

Example Candidate Responses

Cambridge
International
AS & A Level

Cambridge International AS and A Level English Language

9093

Paper 1

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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS and A Level English (9093), and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet candidate responses have been chosen to exemplify a range of answers. Each response is accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answers.

Each response is annotated with clear explanation of where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This, in turn, followed by examiner comments on how the answer could have been improved. In this way it is possible for you to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they will have to do to improve their answers. At the end there is a list of common mistakes candidates made in their answers for each question.

This document provides illustrative examples of candidate work. These help teachers to assess the standard required to achieve marks, beyond the guidance of the mark scheme. Some question types where the answer is clear from the mark scheme, such as short answers and multiple choice, have therefore been omitted.

The questions, mark schemes and pre-release material used here are available to download from Teacher Support. These files are:

Question Paper 12, November 2016	
Question paper	9093_w16_qp_12.pdf
Mark scheme	9093_w16_ms_12.pdf
Question Paper 22, November 2016	
Question paper	9093_w16_qp_22.pdf
Mark scheme	9093_w16_ms_22.pdf
Question Paper 32, November 2016	
Question paper	9093_w16_qp_32.pdf
Mark scheme	9093_w16_ms_32.pdf
Question Paper 42, November 2016	
Question paper	9093_w16_qp_42.pdf
Mark scheme	9093_w16_ms_42.pdf

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How to use this booklet

Example candidate response – high	Examiner comments
<p>Ms Gillard's speech is characterised by strong, emotive language and an accusatory, outraged tone. It is written in a thought-provoking manner, and exposes the flaws of the leader of the opposition. 1</p> <p>she and the mistaken by and conviction. 2 something attention of they feel compelled</p> <p>She refers to Abbott repeatedly as "this man". Such a phrase resonates as slight, bathing, contempt and disgusts. By choosing not to give him a name or title here, she reduces his influence and importance.</p>	<p>1 Immediate and purposeful assessment of the tone of the passage.</p> <p>2 Examiner comments are alongside the answers, linked to specific part of the answer. These explain where and why marks were awarded. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams and helps your learners to refine exam technique.</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

There was some engagement with the passage but the focus was very variable and rhetorical devices

The response would have benefited from a more focused analysis and this prevented any clear exam

This explains how the candidate could have improved the answer. This helps you to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams and helps your learners to refine exam technique.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

The examiner expected candidates to:

- identify language examples and features from the passage
- comment on specific effects of the chosen language and the overall effect of the passage as a whole

Lists the common mistakes candidates made in answering each question. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes at the exam and give them the best chance of achieving a high mark.

Assessment at a glance

For Cambridge International AS and A Level English Language, candidates:

- take Papers 1 and 2 only (for the Cambridge International AS qualification)

or

- follow a staged assessment route by taking Papers 1 and 2 (for the Cambridge International AS qualification) in one series, then Papers 3 and 4 (for the Cambridge International A Level qualification) in a later series

or

- take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the same examination series, leading to the full Cambridge International A Level.

Cambridge International AS Level candidates take:

Paper 1 Passages	Duration	Weighting
The paper contains three questions. Candidates answer two questions: Question 1, and either Question 2 or Question 3. Questions carry equal marks. Externally assessed. 50 marks	2 hours 15 minutes	50%

and

Paper 2 Writing	Duration	Weighting
Two sections: Section A and Section B. Candidates answer two questions: one from Section A and one from Section B. Questions carry equal marks. Externally assessed. 50 marks	2 hours	50%

Cambridge International A Level candidates take:

Paper 1 Passages	Duration	Weighting
<p>The paper contains three questions.</p> <p>Candidates answer two questions: Question 1, and either Question 2 or Question 3.</p> <p>Questions carry equal marks.</p> <p>Externally assessed. 50 marks</p>	2 hours 15 minutes	25%

and

Paper 2 Writing	Duration	Weighting
<p>Two sections: Section A and Section B.</p> <p>Candidates answer two questions: one from Section A and one from Section B.</p> <p>Questions carry equal marks.</p> <p>Externally assessed. 50 marks</p>	2 hours	25%

and

Paper 3 Text Analysis	Duration	Weighting
<p>The paper contains two questions.</p> <p>Candidates must answer both questions.</p> <p>Questions carry equal marks.</p> <p>Externally assessed. 50 marks</p>	2 hours 15 minutes	25%

and

Paper 4 Language Topics	Duration	Weighting
<p>The paper contains three questions, each on a separate topic area.</p> <p>Candidates answer two questions.</p> <p>Questions carry equal marks.</p> <p>Externally assessed. 50 marks</p>	2 hours 15 minutes	25%

Question 1a

Example candidate response – high	Examiner comments
<p>Ms Gillard's speech is characterised by strong, emotive language and an accusatory, outraged tone. It is written in a thought-provoking manner, and exposes the flaws of the Leader of the opposition. 1</p>	<p>1 Immediate and purposeful assessment of the tone of the passage.</p>
<p>The repetition of the assertion that she and the rest of the government "will not" be misled by Abbott shows Gillard's strong will and conviction. It makes her assertion feel like law, 2 something that must not be gone against. The attention of the audience is held firmly, and they feel compelled to listen to her.</p>	<p>2 A perceptive awareness of the effective language.</p>
<p>She refers to Abbott repeatedly as "this man". Such a phrase resonates as slight, bathing, contempt and disgusts. By choosing not to give him a name or title here, she reduces his influence and importance in the eyes of the audience. She uses such a common article, 3 subtly stripping him of some of the dignity his position would give him.</p>	<p>3 A developed account, albeit imperfectly expressed, of the effect of one phrase in diminishing Mr Abbott's authority.</p>
<p>She begins her speech by thanking the Deputy Speaker, as protocol dictates. However, she continues that mundane sentence with "and". This small word fosters anticipation and grabs attention. Her opening paragraph is characterised by the repetition of "I", which again conveys strong will and it suggests that she thinks highly of her own opinions, thoughts and convictions. 4</p>	<p>4 An insightful awareness of the use and significance of pronouns and conjunctions.</p>
<p>The opening paragraph is ended by her refusal to be misled neither "now" nor "ever". The hyperbole</p>	

