

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (COUNT-IN SPEAKING)

Paper 0991/11
Reading and Writing (Core)

Key messages

In **Exercise 1**, candidates should be reminded that detailed reading is needed to identify the key point of each question. For this task, answers should be brief and should avoid the inclusion of extra, often distracting information which could affect the answer.

In **Exercise 2**, candidates are required to identify key details including opinions and attitudes, and to show awareness of what is not explicitly stated but only implied. It is recommended that skimming and scanning reading techniques are practised, and candidates should carefully consider each question, taking into account any distracting information in the texts. When writing their answer, candidates should clearly indicate the letter they have selected.

In **Exercise 3**, candidates need to ensure that responses are brief and that they correspond to the heading in each question. Candidates should be guided by the number of bullet points which indicate the number of responses required. Each response should be presented on a separate line, and candidates should not provide an additional bullet point unless they have crossed through a previous one.

In **Exercise 4**, it is crucial that responses do not go beyond the required length, as Content points which are included after the stated word limit cannot be credited. Candidates should aim to provide six Content points and address exactly what is being asked in the question. The most effective summaries are those which demonstrate understanding of the text and make attempts to paraphrase the main ideas. Summary writing skills such as paraphrasing, ordering information and linking ideas together cohesively continue to be an area for improvement in candidate preparation.

In **Exercise 5**, candidates were generally successful in this series in understanding the topic and responding to the task. To achieve marks in the highest band, candidates must show awareness of the target audience by using an informal register.

In **Exercise 6**, candidates should use a style and register suited to the requirements of the task, in contrast to the informal email in **Exercise 5**. To achieve marks in the higher bands, it is important for candidates not to rely solely on the prompts provided, but to introduce their own ideas and structure their writing cohesively.

General comments

It is important for candidates to read and carefully consider the requirements of each exercise.

Each exercise included degrees of difficulty, so differentiation was achieved within individual exercises and throughout the paper. As a result, a wide range of total marks was used.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

There were many successful responses to this first exercise. Less successful responses were often unnecessarily long and often included irrelevant detail which could not be credited.

Questions 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 were generally well answered.

For Question 4, the material from which the brushes were made was 'horsehair', but any added details on the brushes in the text such as 'pieces of iron' could not be credited.

For Question 5, which was generally well answered, a few candidates appeared to have misunderstood the text and believed that 'Chauvet' was the name of the town, giving the incorrect response 'the name of the local town'. Some candidates wrote 'discovery' or 'discover' instead of 'discoverer' in their answers.

Question 8 proved to be the most challenging question in this exercise. A few candidates were able to locate the correct information, which was that there were no drawings of people, only of animals. Common incorrect answers were 'paintings on the walls', or a full list of the animals in the wall paintings.

Exercise 2

This exercise required very careful reading of both the texts and of the questions in order to choose the correct alternative. Few candidates scored full marks, and most were able to achieve 4 marks out of the 8 available.

- (a) Charles Fournier chose to follow his father into competitive, professional cycling against his father's wishes. This was understood by many candidates.
- (b) Yvonne Taylor chose to be a long-distance runner, but thought it was a 'great pity' that she could not also participate in other enjoyable sports such as gymnastics and swimming. Those who chose C as their response had possibly seen 'do other sports like badminton and basketball' in the extract, but it was Ben Givens' father who suggested these interests to him. There is no mention of regret in Ben's submission.
- (c) Many candidates appeared to have been misled by the word 'future' in Yvonne Taylor's report and chose (B) as their answer. Her focus for the future is, however, very positive. She is already preparing for next year's world championships, whereas it is Charles Fournier (C), who is concerned about leaving his wife and their baby for long periods of time while cycling professionally.
- (d) Many candidates understood that it was Ben Givens (A), who found the family name to be an advantage when following his father into motor-cycle racing.
- (e) Yvonne Taylor (B) was always determined to match her mother's success as an Olympic athlete and, even now, is driven by the same desire. Most candidates understood this and chose (B) as their answer.
- (f) It is Ben Givens(A), who thinks it unfair when racing fans make comparisons between him and his father. Yvonne Taylor (B) accepts the fact that her mother was a top athlete, but does not let it affect her performance.
- (g) Yvonne Taylor is grateful for the warnings given by her mother on how tough it is to make a successful career in international athletics. She appreciates her mother's advice, but it only serves to make her more determined. Neither Ben Given's father nor Charles Fournier's father warned them against their chosen sports.
- (h) The correct answer to the final question on which of the three remembers feeling proud of their parent is located in the final sentence of Ben Givens' statement – 'How many people achieve what he did?' Many candidates were successful here.

Exercise 3

Candidates generally performed well in this exercise. A good number scored full marks in all three sections and the full range of marks was used.

Reasons why some birds fly from Africa to northern Europe at certain times of the year

Most candidates were able to find two correct answers here from the five possible right answers. The response most rarely used was *'the long summer days in northern Europe'*.

How birds find their way when they are migrating

Many accurate responses were seen here. The most common incorrect answer was caused by selecting the following information from the text, *'they are able to judge the direction they should be travelling'* without mention of their judgement being aided by the position of the sun in daylight and the stars at night.

Challenges for birds when they are migrating

Most candidates found two challenges facing the migrant birds, usually *'crossing seas'* and *'flying across deserts'*. Only a few chose to mention the long distance, 8 000 kilometres, between Africa and northern Europe.

Exercise 4

Candidates generally responded well to this exercise. Linking words and good organisation of the advantages and the disadvantages of tram systems in towns were common features of successful summaries. Some candidates tried to use their own words where possible. The advantage of tram routes being fixed and therefore never changing as expressed in the text was taken by some candidates as being a disadvantage, which could not be credited. Neither could the omission of the word *'system'* or *'tracks'* when stating that trams are cheaper to build. It was not the tram itself that was cheaper to build, but the whole tram system as compared to building a railway system.

Almost all summaries were completed within the limit of 90 words.

Exercise 5

There were many successful responses to the email writing exercise. Overall, candidates demonstrated a good sense of purpose, and attempted to develop the bullet points in a relevant way. The most popular places to which the trip went were museums, art galleries and zoos.

Prompt three, concerning the follow-up lesson, was often omitted, which affected the marks available for Content.

The language used featured a range of common vocabulary and a range of simple structure, but tended to be relatively unambitious. Only a few responses featured a variety of tenses and complex sentences, containing relative or subordinate clauses. Those who followed the three prompts closely produced organised and cohesive responses and could be credited with a mark in the upper band for both Language and Content.

Exercise 6

All the points in the task were used by many candidates and the task was generally fulfilled. Some responses featured cinemas in general, others of the candidates' visit to the new cinema. Many responses described their experience more as a narrative than a review, which affected the marks awarded. Greater development of the prompts and the inclusion of language associated with giving opinions would have been effective in accessing the higher bands on the mark scheme.

