

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8004/11
Paper 11

Key messages

Content

- Questions should be carefully read before responding
- Formal essays need to use a suitable register
- Responses should include an effective introduction and focus on the key words of the question
- Responses should avoid sweeping assertions
- Sources should be acknowledged, but not overused
- All questions require debate, the provision of evidence and relevant examples
- Repetition should be avoided unless reinforcing or emphasising a point
- Paragraphs should be linked and enable the reader to follow the argument/debate

Use of English

- Too many sentences without a finite verb
- Confusion with 'their/there/they're'
- Occasional lapses into street-slang
- Too many colloquialisms – 'off of', 'bunch of', 'gonna', 'wanna', 'first off', 'kids'
- Random use of capital letters
- It is best to avoid – 'stuff', 'a lot', 'lots of', and variations of the verb 'to get'
- Incorrect use of fewer/less; amount/number; due to/owing to; effect/affect
- Incorrect use of the apostrophe
- Tense and agreement problems, for example, 'mobile devices is ...'

General comments

Stronger candidates showed that they were able to develop individual ideas into sustained arguments. Conversely a feature of a few scripts was a general introduction followed by two lists of arguments on opposing sides. Nuanced personal judgements are expected.

What sets the tone for an essay is the introduction. A good introduction should aim to demonstrate a candidate's understanding of the question terms and give an idea where their viewpoint may lie, before discussing the issue in more detail in the following paragraphs. It should do more than simply repeat the question and, where possible, offer a specific context in time and/or place.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates were able to recognise that the question was essentially inviting the prompt to be refuted, by means of a balanced discussion. Most of the answers concentrated on phones, rather than the idea of 'mobility'. Main ideas tended to cover faster communication, information retrieval, addiction, distractions, cyber-bullying and breakdown of social interaction, health and privacy issues. Others noted that elderly people are being marginalised through business increasingly being conducted online. Such responses were more able to depart from a separation of positives and negatives in order to debate the issues present.

Question 2

Most responses concentrated on environmental issues. However, there were a few perceptive comments on culture, for example, how tourism is helping to make more people understand the history of a place and how cultures are crossing as people become less isolated. Other thoughtful answers emphasised the recent development of ecotourism, considered both the perspective of the resident and the visitor and the economic benefits of tourism. Others argued that tourism was the main cause of environmental degradation. A few candidates conflated tourism with immigration and this was, of course, irrelevant.

Question 3

Some discussed legislature and others, law enforcement. In some instances, legal systems were confused with law enforcement systems. The main problem was overlooking the word 'can', a key word in the question, instead describing whether police or security forces do or don't provide protection. A few candidates recognised that protection of citizens is a state's most fundamental duty, as is the inclusion of 'all' in any such protection. These candidates also considered the protection of the individual in contrast to the requirements of the state.

Question 4

Stronger responses considered the topic in a global perspective. Thoughtful answers stressed that experience is key to maturity and independence, not simply chronological milestones. Others referred to cultural and religious views, with examples of coming of age rituals. The anomaly of being able to drive at 16, join the armed forces at 17/18, yet not drink alcohol until 21 was frequently noted. Many, however, opted for 21 rather than 18 since young people will have had three years in a job or three years away from home on order to mature.

Question 5

Many candidates seemed to regard 'non-human' as animals and perhaps plants; only one or two mentioned bacteria. Most significant was the failure to understand the concept of dependence, with many just writing about use. Some argued that mankind increasingly relies on its own efforts for transportation, labour, and so on. This was acceptable, given the 'to what extent' directive in the question, but some devoted excessive time to this. A few candidates pointed out that the dependence is constantly changing and that it is much greater than most people think, as it includes countless species of microbes without which metabolism, food chains and biodegradation would cease. Bees and pollination featured in many responses.

Question 6

All the responses to this question had some insight and empathy. There were excellent answers which examined the language of discussion about mental health. Happily, most recognised that while the problem continues to become more prevalent, it is also increasingly being recognised, rather than continuing as a taboo. A few candidates criticised social media for trivialising mental health issues such as depression. Others commented that sociopaths and psychopaths were well represented in television and film drama again enhancing stereotypical attitudes. Many felt that their schools provide support but that parents are more likely to brush aside depression and anxiety as teenage angst. Stronger candidates questioned why mental health does not receive the same funding for treatment and research as other killer diseases.

Question 7

Stronger responses explored in-depth various aspects of artificial intelligence and robots; recognising positive uses in daily life, medicine, exploration, science research and fears society may have such as the threat to employment, together with those fears engendered by decades of science fiction films. A few thought that society might adjust in other ways to cope with changing work requirements. Many candidates were aware that robots had been sent into space and had also been used for underwater marine research. The boundaries between robots and sentient beings were often perceptively explored.

Question 8

Many responses tended to discuss science in general rather than looking at education. These answers lacked a focus on 'value' or on the wider implications of 'scientific education'. The weakest responses wrote about space exploration, pharmacology and genetic modification; that had nothing to do with education. There were hardly any references to the elementary or tertiary sectors.