Example candidate response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>here connotes that to believe Abbott would be a grave sin of sins, something never to be committed. 5 She also sounds resolute and unwilling to change, qualities of a leader that make the audience listen.</p> <p>By repeating what Abbott "says" or by quoting him, Gillard aims to show the sincerity and credibility of her speech. The audience is moved to accept what she says as true because it is backed by seemingly ample evidence.</p> <p>She uses indirect language, asserting that it was time for Abbott to "write out his resignation". She refers to Abbott as a sexist and a misogynist without actually saying so and is still understood by her audience. This creates a rapport between herself and those listening to her. This invisible, small, yet important bond is fortified as she stops using the article "I", and uses "we" instead. This has the effect of creating a rift between she and the audience and "he", Abbott. 6</p> <p>Gillard makes good use of the imperative, declaring boldly what it is that Abbott "needs". This word connotes ^{absolute} necessity. She shows the degree to which the leader of the Opposition is out of line by using it. In the same breath, she uses symbolism of "mirror" ag. to say something indirectly yet still being understood. The "mirror" represents honest self-examination, which implies that Abbott, who has failed to look at himself, is somewhat incompetent. 7</p>	<p>5 Recognition of the accumulated effect of repeated negatives.</p> <p>6 Excellent choice of verb.</p> <p>7 A perceptive paragraph; especially in dealing with the significance of the mirror, a mature understanding of language is demonstrated.</p>

Example candidate response – high, continued

Examiner comments

The repetition of "repulsive double standards" reiterates the graveness of Abbott's attitudes and consolidates it in the minds of the audience. She also repeats "is supposed to" which put up with this "hypocrisy" which makes the entire situation seem much more unreasonable. It also rings ^{of} shared exasperation, that she fraternises with everyone else.

She provides a series of scenarios which in her third paragraph which would have been better, and repeats "not" before each scenario which has the effect of augmenting the atrocity of the misogynist and sexist phrase said. She makes his fault seem far worse than at first. She also repeats that she was "very offended personally", a sandwich of emotive words. "Very" in itself connotes an acute degree of something. "Offended" paints Abbott in an unfavourable light, that of a man careless with words, one who verbally abuses women. "Personally" makes the people sympathise with her, instantly winning them over. **8**

She challenges ~~At~~ the people present to 'check the records' which has the same effect as her direct quotes, that of qualifying what she says and giving her speech a well-informed, honest appeal. She mentions that what Abbott had "said could "never" be uttered to "any man" two ~~two~~ examples of hyperbole that enhance the gravity of her words. She gives a quote its own paragraph, usually putting it at the end, which leaves a dramatic pause after she quotes Abbott, which gives the audience time to reflect. **9**

8 An acute analysis of a three word phrase: 'sandwich of emotive words' is particularly apt, demonstrating an understanding of construction and effect.

9 Clear understanding of the paragraph structure and an awareness of the situation in which the passage is used.

Example candidate response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>on and fully appreciate Abbott's hypocrisy.</p> <p>Then Gillard begins to mock Abbott by mentioning, firstly, that he had suddenly "woken up". This suggests that he had been lazily slumbering on instead of doing his job, which connotes ^{incompetence} incompetence on his part. She begins to speak in the first person with phrases such as "Oh dear" and the notion that Abbott's actions are perfect for his "political purpose". This has a slightly comic but practical and logical appeal.</p> <p>Lastly, she repeats the word "doesn't" as she mentions to all the things that Abbott neglects to do. This has the effect of pointing out and leaving plain all his imperfections and his incompetence. 10</p>	<p>10 A succinct but significant final paragraph which summarises both a particular effect and that of the whole passage.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 15 out of 15</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

A perceptive and sometimes penetrating analysis of the passage which married specific language examples, usually correctly identified, to the intention of the speaker and the accumulated impact of the passage.

A few points were omitted or not fully developed. These included the allocation of separate paragraphs for the mounting list of accusations and the final inability of the speaker to allow Mr Abbott any personal pronoun at all. However, as the mark testified, this was a very good answer indeed, with an excellent understanding of the nuances of language and of the rhetorical devices which the speaker employs. Band 1

Example candidate response – middle	Examiner comments
<p>The text is a speech and the structure of it is many short paragraphs. The tone that the audience receives from the text could be anger or disbelief as Prime Minister Julia Gillard is calling out the hypocrisy of the opposition's leader. The purpose of this speech is to show Australians that the motion to have the speaker of parliament removed should not be taken seriously. 1</p>	<p>1 There is no clear focus to this paragraph and as a result, nothing is usefully developed. The purpose of the speech is self-evident and the effect of the short paragraphs is not pursued.</p>
<p>The audience of this speech is fellow Australian politicians, the Australian public and anyone else who is interested in world politics. Gillard is calling out the leader of the opposition and calling him a hypocrite. She is trying to prove that his motion to have the speaker of parliament removed for my misogynistic text messages should not be taken seriously as he himself has made misogynistic comments in the past. 2 Gillard says that if Tony Abbott, the leader of the opposition wants to know what misogyny looks like then "he needs a mirror". This is an example of the anger 3 she shows through the tone of the speech. The speech is written in the third person about 'the leader of the opposition'. She does this so that she can almost attack Tony Abbott indirectly as she is not addressing him. I think that Gillard uses this technique in an attempt to embarrass Abbott so that fellow politicians and the audience 4 in general take her side and do not support the proposed motion by the opposition. "And now, the leader of the opposition wants to be taken seriously," is an example of this technique.</p>	<p>2 The candidate is relating the events of the passage rather than considering the style and language employed.</p>
<p>Gillard uses formal language and an educated diction. This is expected in a speech from a politician and words like "ensues" and the fact that she refers to Abbott as "the leader of the opposition party" prove this. 5</p>	<p>3 Language effect needs to be more specific.</p>
<p>I'm not sure if it is a custom or some sort of tradition to refer to the leader of the opposition as that and not by his name. However Gillard might refuse to refer to Abbott by his name as she does not want to give him the satisfaction or</p>	<p>4 Another language example which needs more precise application.</p>
	<p>5 Without further development, this paragraph has little bearing on style and language.</p>