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (COUNT-IN SPEAKING)

Paper 0991/21
Reading and Writing (Extended)

Key messages

In **Exercise 1**, candidates should locate the key requirements of individual questions and ensure responses are precise. It is important that candidates avoid including additional, incorrect information.

In **Exercise 2**, it is important to recognise synonymous words or phrases in the text which connect with the questions. This will help to locate correct responses.

In **Exercise 3**, candidates should read the requirements of the headings carefully and ensure they include any key information in each brief note. There should be one relevant note per bullet point and if candidates provide more than one correct note for a bullet point, only the first one can be credited.

In **Exercise 4**, candidates are advised to read the instructions carefully to understand what information is to be summarised. They should attempt to rephrase the content points without altering the meaning. All aspects of a content point should be communicated. Adhering to the specified word limit is important as exceeding this can affect marks for both Content and Language. Any content points given after the word limit cannot be credited, so if there is a lengthy introduction, marked language might contain much irrelevant content.

In **Exercises 5 and 6**, candidates should focus on the requirements of the task and ensure all aspects are developed. Responses need to be of an appropriate length, demonstrating relevant content and a range of language. To achieve marks in the higher bands, it is important for candidates to introduce independent, well-developed ideas in both tasks. Candidates will not be given credit for using language which has simply been copied from the prompts.

In **Exercise 5**, candidates are reminded to use an informal register and to address and develop all three bullet prompts. In **Exercise 6**, a more formal register is required and candidates should use persuasive language to convince the reader of their opinions.

General Comments

It is important for candidates to read and carefully consider the requirements of each exercise.

In **Exercises 1 and 3**, candidates are encouraged to use the relevant words from the text wherever possible in their responses. Rephrasing of the information in these instances is not required. When paraphrasing and synonyms are included in responses, these should accurately reflect the information in the text. If the incorrect spelling forms another word, e.g. 'dessert' for 'desert' (Q 13), the response cannot be credited.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Precise answers are required for this comprehension exercise. Candidates should ensure they focus on the requirements of the question and locate the relevant section of the text when responding.

- (1) This question was very well answered. Incorrect responses included 'a small opening' and 'images of animals'.
- (2) This question was well answered. A few candidates wrote 'between 28 000 and 31 000 years ago', which was the age of *some* paintings and drawings, but not *most* of them.
- (3) This question was well answered. A few candidates gave 'the cave was frozen in time'. However, it was a rockfall which prevented people entering the cave, and it being preserved was a result of this. Another incorrect response was 'the paintings would be damaged'.
- (4) This question was well answered. Several candidates wrote 'horsehair' but also included 'and pointed stones' and/or 'pieces of iron', which could not be credited.
- (5) This question was generally well answered. A few candidates appeared to have misunderstood the text and thought 'Chauvet' was the name of the town, giving the incorrect response 'the name of the local town'. Some candidates wrote 'discovery' or 'discover' instead of 'discoverer' in their answers.
- (6) This question was generally well answered. A significant number of candidates provided at least one correct detail. A few candidates gave the response 'It was a genuine cave', which was a repetition of the question. Other incorrect responses were 'the images just like the originals' and 'concrete tunnel', neither of which explained why the writer felt he was in a real cave.
- (7) This question was well answered. Some candidates gave or included the incorrect response 'beautifully painted'.
- (8) This question was well answered. A significant number of candidates gave incorrect responses such as 'paintings on the wall', 'animals interacting' or 'large and dangerous animals'.
- (9) This question was well answered and a significant number of candidates provided three or four correct details. There were candidates who gave details that were not connected in the text to how the Chauvet paintings differed from other examples of ancient cave art. These details were information about Chauvet paintings and cave art generally. Some responses did not include the required comparison such as 'aggressive animals' instead of '*more* aggressive animals', so could not be credited.

Exercise 2

In this exercise, candidates are required to recognise key words in the question and ensure that the text they select fully supports their choice of answer. Some candidates provided ten correct responses. Most candidates gained at least five of the ten marks available.

- (a) This question was very well answered. Common responses tended to be options (B) or (A), although the correct text (C) states 'once I decided to be a cyclist, he couldn't stop me', which implies rebellion.
- (b) This question was well answered. (C) and (A) were among the common incorrect answers. Candidates may have linked the idea of 'mixed feelings about the media' in the question to the reference to 'television' in (C) and the reference to 'fans' comments to media' in (A).
- (c) Candidates responded well to this question. A few gave (C) as their answer, possibly connecting what Charles' father wanted him to do with the idea of giving up.
- (d) This question was well answered. (B) tended to be the most common incorrect response, but Yvonne had her focus on the future, rather than being worried about it. Candidates needed to find someone who had concerns or worries for the future and (C) was the correct response.
- (e) This question was well answered. (D) tended to be the most common incorrect choice. This does not refer to the family name being an advantage but the reverse, since Charles believes it is untrue that being a Fournier means he gets the best bikes.
- (f) This question was well answered. (C) and (D) were the most commonly chosen incorrect responses. In the correct response (B), Yvonne thought, 'Maybe you don't believe I can be as good as you. I'll show you I can', which connects with aiming to match her parent's success.

- (g) This question was well answered. Some candidates selected (B) or (C), possibly focusing on differences, rather than similarities between the sportsperson and their parent.
- (h) This question was well answered. (C) was often selected, possibly because candidates considered Charles getting the best bikes to be a comparison.
- (i) This question was well answered. Some candidates may have had difficulty recognising the requirements of the question and commonly gave (C) or (D) as their response, although these texts do not refer to being warned about something.
- (j) This question was well answered. A few candidates selected (D) instead of (A). They may have taken Heidi's mother winning a gold medal as being something to be proud of, though this is not communicated in the text.

Exercise 3

Candidates generally responded very well to this note-taking exercise, providing six to eight correct notes, with several candidates gaining the full nine marks available. Notes could not be credited when they were repeated, omitted key information or were under the wrong heading.

Reasons why some birds fly from Africa to northern Europe at certain times of the year

This section was well attempted and there were many accurate responses. Some responses omitted key ideas, giving for example 'good places' instead of 'good places for buildings nests'. Occasionally they expressed the wrong idea by omitting a word as in 'to feed insects' rather than 'to feed on insects'. Sometimes a point was repeated as with 'to feed' and 'plenty of food', which were given as separate bullet points. Some responses like 'to get away from the winter cold' were not about birds migrating from Africa but about migration to warmer places.

How birds find their way when they are migrating

This section was very well attempted and many responses provided the required three correct notes out of a possible four. A few responses referred to winds blowing them along, which was not connected to finding their way. Some responses confused how birds find their way and the challenges they face, so notes referring to crossing seas or deserts were placed under this heading.

Challenges for birds when they are migrating

This section was well attempted and a significant number of responses were accurate. Some omitted key ideas as in 'natural places destroyed', which omitted the idea of feeding places being destroyed. There were also references to ideas connected to the first heading, reasons for migration, such as the possibility of animals attacking.

