the responsibility of the Examiner to move the discussion along and to ensure that a six to seven minute conversation occurs. Ideally, this would be a scaffolded discussion, and more challenging ideas and content would be introduced as the discussion develops.

The most effective Examiners clearly took notes as the candidates completed their presentations, and then based the discussions very closely on what the candidates had actually spoken about. This usually led to conversations which arose naturally from the individual task. More work is needed, however, for candidates to take a greater part in developing the discussions. Some candidates, and some Examiners, seemed to be unaware that this is expected. In a number of Centres, there seemed to be an understanding that the candidate would deliver his or her talk and then wait to be formally questioned by the Examiner. This clearly led to a more stilted and less effective discussion. In the stronger **Part 2** performances the candidates were encouraged to take control of the discussion and there was a genuine feeling that it was a two-way conversation based on an equal footing between the candidate and the Examiner.

Examiners should therefore avoid adopting a very formal 'interview' approach in **Part 2**. The aim is to be supportive of the candidate; to share an interest in his/her topic, and to share views, ideas and to work with the candidate to develop the conversation. It is important that the spontaneity of discussion is maintained.

In general however, candidates and Examiners stayed on task, though there were a few instances of Examiners using the allotted time to involve candidates in discussions about other matters – for example, their future plans – when this was not part of the candidate's talk. Such transgressions are likely to result in lower marks as the assessment criteria assume that content in **Part 2** relates directly to content in **Part 1**.

Some Examiners had a tendency to ask too many closed questions, which unsurprisingly elicited short and weaker responses which do not encourage development. Open questions are much more effective.

Concluding comments

It is clear that some Centres need to offer further training to their Teachers/Examiners to conduct these task-oriented tests as the syllabus and other Cambridge supporting documentation (e.g. the *Handbook for Speaking & Listening*) stipulate. Where Centres do not comply with the rubrics, the result is often disappointing and the effect is usually felt by the candidates whose achievement and performance is clearly affected. This is unacceptable and such Centres should seek direct guidance from Cambridge when they receive feedback on the work undertaken for the session.

However, Cambridge wishes to commend Centres who have responded well to what might be a new examination for them – Cambridge does appreciate that a different culture is required for what is a new assessment methodology and that this takes time to establish itself. There were many cases where Moderators reported refreshing and lively work, where it was clear that the students had enjoyed taking control of their own learning and had responded well to being allowed to be active in the skills of research, oral presentation and subsequent discussion.

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (COUNT-IN ORAL)

Paper 0522/06

Speaking and Listening (Coursework)

Key Messages

Choosing the correct pathway

- Centres should decide whether to choose Component 5 or Component 6 at the beginning of the planning stage. It is very difficult to change from one component to the other and this is certainly not recommended as the components are distinct in their approaches to the Speaking and Listening section of the syllabus.
- Uncertainty as to which pathway to follow can lead to Centres entering for the wrong component. This always causes problems for the Centre and the moderator.
- Component 6 consists of three distinct tasks: **Task 1** is an individual presentation; **Task 2** is a paired activity; **Task 3** is a group activity.
- The three separate tasks can be assessed at any time during the course. This flexibility allows a broader range of topics and skills to be assessed but requires Centres to fully embrace the concept that the Speaking and Listening tasks are an integral part of the overall course.

Recommended support material

- Centres are urged to use both the current syllabus and Speaking and Listening Handbook to ensure the requirements for the administration of the component are met in full. All the relevant information is contained within these documents.
- Official Cambridge training sessions are run throughout the year.
- Enhanced online support materials will be available shortly.

What to send in the sample packet

- Please be aware that four different items must be included in the sample package sent to the Moderator: All the Centre's recordings; all the Summary Forms; all the individual Candidate Record Cards and a copy of the mark sheets showing the total marks awarded for each candidate entered.

Recordings

- Centres are required to record all the **Task 1** and **2** responses for the entire entered cohort. All these must be sent in the Centre's sample for the purpose of moderation.
- We strongly encourage the use of digital recording equipment to generate audio files which can then be transferred to a CD, DVD or USB drive in a recognised common audio file format that can be played by standard computer software.
- Please check the quality of the recordings before despatching to Cambridge and ensure that the CD, DVD or USB is securely packaged to avoid damage in transit. A jiffy bag is recommended.
- Ideally the recordings should be arranged in the same order as the mark sheets – i.e. in candidate number order
- Each track should be labelled with the candidate's name and number. For **Task 2** both candidates' names and numbers should be included in the title of the track.
- Each track should be introduced formally using the rubric prescribed in the current syllabus.
- Wherever possible, recordings should be made in a quiet, undisturbed environment.

Summary Forms

- Moderators require Summary Forms detailing a breakdown of the marks awarded for the whole cohort entered.
- Please note the Component 6 Summary Form is different to the Component 5 version. The two are not interchangeable.
- Ideally the Summary Forms should be arranged in the same order as the mark sheets – i.e. in candidate number order.
- The accuracy of the Summary Forms should be checked thoroughly before submitting to Cambridge.

Candidate Record Cards

- A requirement for this component is that an individual Candidate Record Card should be completed for each candidate.
- All the Record Cards should be included in the sample sent to Cambridge.
- The individual Record Cards should include specific information about the choices made for each task and not just generic statements.

A copy of the mark sheets

- a copy of the marks (the MS1) already sent to Cambridge should be included in the sample sent for moderation
- Centres should ensure that the copies can be read clearly.