Example candidate response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>in an attempt to portray him as inhuman. She refers to the speaker of parliament as "Mr Slipper"; she refers to an interviewer as Stavros' but she refuses refer to the leader of the opposition with his name. This could be an attempt to stop insult him or show her anger toward him. 6</p>	<p>6 This is a return to point 4, but this time, with more specific attachment to language effect.</p>
<p>Repetition is another feature she uses to reinforce her points. "Let's go through the opposition leader's double standards, repulsive double standards when it comes to misogyny and sexism" is an example of this reinforcement through repetition. The constant referral of Abbott as 'the leader of the opposition' reminds the audience of who she is talking about especially when she is portraying him in a negative manner. In lines 38 to 42 she starts two sentences with "I was offended..." followed by sexist, rude or misogynistic remarks or actions that Abbott had directed at her. From line 49 to 50, she Gillard does not use full sentences as she does not use nouns or pronouns and there is no subject. However it is assumed that the audience knows who she is addressing. Again she starts three her statements with "Doesn't..." followed by negative things that Abbott has done. All of the above mentioned is done to portray the opposition leader in a negative way and in doing so take votes or support away from him. I don't believe that that is a hidden 7 agenda as it is a political speech and the motivation of political speeches is generally votes.</p>	<p>7 The technique is recognised but the specific effect of withholding Mr Abbott's name is not specified – 'a negative way' is too generalised.</p>
<p>Sarcasm and irony are two other features which Gillard uses. Irony 8 is used throughout the speech as she calls out Abbott for all the misogynistic things that he has done and then shows disbelief at the fact that he is accusing the speaker of parliament of misogyny. "and he's woken up and he's gone 'oh dear, there's this thing called sexism, oh my lords there's this thing called misogyny.'" - is an an example of sarcasm. This is an attack on Abbott as she puts words in his mouth and portrays him as an ignorant man. She does this</p>	<p>8 Recognition of two language features.</p>

Example candidate response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>to further prove that his motion should not be taken seriously. Gillard also accuses him of using this motion to support his political purpose, "Oh, the speaker must be (misogynist) because that suits my political purpose." Here she is showing that the leader of the opposition has not brought forward his motion as he sees the speaker of parliament as a misogynist but rather to suit his own political agenda. 9</p> <p>"Well this type of hypocrisy must not be tolerated, which is why this motion from the leader of the Opposition should not be taken seriously". In conclusion she tries to show that throughout her speech she exposed Abbott as being a hypocrite and in doing so proved that his motion should not be taken seriously. She did this using the style and language that I have written about above. 10</p>	<p>9 This demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of the speech but doesn't consider style or language.</p> <p>10 A rather confused and assertive conclusion which makes no further attempt to consider style and language.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 7 out of 15</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

There was some engagement with the passage with an understanding of aspects of its style and purpose, but the focus was very variable and rhetorical devices employed were described in very general terms.

The response would have benefited from a more certain sense of direction: the points made tended to be disconnected and this prevented any clear examination of the progression of the passage.

There was a very uneven focus on style and language. The candidate sometimes explained the contents of the passage and sometimes speculated on aspects of the writing which had little relevance to the question.

The critical vocabulary used in examining the examples tended to be highly generalised and the effects described needed more precise definition. Band 4

Example candidate response – low	Examiner comments
<p>In her speech, Ms Julia Gillard makes use of a stern and loathful tone to react to an attempt by the leader of opposition to remove the Speaker of the Australian parliament from office. She gets straight into the matter at hand right in the beginning of the speech, that is, in the topic sentence her stance about the matter is highlighted and made categorically 1 clear by the phrase, "I will not be lectured about sexism and misogyny by this man."</p>	<p>1 The tone of the opening and its effect is understood.</p>
<p>The disdainful use of the phrase "this man", in reference to the leader of opposition, serves to reflect Ms Gillard's unhappiness with him for his wrong actions. The alliteration, 'Not now, not ever.' is used here to emphasise 2 that Mr Tony Abbott's motion will not be entertained at all.</p>	<p>2 The effect of the use of alliteration is broadly acknowledged but might benefit from more specific definition.</p>
<p>In the second paragraph the pun 'he needs a mirror' has been effectively used to expose the leader of the opposition and starts the process of exposing his hypocrisy to the the everyone who is listening. 3</p>	<p>3 Mistaken language feature.</p>
<p>There from is use of a very long sentence in the ^{third} paragraph which helps give the reader full details about what is being said and elaborated about the leader of the opposition's hypocrisy. In it, there is heavy use of commas and hyphens like '-not when he was a student, not when he was in high school - when he wa a minister under the last government.' which help catch the readers 4 attention and underpin Mr Tony's 'double standards'.</p>	<p>4 Very generalised description of effect.</p>