Exercise 4

Candidates generally responded well to this exercise. In terms of content, a significant number of responses included between five and eight relevant points, some providing at least eight of the possible ten Content points in the text. Very few responses did not address both aspects of the summary. If both aspects are not included, this can affect the mark awarded for Language, which is also the case if they go beyond the specified word limit. There were candidates who could not be awarded top band marks for Language as a result of an over length response.

Occasionally points were not clear or precise enough. For example, some responses referred to the fact that headphones, rather than the music itself helped concentration. Sometimes an attempt to paraphrase could affect the accurate expression of a content point, e.g. 'you should listen to music you do not like', which is not the same as *not listening to music you are passionate about*. Candidates are encouraged to use their own words appropriately, but should take care and choose vocabulary and expressions that fit the context. Many responses demonstrated a good awareness of the summary writing skills required, keeping within the 120-word limit and organising points skilfully, whilst attempting to express this to some extent in their own words.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range with many candidates gaining three to six marks. In

order to achieve the top band for Language, candidates must attempt to use their own words, as well as organising the content points. A considerable number of responses copied the wording of the content points directly from the text and attempted to link these copied points in various ways. This meant they made little attempt to use their own words, which significantly affected the Language mark.

There were responses that effectively used synonyms or paraphrased points, were coherent with appropriate cohesive devices, and with a high level of accuracy, thus gaining higher Language marks. It is very important that Content points remain clear when re-expressed since marks cannot be awarded if the meaning changes. Practice with verb, noun and adjective synonyms, along with practice in forming alternative grammatical structures is beneficial to enable candidates to attain the higher Language bands.

Exercise 5

Email to a friend about a school trip

Content

Generally, responses provided developed, appropriate content. Some fulfilled the task skilfully and effectively. Some responses were less than 150 words and these were generally not sufficiently developed to merit higher band Content marks. Most responses addressed all three bullet points, but occasionally there was not enough appropriate detail to demonstrate the adequate development. A few responses omitted to mention what they enjoyed or what they learned, which had an impact on the mark awarded. The most consistently well-developed bullet point concerned the destination of the trip, and what was enjoyed was sometimes communicated through the kind of place visited. There was a range of destinations such as museums, zoos, farms, recycling plants, cities and universities. Candidates often expanded on what happened during the visit and aspects that they liked. Learning was often demonstrated through presentations or completing writing tasks. Effective emails connected the content of the email to the recipient with references to shared experiences or the target reader's interests, writing for example, 'It was a shame you had to miss the trip' or 'remember that zoo we visited last summer'. Such emails were cohesive in how the three bullet points were integrated, with natural openings serving as good introductions to the rest of the email, and endings which provided an appropriate concluding comment.

Language

In terms of Language, most candidates demonstrated a good range of well-organised language, using an informal tone appropriate in an email. Some responses mixed informal with formal language, making the tone inconsistent. More formal links such as 'firstly, secondly, in conclusion' do not tend to feature in an email to a friend. Similarly, learned idiomatic language inappropriately and inaccurately used can negatively affect the quality of the language. Some candidates were able to construct sentences of different lengths, which included more complex structures and a high level of accuracy.

Language deserving of the higher bands should use a wide range of structures and vocabulary. An example of such language is, 'We were treated quite kindly and were taken round the entire factory. I was amazed when I saw an extremely long carousel ...'. In this example, complex language is used accurately and effectively. Complex language was seen in some responses, but accuracy was not always consistent. Some responses attempted to include learned idioms which were inappropriate, inaccurate or used excessively. Some such examples are: 'it made me feel that I'm over the moon, which is a thing happen ones in a blue moon'. Some emails included mainly very short sentences (subject + verb + object), which were accurate but did not demonstrate a sufficient range of language for the higher bands. There were a few candidates who often used commas instead of full-stops.

Exercise 6

In this exercise, candidates may be required to write an article, a review or a report for a particular target audience. It is important that they read the task carefully and consider the two prompts, which are given to help form ideas on the subject.

Review of a cinema that has just opened in the town

Content

Most responses fulfilled the task with a generally good sense of purpose and audience, referring to the ideas in the prompts. A small number of responses discussed the value of cinemas generally, and there were

instances where it appeared the question has not been read carefully enough as the response focussed on a film review. This significantly affected the mark. A few responses focused on the advantages and disadvantages of the cinema, which was not quite appropriate for a review. Responses achieving marks in the top band described their experience of the cinema, evaluated it and supported their views with examples or evidence. They included details of the types of film, the booking system, the cleanliness and comfort, sound and screen quality, or additional entertainment to complete the experience.

Language

The full range of marks was awarded for Language, with most responses attempting some more complex structures and some less common vocabulary. Some responses demonstrated a good range of complex structures with only occasional non-impeding errors, enabling them to achieve the precision required for marks in the top band. Responses included accurate, varied sentence structures, good punctuation and paragraphing, along with ambitious vocabulary. This quality of language is exemplified in 'I would recommend Starscreen to thoroughly train its staff on how to manage customers and render services more efficiently and speedily.' In general, many candidates used language with a good level of accuracy that included non-impeding errors when attempting more complex structures. In order to access top band marks, candidates should include a wide range of accurate language that is well organised and sequenced.



ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (COUNT-IN SPEAKING)

Paper 0991/31
Listening (Core)

Key messages

Candidates should be reminded to provide clear and legible responses. The formation of individual letters must be clear. Candidates should use a pen, not a pencil, and simply cross out responses which need to be altered. Candidates should not write over, or try to erase, their initial answers. Attempts which cannot be read may not be credited.

Candidates should be reminded to write their answers in the spaces provided on the question paper. Learners' awareness should be raised of the importance of using the appropriate singular/plural form of nouns as these can alter the key meaning.

When providing spelling attempts, the intended meaning of the attempted word should not be in doubt. Spelling attempts that create a homophone are not accepted (e.g. son/sun).

More pronunciation awareness activities, particularly of connected speech (e.g. assimilation of sounds, omission of sounds), would be beneficial to learners. Learners should also be made aware of the importance of transcribing voiced and unvoiced consonants accurately as these may change meaning (e.g. t/d as in 'tends' and 'tents').

Some questions involve transcribing various numbers and these should therefore be practised. For example, it is useful to help candidates to distinguish between the pronunciation of sixty and sixteen. Candidates would benefit from more practice in writing larger numbers correctly and the standard form of abbreviations of common units (e.g. 'hrs' for hours, 'min' for minutes, 'km' for kilometres, etc.). Candidates should be encouraged to read and listen to the rubric for each part of the paper very carefully to ensure they meet the exact requirements of each particular question.

In **Exercise 1, Questions 1 to 4** candidates should try to establish what a question is asking for, by highlighting the question words, e.g. how, why, when, and the key words in the question. In most cases, a short, direct response is most successful. In cases where candidates supply extra information, in addition to the expected key answer, and where that extra information is incorrect, the whole answer cannot be credited. For this reason, candidates should be encouraged to provide concise answers.