General Comments

- Any candidate who is absent should be recorded as such on the relevant documentation and only those who attempted the activity but who failed to contribute should be given a mark of 0.
- Through the syllabus, Cambridge provides specific forms for use with Component 6; namely the Individual Candidate Record and the Summary Form.
- For Component 6, Centres are encouraged to be creative in the choice of tasks as long as the assessment criteria are used as a guide to the skills being assessed.

Comments on Specific Tasks

Well planned and prepared responses to tasks were generally more successful but, in particular, **Tasks 1** and **2** do not benefit from over-scripted and seemingly 'artificial' performances where spontaneity is missing. Candidates aspiring to the higher band criteria need to be able to react positively to changes in the direction of the discussion in **Task 2**.

In response to Tasks 1 and 2, it is very difficult to achieve the higher bands if the performances are heavily scripted.

Task 1

Responses generally took the form of an individual presentation. This component allows differentiation by task setting so the ability of the individual candidate needs to be taken into consideration when topics are chosen. This component allows the candidate and teacher to work together through rehearsal and development of the task to ensure the topic choice is suitable.

*Some examples of productive **Task 1** activities include:*

- 'My holiday in…' that is developed beyond a narrative account
- a personal experience that is relevant, thought-provoking and developed beyond narrative
- the effects of social media/technology on teenagers
- a review of a film, book, concert or sporting event where the candidate is thoroughly engaged and able to develop the presentation beyond a literal re-telling of the events
- an engaged reflection on a hobby or sport in which the candidate is thoroughly engaged. (Generally sports other than football work best.)

Task 2

There should be only two participants in **Task 2**. Where there is an extra candidate, a teacher or a pupil who has been assessed may make up the pair. It is unacceptable and an infringement of the rubric for this task to be performed by three candidates. In effect, any **Task 2** activity comprising of more than two candidates becomes a **Task 3** Group Activity. As three distinct tasks are expected in response to Component 6, this becomes non-compliance and will be treated accordingly.

For paired activities it is essential that the Moderator is able to distinguish between the candidates in the activity so that successful moderation can take place. The simplest way of achieving this is for the candidates to introduce themselves and their roles in the activity at the beginning of the recording.

Unlike Component 5, there is no specified time duration for Component 6 tasks but it is difficult to see how both candidates in the Paired-Task activity can meet higher level criteria such as 'responds fully', 'develops prompts' or 'employs a wide range of language devices' in a performance lasting less than two minutes. Given that both speaking and listening are assessed, it is important that the activities last long enough for candidates to clearly demonstrate their strengths in both mediums. Planned, rehearsed and developed performances will normally justify higher marks in the same way written examination practise encourages more successful outcomes.

The Pair-Based Activity is more successful when two candidates of similar ability work as a pair. With regard to role-plays, it should be borne in mind that this is an assessment of language skills rather than drama skills so the language requirements should always drive the assessment criteria.

Responses to **Task 2** that are teacher-led, either with a teacher interviewing a candidate or with two candidates being led by a teacher, are less successful than a developed discussion between two candidates. It is recommended that this approach is only considered where it is deemed the candidates are too weak to initiate the discussion without external assistance.

A popular **Task 2** vehicle is the 'interview' where one candidate acts as the interviewer and the other is the interviewee. This can work well but there is an inherent weakness in the activity if the interviewer does little more than ask a set of pre-prepared questions. This restricts the level of performance, particularly for the Listening element. One way to counteract this problem is for candidates to swap roles halfway through so each has the opportunity to demonstrate a wider range of relevant skills.

*Some examples of productive **Task 2** activities include:*

- Does the media put too much pressure on teenagers?
- Should teenagers play 18 rated video games?
- Topical social issues such as sexism in sport
- Feminism/Gender inequality
- The influence of reality television on the teenage audience
- Planning a school prom
- Analysis of set texts such as poems and novels
- The benefits and pitfalls of social media
- Desert island survival techniques
- Are politics irrelevant to teenagers?

Task 3

Task 3 may take various forms but it is most important that each candidate in the group is allowed sufficient scope within the activity to demonstrate their strengths without being dominated by others. A group made up of candidates of similar ability levels is often more successful. In more diverse groupings the weaker candidates are disadvantaged and do not have the opportunity to contribute to the best of their ability. The role of a group leader should be considered, as a more successful outcome usually results from having one of the candidates directing the focus of the discussion.

*Some examples of productive **Task 3** activities include:*

- characters from a literary text participating in a televised debate
- performing an extra scene from a play that has been written by the candidates
- any discussion of a topical issue with each candidate having their own viewpoint
- what to include in a time capsule/school newspaper, etc.
- championing a character from a film or book where each candidate chooses their favourite
- balloon debates.

General Conclusions

- The general level of assessment by Centres is in line with the expected standard.
- There are many Centres where internal moderation has been successful.
- Successful Centres continue to implement the component efficiently and imaginatively. Samples are generally well-prepared and aid the moderation process considerably.
- Component code errors are unnecessary and disruptive. Centres are urged to check that the correct pathway has been chosen and that the documentation accurately supports this.
- Where problems have arisen, Centres have not followed the instructions regarding sampling and documentation. It is an expectation that Centres provide the requisite documentation and that it is accurate.
- All the documentation asked for in samples is used to check and cross-check as part of the rigour that underpins the moderation process. In the end this is of benefit to Centres and their candidates. It is important to remember that every Centre is moderated in every examination series and that this process is conducted rigorously to protect the reputation of the component and to maintain the standard so that Centres may have continued confidence in the product they have chosen.