Example candidate response – low, continued	Examiner comments
<p>In the phrase, 'I was very offended personally.' the speaker takes a different route personal stance and repeats the same phrase in the very same paragraph, highlighting 5 her displeasure towards the un unbelievable words said by Mr Tony. She then uses says makes the direct statement 'You said that in March 2004, I suggest you check the records.' which has implications that Tony says many terrible things against women, that he barely even keeps that track of them.</p>	<p>5 A broad description of effect which needs more specific application.</p>
<p>Furthermore, the phrase 'on behalf of the women of Australia' shows that Ms. Julia Gillard does not support sexism sexism, unlike Mr Abbot, whom she calls a 'hypocrite' and has the best interests of her the women of Australia at heart. She further goes on to highlight that she is also a victim of Mr Abbot's statements, by quoting an incident where Mr Abbot said said she & wants to, politically speaking, make an honest woman of herself. 6</p>	<p>6 This paragraph comments on the contents of the speech rather than the effects of language.</p>
<p>In closing, the speaker uses the sentence 'Well this there is very little use of nouns in the text. This was done to centralise 7 the whole speech around my misogyny and sexism. The speech is ended well with the phrase 'motion from the leader of the Opposition should not be taken seriously' order as she rest highlights her stance again.</p>	<p>7 This is a key feature which needs development and precise reference to language examples.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 5 out of 15</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This response made a few good points but was short and would have benefited from a much fuller consideration of specific examples.

A more exact description of the effects of language would have been helpful, for instance, avoiding phrases such as 'help catch the reader's attention'. Any piece of worthwhile writing tries to capture the reader's attention; the question to be answered is how this is achieved.

The material selected was not always of primary importance. There was one quite lengthy but inconsequential consideration of commas and hyphens but the concluding paragraph of the text, which was of much more importance, was not examined.

A stronger and clearer sense of progression through the development of the passage was required and a clearer connection between the examples chosen. Band 3

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

The examiner expected candidates to:

- identify language examples and features which they considered significant in establishing the style of the passage
- comment on specific effects of the chosen language examples and consider their contribution to the effect of the passage as a whole
- support their comments with an economical use of quotations.

The majority of candidates approved of Ms. Gillard's outrage at Mr Abbott's behaviour and this sometimes resulted in a lack of critical distance and focus in approaching the passage. This was manifested in some responses which listed the success and justice of the accusations without examining the rhetorical devices employed.

Relatively few candidates considered the effect of the short, punchy paragraphs which allowed the reader/listener to absorb and understand each accusation in turn.

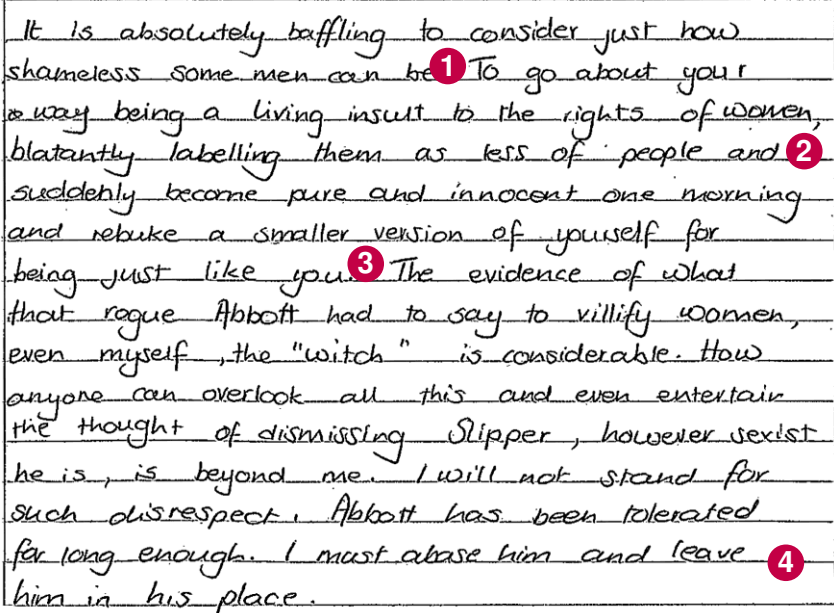
There was rather uneven consideration of the whole passage, the opening paragraphs often receiving close attention but the trenchant conclusion given little examination.

Not all candidates picked up on the mixture of formal and informal styles in the approach of the speaker. The protocol observed in the opening address was often remarked upon but rarely contrasted with the slangy informality of the later paragraphs.

Weaker responses concentrated at too great a length on immediately recognisable features such as repetition, and in doing so failed to consider other equally significant elements of the passage.

This passage was generally well understood, but the answers would have benefited from a clearer sense of the progression from a calm but determined opening to the final sentence with its suggestion of 'job done'.

Question 1b

Example candidate response – high	Examiner comments
 <p>It is absolutely baffling to consider just how shameless some men can be. 1 To go about your way being a living insult to the rights of women, blatantly labelling them as less of people and 2 suddenly become pure and innocent one morning and rebuke a smaller version of yourself for being just like you. 3 The evidence of what that rogue Abbott had to say to villify women, even myself, the "witch" is considerable. How anyone can overlook all this and even entertain the thought of dismissing Slipper, however sexist he is, is beyond me. I will not stand for such disrespect. Abbott has been tolerated for long enough. I must abase him and leave 4 him in his place.</p>	<p>1 Immediate engagement with the brusque, no-nonsense tone of the original.</p> <p>2 Awkward expression.</p> <p>3 A cutting remark which would fit comfortably in the sharpest section of the speech.</p> <p>4 A succession of terse sentences which reflect the writer's determination to deal decisively with Mr Abbott.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 9 out of 10</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This was a purposeful answer which successfully adopted much of the feistiness of the original passage. However, in adopting this very direct tone, it didn't fully realise the possibilities of showing a more personal side to Ms Gillard's reflections.