In gap-filling **Exercise 2**, candidates should be encouraged to try and predict the answers in the gaps (e.g. a number, a name, etc.). Candidates should not only listen for the correct meaning of the targeted detail, but also for the correct form used in the recording. At the end of each listening section, candidates should also check their responses carefully and make sure the word forms used fit each gap on the question paper.

In **Exercise 2** candidates should be reminded not to include words which are already printed on the question paper before or after each gap, as part of their answer.

In multiple-matching **Exercise 3** and multiple-choice **Exercise 4** candidates should be encouraged to make it absolutely clear which option they wish to be taken as their final answer. It needs to be emphasised that where crossing out of a rejected selection is not clear this will be seen as ambiguous and, if there is any uncertainty, it will not be credited.

It is also important to emphasise that if two boxes are filled in with the same letter in **Exercise 3** then, even if one of the responses given is correct, it will not be credited. Similarly, for each item in **Exercise 4**, if two boxes are ticked rather than one then no marks can be given.

General comments

Candidates were required to use a set number of words for **Exercises 1 and 2**. A large number of candidates, although with correct responses, could not be credited as they exceeded the required number of words.

Successful responses were those which provided short, clear answers and which adhered to the word limit required.

Candidates should be reminded that the answer will be heard; they should lift the response from the text rather than use their own words..

Candidates should be reminded that no two questions will have the same answer.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Overall this section was well answered. There were few omissions but responses could not be credited when more than the required number of words was given.

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates identified the correct response 'music'. There was a wide variety of spelling variants that could be credited but some candidates went for the distractor 'flower festival'. Some candidates wrote the plural 'music festivals' which could not be credited, as the addition of 'festivals' altered the meaning of the response.
- (b) There was a very mixed response here with several candidates giving incorrect responses such as 'check tickets', 'get photo prices', 'take ticket photos' and 'organize the festival'.

Question 2

- (a) This was very well attempted and a large number of candidates were able to score the mark as there were many acceptable spelling attempts which did not put meaning in doubt. Quite a few candidates selected 'prices' or 'amount of posters' and lost the mark.
- (b) This was quite well attempted. However certain responses could not be credited where misspelling put meaning in doubt.

Question 3

- (a) This was fairly well answered. The expected response was 'plastic bags'. Responses which omitted 'bags' or included extraneous detail, which altered overall meaning, e.g. 'plastic bags and bottles', could not be credited.
- (b) This was very well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was '38 million / 38 000 000'. Quite a few candidates selected the distractor '4500'. The following responses could not be credited: 'over 38 million' and '38 000'.

Question 4

- (a) This question was extremely well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. Some common incorrect responses that could not be credited were 'relax', 'sleep and relax' and 'eight hours'.
- (b) This question was generally well answered. However, some candidates added extra detail which negated the response e.g. '45 minutes to relax'. Other common incorrect responses included 'sleep' and 'work with children'.

Exercise 2

Question 5

Large parts of this question were answered well by the majority of candidates. Responses containing repetition of words, either preceding or following the gap, were not credited as they led to an incorrect grammatical fit. In some cases, errors around word form, e.g. providing a singular form where the expected response was plural and vice versa, meant that candidates could not be credited. Some parts of the question were left blank by a small number of candidates.

- (a) There was a mixed level of success here – responses were fairly evenly divided between the expected response, ‘radio’ and the distracting detail ‘internet’. Some incorrect responses were ‘internet radio’ and ‘Will Broadway’.
- (b) The majority of candidates identified the correct response ‘medicines’. There was a wide variety of spelling variants that could be credited where they did not put meaning in doubt, but some candidates gave the distracting detail ‘drinks’ and therefore lost the mark.
- (c) On the whole, this question was quite well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. A common incorrect response was ‘Cambodia’.
- (d) This question was consistently well answered by the vast majority of candidates. However, a few candidates wrote ‘chemicals’ or ‘gas’ and lost the mark.
- (e) This was generally well attempted by the majority of candidates. Some candidates wrote ‘comfortable’ or ‘heavier’, which could not be credited.
- (f) This was consistently well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was ‘weight’. Common incorrect responses were ‘8 Km’ and ‘weigh’.
- (g) There was a mixed level of success here as many candidates selected the distracting detail ‘doctors’. Other common incorrect responses included ‘medics’ and ‘transportation’.
- (h) This was extremely well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was ‘fame’. Some candidates however lost the mark where they wrote the plural form, ‘fames’ which could not be credited.

Exercise 3

Question 6

Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the task and obtained full marks.

A few candidates used the same letter more than once. In this case, no marks were awarded even if one of those letters was the correct response. As outlined in ‘Key Messages’, where crossing out of a rejected selection is not clear this will be seen as ambiguous and, if there is any uncertainty, it will not be credited.

Exercise 4

Question 7

Generally, candidates performed well on this question.

A few candidates did not clarify their final response, and instead gave two answers. It should be noted that if a candidate changes their mind about their original intended response, they should clearly cross out their first answer. There should be absolutely no ambiguity regarding which response is intended to be the candidate’s definitive answer.

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (COUNT-IN SPEAKING)

Paper 0991/41
Listening (Extended)

Key messages

Candidates should be reminded to provide clear and legible responses. The formation of individual letters must be clear. Candidates should use a pen, not a pencil, and simply cross out responses which need to be altered. Candidates should not write over, or try to erase, their initial answers. Attempts which cannot be read may not be credited.

Candidates should be reminded to write their answers in the spaces provided on the question paper. Learners' awareness should be raised of the importance of using the appropriate singular/plural form of nouns as these can alter the key meaning.

When providing spelling attempts, the intended meaning of the attempted word should not be in doubt. Spelling attempts that create a homophone are not accepted (e.g. son/sun).

More pronunciation awareness activities, particularly of connected speech (e.g. assimilation of sounds, omission of sounds), would be beneficial to learners. Learners should also be made aware of the importance of transcribing voiced and unvoiced consonants accurately as these may change meaning (e.g. t/d as in 'tends' and 'tents').

Some questions involve transcribing various numbers and these should therefore be practised. For example, it is useful to help candidates to distinguish between the pronunciation of sixty and sixteen. Candidates would benefit from more practice in writing larger numbers correctly and the standard form of abbreviations of common units (e.g. 'hrs' for hours, 'min' for minutes, 'km' for kilometres, etc.). Candidates should be encouraged to read and listen to the rubric for each part of the paper very carefully to ensure they meet the exact requirements of each particular question.

In **Exercise 1, Questions 1 to 4** candidates should try to establish what a question is asking for, by highlighting the question words, e.g. how, why, when, and the key words in the question. In most cases, a short, direct response is most successful. In cases where candidates supply extra information, in addition to the expected key answer, and where that extra information is incorrect, the whole answer cannot be credited. For this reason, candidates should be encouraged to provide concise answers.