There was some awkward expression which might have been corrected by a careful check.

Example candidate response – middle	Examiner comments
<p>12/03/2016: I cannot believe the nerve of this man, ¹ calling out someone for being a misogynist after his the sexist comments he has made in his past. He is a hypocrite and tomorrow during my speech I am going to prove it.</p> <p>I have the proof, it honestly wasn't hard to get. ² Quotation upon quotation of sexist, misogynistic, remarks that he has made. It makes me sick, it ³ makes me sit sick to even think of his name. I'm honestly in disbelief at his proposed motion. The text messages he is accusing Mr Slipper of were sent when Slipper was a young man. Abbott has said things far more disgusting as a politician.</p> <p>⁴ Anyway I hope Australia hears what I say tomorrow and finally see him for the man he is.</p>	<p>¹ An immediate immersion in the very direct style and tone of the original.</p> <p>² The direct tone and unadorned style of the original are sustained.</p> <p>³ This provides a convincing explanation for Ms Gillard's refusal to use Mr Abbott's name.</p> <p>⁴ A suitably terse and combative concluding sentence.</p>
Total mark awarded = 7 out of 10	

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This response had a suitably direct approach which made intelligent use of some of the original material. However, the possibilities of using the diary form to enlarge upon the material of the speech were not taken and the resulting tone lacked variety.

There was also a repetitive quality to the short, undeveloped sentences which was effective in places but lost its impact in the second paragraph.

Example candidate response – low	Examiner comments
<p>Dear Diary ①</p> <p>It is about time someone stopped this man. What do the women of Australia Australia need to do to get respect this man? This must come to an end.</p> <p>He is the first to condemn sexism, yet he is bigg biggest perpetrator of this crime. He wants to undermine our potential, and call us housewives who only do ironing. I can not allow this ②</p> <p>Not only has he made sexist remarks towards me, as a Prime Minister, but he has verbally abused many other women countrywide. Does this hypocrite ever stop and think about no what he says? I will put it upon myself and end it all tomorrow. ③</p>	<p>① The diary form is not properly established, but the opening sentence clearly echoes the tone and purpose of the original.</p> <p>② Errors of expression.</p> <p>③ Improbable conclusion for a diary entry.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 6 out of 10</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This response got straight to the point in establishing a credible style and sense of purpose and there was some effective use of the rhetorical question.

The answer lacked any really imaginative addition to the original material and any interesting use of the diary form. As a result, the response had no real development but was a series of perfectly credible statements with little that added any extra dimension to the speech.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

The examiner expected candidates to:

- identify aspects of the speech which would be suitable to include in the more personal form of a diary entry
- develop the chosen elements of the text in a style which reflected the concerns of the passage and the character of the writer
- check the accuracy of their writing (this is of especial importance in this section of the question).

The wording of the question asked candidates to base their answers closely on the material of the speech; style and language were not prescribed. This gave candidates the opportunity to make full use of the diary form and the possibility of adjusting the style of the original to reflect a more personal mode of expression. Unfortunately, this option was not generally taken – too often the diary suggested that the writer publicly addressing herself.

There were some purposeful responses, conveying Ms Gillard's exasperation and combativeness, but relatively few took the opportunity to give an imaginatively different perspective on the material.

Careful checking for accurate expression is essential in the directed writing exercise but this was not always in evidence.

Question 2a

Example candidate response – high

This passage is an excerpt from a book about travel. Its purpose is to inform ^{readers} ~~readers~~ of de Botton's experiences on a tropical island. The readers are likely ~~followers~~ travellers for looking for new destinations or fans of de Botton reading of his latest exploits. The style is heavily descriptive, creating a relaxed, tranquil mood. The tone is formal, creating a distance between the reader and the location, emphasising the exotic feel.

De Botton starts thematically ~~soon~~ in the early morning, signifying a fresh start. The sense of comfort is given in 'slipped on a dressing gown provided by the hotel' and the use of the verb 'slipped' suggests a certain nonchalance to the action, highlighting the relaxed mood. The noun phrases 'dawn light' - gives and the 'grey-blue' the description in 'pale grey-blue' give strong visual imagery and help the reader picture the scene. The onomatopoeia in 'rustlings' shows the very natural, idyllic sounds of the night, reinforcing the tranquil feel of the location. 'The creatures and wind seemed in deep sleep' uses the rhyming of long vowel sounds to emulate the gentle ebbing and flowing of the tide. The simile 'as quiet as a library' cements the idea of untouched paradise. In line 5, the description of a 'wide beach' that 'sloped unbordered to the sea' gives a sense of expansiveness and freedom, as opposed to cramped, congested city life. De Botton then personifies nature to show that nature itself is the main attraction of this location. 'Nature was at her most benevolent', and 'atone for her ill-temper' and 'display only her munificence' show that de Botton has experienced