In gap-filling **Exercises 2, 5A and 5B** candidates should be encouraged to try and predict the answers in the gaps (e.g. a number, a name, etc.). Candidates should not only listen for the correct meaning of the targeted detail, but also for the correct form used in the recording. At the end of each listening section, candidates should also check their responses carefully and make sure the word forms used fit each gap on the question paper.

In **Exercises 2, 5A and 5B** candidates should be reminded not to include words which are already printed on the question paper before or after each gap, as part of their answer.

In multiple-matching **Exercise 3** and multiple-choice **Exercise 4** candidates should be encouraged to make it absolutely clear which option they wish to be taken as their final answer. It needs to be emphasised that where crossing out of a rejected selection is not clear this will be seen as ambiguous and, if there is any uncertainty, it will not be credited.

It is also important to emphasise that if two boxes are filled in with the same letter in **Exercise 3** then, even if one of the responses given is correct, it will not be credited. Similarly, for each item in **Exercise 4**, if two boxes are ticked rather than one then no marks can be given.

General comments

Candidates were required to use a set number of words for **Exercises 1, 2 and 5**. A large number of candidates, although with correct responses, could not be credited as they exceeded the required number of words.

Successful responses were those which provided short, clear answers and which adhered to the word limit required.

Candidates should be reminded that the answer will be heard; they should lift the response from the text rather than use their own words.

Candidates should be reminded that no two questions will have the same answer.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

Overall this section was well answered. There were few omissions but responses could not be credited when more than the required number of words was given.

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates identified the correct response 'music'. There was a wide variety of spelling variants that could be credited but some candidates went for the distractor 'flower festival'. Some candidates wrote the plural 'music festivals' which could not be credited, as the addition of 'festivals' altered the meaning of the response.
- (b) There was a very mixed response here with several candidates giving incorrect responses such as 'check tickets', 'get photo prices', 'take ticket photos' and 'organize the festival'.

Question 2

- (a) This was very well attempted and a large number of candidates were able to score the mark as there were many acceptable spelling attempts which did not put meaning in doubt. Quite a few candidates selected 'prices' or 'amount of posters' and lost the mark.
- (b) This was quite well attempted. However certain responses could not be credited where misspelling put meaning in doubt.

Question 3

- (a) This was fairly well answered. The expected response was 'plastic bags'. Responses which omitted 'bags' or included extraneous detail, which altered overall meaning, e.g. 'plastic bags and bottles', could not be credited.
- (b) This was very well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was '38 million / 38 000 000'. Quite a few candidates selected the distractor '4500'. The following responses could not be credited: 'over 38 million' and '38 000'.

Question 4

- (a) This question was extremely well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. Some common incorrect responses that could not be credited were 'relax', 'sleep and relax' and 'eight hours'.
- (b) This question was generally well answered. However, some candidates added extra detail which negated response e.g. '45 minutes to relax'. Other common incorrect responses included 'sleep' and 'work with children'.

Exercise 2

Question 5

Large parts of this question were answered well by the majority of candidates. Responses containing repetition of words, either preceding or following the gap, were not credited as they led to an incorrect grammatical fit. In some cases, errors around word form, e.g. providing a singular form where the expected response was plural and vice versa, meant that candidates could not be credited. Some parts of the question were left blank by a small number of candidates.

- (a) There was a mixed level of success here – responses were fairly evenly divided between the expected response, ‘radio’ and the distracting detail ‘internet’. Some incorrect responses were ‘internet radio’ and ‘Will Broadway’.
- (b) The majority of candidates identified the correct response ‘medicines’. There was a wide variety of spelling variants that could be credited where they did not put meaning in doubt, but some candidates gave the distracting detail ‘drinks’ and therefore lost the mark.
- (c) On the whole, this question was quite well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. A common incorrect response was ‘Cambodia’.
- (d) This question was consistently well answered by the vast majority of candidates. However, a few candidates wrote ‘chemicals’ or ‘gas’ and lost the mark.
- (e) This was generally well attempted by the majority of candidates. Some candidates wrote ‘comfortable’ or ‘heavier’, which could not be credited.
- (f) This was consistently well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was ‘weight’. Common incorrect responses were ‘8 Km’ and ‘weigh’.
- (g) There was a mixed level of success here as many candidates selected the distracting detail ‘doctors’. Other common incorrect responses included ‘medics’ and ‘transportation’.
- (h) This was extremely well attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The expected response was ‘fame’. Some candidates however lost the mark where they wrote the plural form, ‘fames’ which could not be credited.

Exercise 3

Question 6

Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the task and obtained full marks.

A few candidates used the same letter more than once. In this case, no marks were awarded even if one of those letters was the correct response. As outlined in ‘Key Messages’, where crossing out of a rejected selection is not clear this will be seen as ambiguous and, if there is any uncertainty, it will not be credited.

Exercise 4

Question 7

Generally, candidates performed well on this question.

A few candidates did not clarify their final response, and instead gave two answers. It should be noted that if a candidate changes their mind about their original intended response, they should clearly cross out their first answer. There should be absolutely no ambiguity regarding which response is intended to be the candidate’s definitive answer.

Exercise 5

Question 8

There was a mixed degree of success on candidates’ performance on this question. Some responses provided were not always a grammatical fit, and incorrect singular and plural nouns, for example, could not be credited. There were a few questions that were not attempted by some candidates.

Part A

- (a) This was generally well attempted by most candidates. Some common incorrect responses were ‘facts’ and ‘length’.

- (b) Most candidates were successful on this question. Some candidates wrote 'whale sharks' which was not creditworthy as this response altered overall meaning.
- (c) There was a very mixed level of success here. The distracting detail, 'underwater cameras', was selected as often as the expected response. Common incorrect responses included 'trackers', 'sand recorders' and 'sound recordings'.
- (d) The vast majority of candidates picked out the correct detail and scored the mark on this question for which the expected response was 'whispers'.
- (e) This was answered correctly by many candidates. The expected response was 'affection'. Some candidates however, wrote the plural 'affections' and as such lost the mark. Other incorrect responses included 'direction', and 'infection'.

Part B

- (a) There was a mixed level of success here – responses were fairly evenly divided between the expected response, 'distance', and the distracting detail 'speed'. Some common incorrect responses included 'seasonal patterns' and 'migration'.
- (b) This was generally well answered. The most common incorrect responses were 'temperature' and 'feeding'.
- (c) This was quite well attempted. Some common incorrect responses included 'slapping', 'fighting' and 'mating'.
- (d) There was a mixed level of success here. Some candidates picked out an incorrect detail e.g. 'songs' or 'pattern levels' and lost the mark.
- (e) The vast majority of candidates were successful on this question. A number of candidates used the singular form of the expected response, 'ocean', and therefore lost the mark. Other common incorrect responses included 'creatures' and 'positions'.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (COUNT-IN SPEAKING)

Paper 0991/51
Speaking

Key messages

Examiners should engage candidates in a two-way conversation from the outset, encouraging a friendly conversation which develops naturally. Examiners should give candidates the opportunity to express their ideas and give anecdotes without judgement, correction or unnecessary prompting.

Examiners should read the Moderation Report sent to the centre which gives advice on the conduct of the test.

Examiners should read the Teacher's/Examiner's Notes thoroughly before conducting the tests.

New Examiners should watch the Speaking Test Video on the School Support Hub.

Examiners should use a timer for **Parts B, C and D** of the test and keep to the minimum suggested timings for each part of the test, so that candidates have sufficient time to demonstrate their skills.

Use a quiet room for the test without distracting background noises.

Go through the prompts in the order they appear on the cards.

General comments

Part A

This part was generally well conducted with the majority of Examiners reading out the script as required. Some Examiners paraphrased it, which occasionally led to key information being missed.

Part B

The majority of these parts were well conducted in terms of timing and engagement with candidates. However, in some tests **Parts Part A and B** were too short: 2–3 minutes in total. Most Examiners asked appropriate questions, focussing more on candidates' interests rather than questions about school or abstract topics which are more suited to **Part D**.

Part C

Timings were generally very good, though some were notably short. Few candidates indicated that they were ready during **Part C** but, when it happened, very few Examiners told the candidate they had more time. Not many candidates asked for clarification of the prompts, although this is allowed, and when responding, explanations given by Examiners were mostly clear and helpful. Overall, a wide selection of topic cards was used in centres. Many Examiners clearly used **Part B** to inform the choice of topic card.

Part D

In most tests Examiners engaged in two-way conversations from the outset, with few allowing the candidates to deliver monologues. The required timings were followed in the majority of assessments. There was a good use of the prompts, including adhering to them in the order they are given, although some Examiners went through the prompts too quickly without developing a conversation with the use of additional questions. Some Examiners did not read out the prompts but expected the candidate to respond to them which was not effective in creating a natural conversation. Examiners should aim to ask open questions to help the discussion to develop and should not interrupt by finishing the candidate's sentences or supplying vocabulary.



Application of the marking criteria

Structure – This was generally accurate though occasionally slightly generous, especially when candidates were fluent but did not use a wide range of structures accurately or consistently. When marking was severe, this was often because of a tendency by the Examiner to focus too much on errors.

Vocabulary – The application of this marking criterion was generally accurate. Lenient marking might have been caused by some Examiners missing repetition or lack of precision in expression. When marked severely, Examiners often did not credit lexical structures such as phrasal verbs, collocations or other idiomatic expressions, but focus on isolated thematically related words, for example scientific terms.

Development and Fluency – The marks for this criterion were generally accurate but sometimes Examiners marked slightly generously in the upper mark range and slightly severely in the lower mark range. Higher marks were often given to candidates who spoke fast, this being mistaken for fluency. It would be beneficial with some candidates to encourage them to speak a little slower so that what they say is clearer. Strong performance was not always rewarded when candidates paused and seemed to be weighing up their ideas, even though they had otherwise been able to carry on the conversation competently enough.

Administration

On the whole administration was done competently, although some Examiners need to check that the microphone is near the candidate and ensure there is no background noise. There were some clerical errors on the forms and in some cases the recordings included in the sample were not indicated with an asterisk. Centres need to remember to label the tracks with the candidates' details.

Internal moderation

Where more than one Examiner is used at a centre, internal moderation must be carried out.

Each Examiner should list their candidates in descending order of marks (this is called 'rank order'). The candidate with the highest mark should be at the top of the list, and the candidate with the lowest mark should be at the bottom of the list.

The lead Examiner should then review the marking by each Examiner. To do this, the lead Examiner should listen to a range of candidates (top, middle, bottom) from each Examiner, identifying if there are points on the mark range where adjustments are required. This will produce a consistent rank order of candidates across all Examiners at your centre. If no adjustments are required to an Examiner's marks, these are the final total marks that should be submitted to Cambridge International. If an adjustment to an Examiner's marks is required, the lead Examiner should make this adjustment to all the marks given by that Examiner in that mark range. The adjusted marks are then the final total marks which should be submitted to Cambridge International.

The lead Examiner should record the final total marks for all candidates in the final column of the working mark sheet or speaking examination summary form. They should then submit these marks to Cambridge International according to the instructions set out in the Cambridge Handbook.

When candidates' marks have been internally moderated, the change should be indicated on the WMS against each of the criteria.

Comments on specific topic cards

A – Choosing a career

For prompt 1, most candidates already had a career in mind, which they could describe in some detail ('content creator', 'open a business', 'my own brand'), although others talked about still considering their 'options' and 'keeping things on the table'. While some used the simple present tense, stronger candidates used different tenses to refer to a specific moment when they decided on their career. , to prompt 2, opinion was divided as to who is the best person to help you choose a career. Most candidates would seek advice from their parents, teachers and friends while 'professionals already working in the same field' also provided a thoughtful source of help. Responding to why people change their career, candidates often speculated, leading to the idea that views change as you mature. Some candidates gave examples of family members who had changed career and why. Prompt 4 about needing more than qualifications allowed candidates to

show their skill with vocabulary referring to '*characteristics*' such as '*humility*', '*persistence*', '*the need for passion*', '*determination*' and having '*the right mindset*' in order to '*achieve your dreams*'. Strong candidates referred to people they know who have practical skills and evaluated the benefits of experience over paper qualifications. Ideas of other important decisions beyond choosing a career were considered by most candidates. The last two prompts enabled candidates to weight up different viewpoints, and to use a range of future and conditional structures to discuss how decisions they make now will affect their future.

B – Keeping fit

The warm-up discussion often gave Examiners a good indication of when it would be appropriate to choose this card. In prompt 1, candidates were generally capable of describing their fitness regimes in considerable detail, often involving the language of routine: '*on a regular basis*', '*several times a day*', '*twice a week*', and of using vocabulary related to '*working out*', such as '*push ups*', '*crunches*', '*circuits*' or qualities needed such as '*stamina*' and '*endurance*'. When prompted, they also mentioned the need to have plenty of sleep and a '*healthy*' or '*balanced*' diet. Further focus on diet included vocabulary such as '*calories*', '*carbohydrates*' and '*fighting obesity*'. The challenges of having a healthy lifestyle included the idea that '*bad habits die hard*' and '*it's very difficult to eat less and exercise more*'. There were plenty of opportunities for using the zero and first conditionals. In response to prompt 3, most candidates did not imagine being a fitness instructor, although many could see positive aspects, such as working with people or being a source of inspiration. Many thoughtful candidates considered some of the negative aspects of an '*obsession with*' or '*addiction to keeping fit*', with more able candidates widening the discussion to mental health issues. Most candidates felt that sports stars already did enough to promote a healthy lifestyle, giving examples, and using modals and conditionals.