Examiner comments

1 Nothing is gained by this definition of audience and purpose.

2 Perceptive understanding of word selection.

3 Perceptive understanding of the effect of the language feature.

4 Perceptive awareness of the use of vowel sounds.

5 Precise description.

Example candidate response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>many sides of Mother Nature, attending to other, very different locations he has visited on his travels. In line 9, 'The trees provided shade and milk, the floor of the sea was lined with shells, ...' is a complex - compound sentence used to show the beautiful nature of this location; almost as if it is paradise. The 'enveloping profound warmth ... so unlike the fragility of northern European heat,' uses contrast to show emphasise the exotic, almost alien feel 6 the island, while simultaneously giving readers a clue about de Botton's home country, making him more relatable. The personification 'assertive' of the skill in line 13 returns to theme of nature being the <i>prima donna</i> Prima Donna in the play of life 7</p> <p>In line 14, de Botton returns to descrip rich description. Onomatopoeia in 'lapping sounds' combines with the simile 'as if a kindly monster was taking discreet sips of water' to give strong auditory imagery description of the scene. The oxymoron in 'kindly monster' is used to show that this exotic, unfamiliar place is extremely beautiful once one has overcome one's initial trepidation 8</p> <p>The reference to birds 'careering through the air' brings the passage to life, and transitions from the stillness of early morning, to the activity of the day, using the graphic verb 'careering' 9 The alliteration in 'raffia roofs' uses the soft consonant sound 'r' to promote the idea of relaxation. Adjectives like 'gentle' and a few adverbs like 'irregularly' promote this too. The personification of the coconut trees 'as though some of them were craning their necks' gives the reader an idea of just how the trees lean over the water. Furthermore, the reference to the brochure in</p>	<p>6 Excellent awareness of nuance.</p> <p>7 An interesting and enjoyable development of the author's personification of the natural world.</p> <p>8 Recognition of language feature and a plausible interpretation of effect.</p> <p>9 Excellent understanding of verb choice.</p>

Example candidate response – high, continued	Examiner comments
<p>line 18 makes the passage relatable. Who hasn't seen a tropical picture of 'tropical sea' and 'jungle-covered hills' and dreamed of being there?</p> <p>In line 23, de Botton suggests that a description of his surroundings is insufficient to truly explain his feelings. 'only imperfectly reflects what occurred'. This 'attention was ... fractured and confused' suggesting the beauty of the landscape was so great, that even without ^{having given} it his full attention, de Botton is able to recall in fantastic detail, the exact location he visited. Repetition of 'birds careering through the air ...' is used to give the feeling that de Botton's recollection may be unsure of his recollections as his 'awareness of them was weakened'. The passage now moves on to more mundane ¹⁰ aspects of life such as 'a sore throat', 'a pressure across both temples' and 'a rising need to visit the bathroom.' These feelings return us with a jolt to the real world; de Botton's ¹¹ ungrainy removal from paradise, in many ways, paralleling Milton's paradise Paradise Lost. De Botton's sin was also severe; he had brought himself to the island - to paradise. ¹²</p> <p>The passage uses exquisite description to follow de Botton's journey through the day, waking up in paradise, rejoicing in its beauty, before being yanked back to reality by the mundanities of life. A relaxed, slow pace is maintained throughout by using complex-compound sentences, while the 'fall from paradise' near the end is subtly foreshadowed ¹³ early on in 'rustlings of the night' and 'hindy monster' making for enthralled reading.</p>	<p>¹⁰ A clear recognition of change of tone in the last paragraph.</p> <p>¹¹ Interesting word choice.</p> <p>¹² The reference to 'Paradise Lost' is a very slight digression but fully justified and a demonstration of the candidate's confidence and enjoyment of the passage.</p> <p>¹³ Awareness of the whole passage.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 15 out of 15</p>

Question 2a

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This was a very full and perceptive response which received full marks but this does not imply that there are no areas open to improvement.

The opening paragraph speculated about the possible target audience for the passage, which in this case served no useful purpose in defining style, tone and language. The focus of the whole paragraph was uncertain and there was no clear relationship between a formal tone and the emphasis on an 'exotic feel' to the location.

After the first paragraph, there was largely unwavering attention to the effects of style and language, though there is no reason to think that knowing the author's native country makes him more 'relatable'. Band 1

Example candidate response – middle	Examiner comments
<p>The writer creates a vivid description of beauty and peace ^{in the passage} through the use of personification and colour to allow the reader to understand the magnificence of traveling. Although the writer creates such a wonderful scene, he contradicts these statements in the final paragraph by depicting multiple problems that he had occurred on the way to his destination. 1</p>	<p>1 An opening paragraph which demonstrates recognition of the key feature of the passage.</p>
<p>The writer sets the scene as being "early on that first morning" to draw the readers attention towards a cool and undisturbed atmosphere. This is further enhanced by the vivid and colourful image of the "dawn light" being a "pale grey-blue." The description of the sky shows how early it was and how beautiful the day already was. The writer uses onomatopoeia to describe the "rustlings" of the previous night to allow one's sense's to be evoked through movement, and creates a sense of wonder as to what animals there might have been. 2</p>	<p>2 A developed but economical account of the scene setting of the passage.</p>
<p>Additionally, the writer personifies the wind as it "seemed in deep sleep" to enhance the feeling of peace and quiet, which links to the idea of it being very early. The writer goes further in describing the ultimate peace in his use of a simile to outline how "It was as quiet as a library." This creates an image of nature being a type of librarian watching over everything and instilling silence, which is made clear through the use of a short sentence, giving a sense of power. More so, nature is further personified in "Nature was at her most benevolent" and "she had chosen to atone for her ill-temper in other regions" to create a feeling that this beach was protected from the harsh elements and creating a sense of relief and undisturbed beauty. 4</p>	<p>3 An effective and personal interpretation of the image.</p>
<p>The description of the sand being "powdery" and "the colour of sun-ripened wheat" further evoke's the readers senses through taste and portrays a vivid image of warmth and happiness. The word</p>	<p>4 A good use of the text to demonstrate how the passage employs personification.</p>