C – Day and night

Many responses to this topic were enthusiastic in tone. The first two prompts allowed candidates to talk at length about their preferences between day and night, giving details about how they spend their time, generating appropriate vocabulary for specific times of day: '*sunrise*', '*sunset*' and qualities: '*productivity*', '*concentration*'. More able candidates moved away from the school focus. In response to prompt 3, there was a variety of reasons why people struggled to sleep, from too much caffeine, being '*stressed out*' or '*agitated*' and the '*blue screen effect*', to '*not a lot of exercise throughout the day*.' Most candidates were in favour of spending some time outdoors during the day and supported this with the benefit to mental health of '*UV rays*' and '*Vitamin D*'. In response to prompt 5, some candidates introduced the idea of night shift workers or the use of artificial light sources to explain why the difference between day and night is already less important for people's lifestyles than in the past.

D – Made by hand

Candidates who had expressed an interest in art were often given this topic. More able candidates generated some interesting discussion with thoughtful use of language. Some candidates described a handmade object in some detail, referring to its function ('*a stool to sit on*') and what it was made of ('*wood*', '*metal sheets*', '*leather*'). Candidates often saw the value of handmade objects in terms of the skill and effort involved in making them ('*sweat, blood and tears*', '*the time the producer has put into it*') and their qualities of '*originality*' and '*uniqueness*'. Most agreed that young people should learn the skills of making handmade objects as it improves our imagination, patience and mental capabilities, or might later be a means to '*earn a living*' or '*become self-employed*', and could also be a source of '*satisfaction*' or even '*entertainment*'. They also thought the '*skills of the forefathers are being lost*'. In response to prompt 4, opinions varied about whether machine-made or handmade objects were better in quality. Some emphasised the '*accuracy*' of machines when it comes to measuring and '*cutting and shaping*', but others thought that handmade items might '*last forever*' unlike machine-made objects, which would just '*depreciate*'. Prompt 5 elicited the opinion that handmade objects would soon be '*regarded as old-fashioned*,' although they might still be '*appreciated and valued*' and something '*to be proud of*'.

E – Sightseeing

Although this card was chosen frequently, some candidates were not clear about the idea of sightseeing, either because they lacked any personal experience of it, or because they did not equate it with being a tourist. The first two prompts allowed candidates to talk at length about their own experiences, bringing up specific sights including '*monuments*', '*historical places*', '*museums and galleries*', and describing how they spent time '*exploring*', '*taking pictures*' or just '*having fun*', using past tenses here and some interesting

adjectives: *'spectacular'*, *'picturesque'* and *'impressive'*. Focus tended to be on cities for prompt 2, but some extended the idea to visiting the countryside and mountains. When talking about a place in their own country that they would consider *'worth looking at'* or *'popular'* with visitors, strong candidates used some conditionals and modals (*'If you go there, you should...'*). When weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of sightseeing in a group, there were good connectives of contrast (*'whereas'*, *'on the other hand'*, *'while'*). Most candidates considered sightseeing a rather superficial way of encountering a country, although it could be *'informative'*, and help a country to *'promote'* itself. Some expressed the opinion that *'eating traditional foods'* or visiting local restaurants where you could have *'contact with people'* would give the visitor more of an insight.

F – Robots

Candidates were able to list jobs that they would like robots to do: *'cooking'*, *'cleaning and washing up'*, *'office work'*. Many candidates commented on how *'it would free up time'*. Some candidates used conditional tenses, e.g. *'If the robot is told to do something, it will complete it'*. Stronger candidates used more specific vocabulary such as *'scan the environment'* or *'artificial intelligence'*, *'sensor'* and *'detects'*. For prompt 2, candidates touched on whether robots have feelings, and if not, how could they be real friends. Prompts 3 and 4 provided candidates with an opportunity to discuss how robots are better at repetitive jobs like factory work (*'in a production line'*), with the effective use of modals as candidates considered possibilities, balancing human error and robot efficiency, while acknowledging that like humans, *'they also needed rest, if only to prevent over-heating'*. Prompt 5 allowed strong candidates to use conditionals to discuss the future impact of robots on our lives. Candidates could use a range of tenses and showcase excellent vocabulary such as: *'regulate'*, *'prevent'*, *'programmed'*, *'catalytic converter'*.

G – Supporting others

Candidates were able to respond to prompt 1 by using abstract nouns such as, *'positivity'*, *'understanding'*, *'loving'*, *'caring'* as well as more concrete examples, *'advice with preparing a schedule'*. Stronger candidates used collocations such as *'mental encouragement'* and *'financial support'*. The second prompt allowed candidates the opportunity to tell an anecdote, with strong candidates using narrative tenses effectively. Many candidates talked about helping a friend with a mental health issue. For prompts 3 and 4, candidates were able to discuss the qualities of patience and understanding, while stronger candidates were able to develop the idea of being a *'good listener'*. Prompt 3 encouraged reflection, with some expressing uncertainty, *'maybe'*, *'if you are...'* Others were more emphatic, *'honestly, you just need...'* *'your presence is enough.'* Prompt 5 often needed clarification. However, it enabled stronger candidates to use business-related vocabulary such as *'profit'* or *'revenue'* and effective vocabulary and phrasing, *'implement'*, *'construct'*, *'vital connections'*, *'build relationships'*, *'bring stability'*. Candidates used conditionals and comparative structures to discuss why local businesses should offer support in their neighbourhoods.

H – Being independent

Candidates were able to give examples of decisions that they had made. Stronger candidates discussed the responsibilities that come with independence. Prompt 1 enabled candidates to use complex structures with *'when'* and time adverbials (*'at that point'*, *'at first'*, *'in the end'*) and refer to shopping, friendships, spending money and career. This led on to prompt 2 in response to which many candidates used some effective nouns and adjectives, *'challenges'*, *'hardships'*, *'essential'*, *'advantageous'*. Stronger candidates referred to parental *'expectations'* or *'peer pressure'* and were able to use complex structures such as, *'you can do whatever you want to'*. Prompts 3 and 4 were well handled and most candidates were able to give advantages (*'freedom'*, *'choices'*) and disadvantages (*'lonely'*, *'too much responsibility'*). Stronger candidates talked about our roles within society and how we all rely on each other. Prompt 4 allowed candidates to make use of quotations to illustrate points, such as *'No man is an island'*, and use them effectively within expanded answers. Prompt 5 generated extended responses from the most able candidates, with vocabulary such as *'referendum'* and *'democracy'*. There were some passionate responses to prompt 5, making use of intensifiers, *'They actually should...'* and effective phrasings, *'decisions governments take will most likely affect its citizens'* and *'governments are elected by the people'*. Most were able to give specific examples such as education or the economy.