Example candidate response – middle, continued	Examiner comments
<p>"powdery" describes how fine and soft the sand was which adds to the interpretation of beauty. The image of the air "enveloping profound warmth" creates a sense of safety and of the beach being hidden and private. 5</p> <p>The writer goes further in describing the magnificence of the beach and the amazement the writer felt through describing the sounds of the sea to be like "a kindly monster was taking discreet sips of water from a large goblet." This image creates a fairytail effect to the reader showing how magical everything was, as if the water felt like a child again in his surroundings. This depicts 6 further the feeling of safety and wonder to the reader. The trees are described to be "craning their necks to catch a better angle of the sun." This personification shows how even nature felt relaxed and how calm everything was. 7</p> <p>In the final paragraph, the writer contradicts the images of beauty at the beach through "my attention was in truth far more fractured and confused than the foregoing paragraphs suggest." This draws the readers attention away from the beauty and more towards the negative feelings the writer had. The writer states that these 8 details mentioned previously were "weakened by a number of other, incongruous and unrelated elements." This creates a sense of anticipation as to what has gone wrong with the writer. The listing effect used throughout the last paragraph through "a sore throat...", "not having informed a colleague..." and "a pressure across both temples" suggests how nervous the writer had become and how stressed he was. 9</p>	<p>5 A perceptive awareness of language effect.</p> <p>6 The image of the 'kindly monster' is open to different readings and this is a perfectly acceptable view.</p> <p>7 Another language feature which has a variety of allowable interpretations.</p> <p>8 Recognition of a drastic change of tone and direction in the passage.</p> <p>9 Developed attention to the paragraph, but fails to consider the final sentence and the implication of a spiritual rather than a physical malaise.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 10 out of 15</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This response demonstrated a consistent understanding of the passage and used a good range of language examples. However the effect of some of these examples might have been demonstrated more precisely.

'The kindly monster' taking 'discreet sips' was described as creating a 'fairytail (sic) effect', which is perfectly allowable as a general impression. However, the key effect is the contrast between the massive size of the monster (the sea) and the delicacy implied by 'discreet sips'.

The change of tone in the final paragraph might have been more specifically examined. The writer's sense of malaise was described as his 'negative feelings', a very general application that doesn't suggest the sense of alienation that was intended.

Example candidate response – low

Examiner comments

This extract's style is narrative, it's telling a story in a calm and creative approach. The tones very easy going as gentle and in my opinion this represents the mind state of anyone who would be on a tropical island and the physical state of the island itself. ①

There is a lot of imagery and adjectives used to add to make this extract descriptive. The author is trying to paint a picture in our heads. "in the dawn light ^{the} sky was pale grey-blue" ②
 "Beyond the hotel room stretched a wide beach which was covered at first with coconut trees and then sloped unhindered towards the sea". ③

There is a lot of use of personification in this extract, giving inanimate objects human like abilities ④ which brings the entire extract together. In this case it is made to make the island and location seem alive and liberating. ⑤
 "wind seemed in deep sleep"
 "Nature was at her most benevolent"
 "coconut trees were craning their necks"
 Adding personification brought more colour and venture ⑥ to the story

The author also used a few similes such as "it was as quiet as a library" and "as if a kindly monster was taking discreet sips of water from a large goblet". Because a lot of imagery and descriptions have been used the similes compliment them by giving the audience something to compare the descriptions with. This helps thoroughly give us an idea and paint a better picture for the audience. ⑦

① A fairly purposeful opening, no repetition of the question and making a reasonable point about the tone of the passage.

② A very general point, which fails to specify what picture the author is trying to paint.

③ A lengthy quotation which serves no useful purpose.

④ The purpose of personification is described but how it brings the extract together is not developed.

⑤ 'alive and liberating' needs more specific references to language examples.

⑥ 'Colour and (ad)venture' lacks precise referencing.

⑦ The use of the simile is considered in general terms, but no attempt is made to examine the author's use of a library as a simile, or the image of the 'kindly monster'.

Total mark awarded = 3 out of 15

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This was a very short response which needed to consider a more comprehensive range of language examples and to do so in greater depth and detail. 'The author is trying to paint a picture in our heads' is not an examination of style or language.

Quotation could have been used far more sparingly and as a result would have been more effective. Over half of the second paragraph is taken up by quoting the original text, suggesting that quotation was used to avoid the need for comment.

The use of both personification and simile were commented on, but in very general terms which failed to demonstrate an understanding of specific effects.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

Some candidates devoted their first paragraph to deciding the probable audience for the passage. This was a largely wasted effort, especially as the guesswork was often wrong.

The main features of the opening were generally well understood and commented on, especially the personification of the natural world. The second paragraph was more sketchily considered and some significant features: the kindly monster, sunbathing trees and careering birds were ignored or mentioned only in passing.

There was also uneven attention to the final paragraph, with its sudden qualification of all that has gone before. Some candidates ignored the change of direction and tone, with only a minority seizing on the significance of the final sentence.

As always, the stronger responses tended to come from those candidates who spread their attention throughout the whole passage and having made a point, moved quickly onto the next.