I – Information

This topic generated good use of subject specific vocabulary, for example *'internet'*, *'libraries'*, *'documentaries'*. Prompt 1 enabled candidates to use cause-effect structures with *'because'* and zero conditionals. Candidates said they found most of their information on the internet: *'online sources'*, *'recommended sites'*. Candidates extended this prompt by talking about convenience and ease of access,

using idiomatic language such as *'at the click of a finger'*. In prompt 2, candidates used comparative structures and related vocabulary such as *'overwhelming'* or *'evidence'*. Most considered books more reliable. They used complex sentences and effective phrasing, *'trusted professionals'*. Candidates frequently referred to school projects and coursework. Prompt 3 allowed stronger candidates to comment on the state of the media (*'fake news'*, *'reality TV'*, *'bloggers'*, *'social influencers'*). Most candidates were sceptical about accepting news at face value. Some candidates referred to *'bias'* in the media, and the difference between *'subjective'* and *'objective'* reporting. Prompt 4 almost universally elicited the distrust candidates had for politicians generally. Stronger candidates were able to speculate on a range of reasons for information not being shared, with ideas such as *'corruption'* and *'national security'*. In prompt 5, candidates discussed the accessibility of social media and how you *'cannot get away from it'*. Candidates spoke of how the world is getting smaller (*'global village'*). Prompt 5 was clearly a statement that candidates identified with as most used the first-person plural in their responses.

J – Zoos

Candidates were able to name zoo animals and jobs in zoos in prompts 1 and 2. Stronger candidates expanded this by describing the appearance, habitat and characteristics of zoo animals they liked (*'king of the jungle'*) and used a range of modals and linking words to argue the advantages and disadvantages of working in a zoo. Prompts 3 and 4 enabled candidates to expand on the idea of animals kept in captivity using vocabulary to express feelings (*'It really broke my heart'*). Stronger candidates supported this with personal anecdotes of a visit to a zoo or game reserve, using a range of past tenses, or described a zoo or game reserve they would like to visit. Most candidates were able to give examples of wildlife videos they had watched. Prompt 5 enabled candidates to use a range of conditional tenses to explore the more abstract idea of whether endangered animals should be protected.

K – Games

Candidates were able to enter the conversation by describing indoor and outdoor games they played in response to the first prompt. There were some good responses to the second prompt using football as a game which brings people together. Candidates used language such as: *'competitive'*, *'obsessed'*, *'strategy'*, *'90 per cent know what you mean'*, *'socialise'*, *'challenging'*. Most were able to give one example of a game causing arguments, which prompted good use of the past simple and continuous. The last two prompts elicited the most developed responses with candidates referring to robots and how games become impersonal when you play against machines. There was some good discussion of the idea of making friends around the world and comparisons of technology used in different countries. Prompt 4 enabled stronger candidates to switch from the present and past to using future forms and language of hypothesis and speculation. The final prompt was well answered by the stronger candidates described skills with a range of abstract nouns and adjectives.

L – Fashion

In response to the first two prompts, candidates talked about the brands they wear and changing fashions. Language: *'unique'*, *'colour scheme'*, *'designers'*, *'over the top'*, *'specific group'*. Some candidates referred to the difficulty in keeping up with fashion due to their geographic location. Prompt 1 gave all candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their topic-based vocabulary with a range of specific clothes and accessories. In response to prompt 3, candidates speculated, often attempting to use conditionals (*'if they did not have the money, they would not buy these things'*, *'if they did not save up their money, they would not be able to afford it'*). Many candidates agreed with a uniform being beneficial and how it creates unity. In prompt 4, there was comparison between uniforms for school and in future jobs. All candidates had a good idea of the benefits of wearing a uniform e.g. saves money, saves decision making in the morning, keeps class and identity homogenous/equal. The last prompt elicited some very good discussion on the issue of gender and dress. Fashion was also linked to culture and how it differs culturally. There was also talk about how fashion helps people to be accepted into certain groups. The language used to respond to this prompt included: *'trendy'*, *'latest'*, *'showy'*, *'judgemental'*, *'obsessed by looks'*, *'express yourself'*. Many candidates brought up the topic of *'selfies'*.

M – Respect

Candidates referred to members of their family, friends and famous people in response to the first prompt. Language used included: *'attitude'*, *'sincere'*, *'upbringing'*, *'authority'*, *'admiration'*. Stronger candidates introduced the idea of cultural differences in connection with the way people show respect to each other. For prompt 2 most candidates focused on showing respect to their parents by obeying them and helping out in the house or doing their homework. All candidates were able to give some good points in response to the

third prompt. This opened up discussion linked to different generations as well as different cultures and led to a range of topic-based vocabulary such as *'recycling'*, *'trash'*, *'air/water/land pollution'*. Candidates also spoke about littering, wildlife, harming animals, recycling, plastic and the sea, people's ignorance in general. In response to the fourth prompt, stronger candidates were able to point out that celebrities can be a bad influence on younger people especially. The last prompt again introduced a focus on culture and contrasting opinions between generations. There was a range of appropriate phrases used: *'not the type of person'*, *'do whatever they want'*, *'different perspectives'*, *'they should be admired'*.

N – Our brains

This card was rarely used though the prompts on it were generally well understood. The first two prompts generated discussion on how the brain is a muscle and how it can be exercised. Some candidates said that we use our brain every day for studying and judging people's moods. Candidates referred to the programming of the brain and *'memory exercises'*. Suggestions in relation to prompt 3 included creative jobs such as fashion designer, journalist, author, film director and artist. Stronger candidates were able to compare jobs. Prompts 4 and 5 enabled candidates to use future and conditional tenses but they were not in agreement with the ideas suggested in these prompts. Some candidates thought that the use of robots might increase unemployment, poverty and laziness. There was reference to science fiction and robots. Language used to respond to this prompt included: *'modern era'*, *'past generations'*, *'constant preparation'*. The last bullet point prompted discussion on how the human race continues to advance.

O – Beauty

In prompt 1, candidates referred to people, art and aspects of nature they found beautiful. Prompt 2 was well answered with all candidates being able to name a place they found ugly. The first two prompts gave candidates the opportunity to move the discussion away from personal beauty to discuss objects which were meaningful to them (watches, jewellery, photos etc.) identify landscapes, scenes, towns and cities, areas of countryside and even other countries. They did so with a good range of nouns and adjectives. Stronger candidates were able to identify ways to make the place more beautiful with a range of vocabulary connected to conservation and preservation and also some good use of modal verbs, the gerund and conditional forms. Prompts 3 and 4 generated discussion about society and how people were supposed to make themselves look nice to get jobs. This prompted language such as: *'flaws'*, *'faults'*, *'reparation'*, *'vibrant'*, *'industry'*, *'discriminatory'*, *'ultra modern'*. Prompt 4 introduced discussion on different jobs such as models and actresses. There was some use of anecdote and references to famous people. There was some discussion about how beauty dies and comparison between the way society views males and females. Some strong candidates referred to the history of our perception of beauty and the way it changes over time.