Question 2b

Example candidate response – high	Examiner comments
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>had just begun to kiss</i></p> <p>The first rays of sunlight were kissing the peaks around me as I huddled outside my tent, clutching my parka about me 1. The sky was still dark, but streaks of blazing orange were creeping 2 along the snow-capped mountains. The howls of the night-time winds had been replaced by the gentle swishing 3 of the rhododendrons, silhouettes like wizened old men, bent and shrunken ⁶⁹. 4 The silence seemed almost enchanted, as if ⁷⁰ Mother Nature dared not break her self-imposed silence; a silence more profound than those of the shadows that glide across the slopes around me ¹⁰⁰.</p> <p>As my senses sharpen 5 I hear the playful babble of a nearby brook, and then the wind announces its return with a deathly chill ¹²³.</p> <p>Suddenly, my stomach interrupts this silent ^{with an ominous growl} symphony ¹²⁴. Even in paradise, it seems, hunger calls 6.</p>	<p>1 Atmospheric opening which is cleverly contrasted with that of the passage. The choice of 'huddled' and 'clutching' is particularly effective.</p> <p>2 Use of personification.</p> <p>3 Onomatopoeia echoes the use of 'rustling' and 'lapping' in the passage.</p> <p>4 Striking image.</p> <p>5 Deliberate change of tone which reflects that of the passage.</p> <p>6 Cleverly achieved bathetic effect: hunger rather than a sense of danger or alienation creates the change of tone.</p>
Total mark awarded = 9 out of 10	

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This was a fluent response with excellent understanding of the stylistic features of the extract but it might have been even more interesting had it created a more independent narrative. Candidates were invited to write the opening of a passage based closely on the style and language of the extract, but the specification did not demand that the shape and development of the passage were to be replicated.

The response would have benefited from a stronger contrast of settings and even though the change of tense and tone worked very well, there was no need to follow the exact shape of the original.

Example candidate response – middle	Examiner comments
<p>It was absolute magnificance, the type of beauty that could not be depicted in a few simple words. It was a late, dusty, African ^{afternoon} morning as I sat on the balcony of a tourist ^{based} like hotel, sipping an ice cold drink. The bush that surrounded every aspect of my vision was thick and dense, apart from small clearings where I spotted numerous animals busily scurrying about. The burnt-orange coloured sun cast colours across the sky that portrayed a watercoloured painting done by a famous artist I studied in college, outlining the pure beauty and enjoyment experienced by many in this beautiful country. It was not something you would be able to experience anywhere else in the world. I stared in amazement at the herds of elephants that strolled, barely five metres away from where I sat, through and over trees and bushes, watching the utter control they assumed over the surrounding area.</p>	<p>1 A direct and emphatic opening sentence which recalls the style of the original.</p> <p>2 A mundane detail which seems out of place.</p> <p>3 This echoes ‘I slipped on a dressing gown’ in the passage, but isn’t really necessary. Candidates are asked to respond using the style and language of the passage. They don’t need to replicate the situation.</p> <p>4 An overlong and clumsy sentence which tries too hard to echo the descriptions of the island’s colours.</p> <p>5 An odd choice of verb which doesn’t tally with the ‘utter control’ mentioned later in the sentence.</p> <p>6 In the spirit of the original, but very improbable if read literally.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 6 out of 10</p>

How the candidate could have improved the answer

This response made a purposeful attempt to replicate the style and language of the original but could have been more confident in developing its own independent narrative.

With a stipulated word boundary of 150 words, the writing needs to be succinct. The phrase ‘a watercoloured (sic) painting done by a famous artist I studied in college’ added little to the description of the colours of the African sky.

Bearing the word restriction in mind, it might have been better to have devoted the whole passage to its most dramatic feature: the herd of elephants.

Example candidate response – low	Examiner comments
<p>Just getting out the airport parking lot, we drove into Johannesburg city. The atmosphere and all my surroundings were dipped in culture. The sky as blue and more clear than a crystal and to the tall, tainted buildings were screaming their history. 1 As we drove, we entered more towards the heart and soul of Joburg, we were in the towns and streets. People were joyess though some were not, 2 every language spoken containing so much heritage.</p> <p>children running with soccer balls on the fields and woman with babies strapped to their backs watching them. even the air spoke a new 3 language and as we drove, I was only but exited to expirence this city, as it much as it allows 4 me to. we entered the suburban areas where greenary filled the scenes. Houses upon houses and shopping malls galore, it felt as if I were in a completley different city now and with that thought in mind, I've come to learn that she was a bipolar city. 5 Though it my my choice upon which personality I wanted to know more about. in front of me, lay a pool of oppertunity. 6</p>	<p>1 Several very awkward sentences in which either the construction is faulty or the meaning is uncertain.</p> <p>2 This qualification is given no context and the sentence has no logical progression.</p> <p>3 A plausible echo of the original style.</p> <p>4 Uneven expression and altered text.</p> <p>5 An interesting development of the contrasting moods of the passage.</p> <p>6 A metaphor which echoes the language of the text and gives the response quite a purposeful conclusion.</p> <p>Total mark awarded = 4 out of 10</p>

Question 2b

How the candidate could have improved the answer

There was an attempt to introduce elements of the text's style and language into the response but the effect was very variable, and accuracy of expression suffered in the process.

The first paragraph would have benefited from a clear sense of the atmosphere the candidate was trying to create. In the answer, the images of screaming buildings and surroundings 'dipped in culture' seemed disconnected and arbitrary.

The second paragraph had a greater sense of cohesion, together with a purposeful conclusion, but the more matter of fact style bore little resemblance to the original.

There were significant errors of expression throughout the response which with careful checking would have been improved.

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

This question produced some interesting and imaginative work but certain elements of the style of the text were not reproduced.

The most obvious feature of the passage, the personification of the natural world, was generally understood and replicated. Alliteration was another feature that was commonly included, but other aspects of the writing tended to be ignored. In attempting to replicate the quirky imagery of the text, some candidates produced images which were weak or simply eccentric.

The major problem proved to be an unwillingness to depart too far from the structure of the original text. This sometimes resulted in rather contrived responses and also inhibited the candidates' capacity to produce a strongly personal account of an event in their own country.

In the low example, the candidate significantly exceeded the specified word limit. While transgression does not directly result in the deduction of marks, this script is an example of how a lack of conciseness can be self-penalising.

Cambridge International Examinations
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom
t: +44 1223 553554 f: +44 1223 553558
e: info@cie.org.uk www.cie.org.uk

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