Question 9

Many candidates simply explored the general benefits of books rather than how the written word develops character or even 'soul'. However, there were responses that took an imaginative approach, focusing on the issue of whether, like a soul, books could be said to be the essence of a room or the life of an individual. A few candidates referred to the burning of books in Nazi Germany, the persecution of writers, as evidence of the threat posed by books to those without a soul.

Question 10

Some candidates referred to eighteenth century political cartoons, pointing out that they were just as pointed as today's political cartoons, if not more so. The strongest responses dealt convincingly with the issue of 'impact' or analysed in some detail a comparison with the written word. A few understood that there is much more to the genre than children's animations, although interesting comments were made about the 'Anime' style in Japan. Some responses traced the origin of cartoons to cave paintings. Thoughtful responses demonstrated an awareness of the powerful simplicity of messages conveyed through image during times when literacy was not widespread.

Question 11

This question was rarely attempted. Responses tended to struggle with the concept of 'culture'. There were a few candidates who recognised the tension between culture and commerce and modernisation and the past. One useful example was given; the disappearance of local fishing fleets and the associated skills and culture.

Question 12

Many asserted rather than justified the greatness of their choices. Rappers outnumbered classical musicians quite substantially and there was often more emphasis on the social contributions of the chosen artists rather than their actual music. References to songs were only ever in terms of the intended message of the lyrics, rather than the deftness of the lyrics themselves, or to instrumental dexterity or proficiency. Also, there were too many biographical eulogies. Justifying choices in terms of respect and legacy posed a significant challenge.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8004/12
Paper 12

Key messages

Content

- Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
- An introduction should immediately address the key words of the question and show understanding of them.
- Use solid details/examples and avoid vagueness.
- Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
- A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
- Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
- Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.
- A clear communication of the argument does engage the reader.
- Overly long essays can introduce needless repetition and digression.
- Ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.

Use of English

Basic errors need to be checked and corrected. Typical examples are listed below:

- Subject/verb non-agreement.
- Incorrect use of prepositions.
- Frequent incorrect use of definite/indefinite article (the society).
- Misuse of conjunctions ('although' being used instead of 'however').
- Confusion between their/there, to/too, your/you're.
- Incorrect tenses.
- Incorrect comparative forms.
- Missing endings on plurals.
- Incorrect use of vocabulary ('conclusive' used to mean 'concluding').
- Sometimes attention is needed to check word order (syntax) to ensure clear meaning.

General comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework using an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

More successful responses answered the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points of the essay. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing and engaging, thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details. On occasions anecdotes were the only content of the response.

When the set question demands it, candidates should focus on aspects of their own country; if this is not the prompt then a broader focus is required. Stronger responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points. Sometimes candidates were either unfamiliar with the question topic or only understood one aspect of it. Time should be spent studying the wording of all questions and then to choose the one which is best understood and where there is sufficient knowledge to write 500–600 words. It is advisable to re-visit the key words of the question after every paragraph.

Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce two clearly structured essays of around the recommended length. However, some essays were unnecessarily long causing repetition, digression or an unclear line of argument. Overall, such lengthy responses did address the question but time might have been better spent widening the argument and introducing more specific details and examples. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written.

Rubric infringements were rare but there appeared more this session so a careful reading of the question paper instructions is required by candidates. The quality of the Use of English was variable and depended on whether grammatical errors disrupted the communication of the content. Consequently, some candidates need to work on forming secure, grammatically correct sentence structures and to leave time at the end to check for basic errors. A thorough and systematic checking could greatly improve the standard as well as clarify the content. Also, a substantial number of candidates have acquired a wide-ranging English vocabulary but need to improve putting these words in an appropriate context in order to create greater precision.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A majority of responses had a reasonable knowledge of the current threats to world peace as well as organisations that work to decrease tensions. Quite a few were familiar with the background of the two world wars and were able to draw 'lessons' from historical events. A range of examples were given often with good knowledge and factual accuracy. All responses discussed both sides of the question and offered sensible conclusions. More successful responses navigated through the examples, consistently evaluating them in relation to the question and analysing both threats and preventions. The best response provided a more philosophical conclusion where those born now could create a future world without borders where the 'us and them' attitude might disintegrate. However, the response did acknowledge that this may be too idealistic. There were many impressive responses to this question.

Question 2

This question encouraged a large number of reflective responses. Most candidates were able to balance the subjectivity of the young person's perspective with objectivity so discussions were quite measured. Families were seen as loving, ever-supportive, strict or even abusive, while friends could be people to share experiences or confidences with, but who might equally be untrustworthy. Quite a few though, were overly sentimental about the role of the family and/or friends and offered unstinting praise. There were several which took the sociological route and presented quite a lot of theoretical information about socialisation and attachment. More successful responses specifically focused on 'growing older' and evaluated the complexity of changing relationships over time, from childhood to adulthood, in the context of cultural influences, social networking and personality.

Question 3

This was popular with candidates who wrote descriptively about the 'textbook' benefits and disadvantages of small businesses. Responses tended to consider factors such as initial cost, competition, bankruptcy and big business takeovers. However, there were a number of responses which never mentioned to which country they were referring thus causing responses to be vague and hypothetical. The most successful responses consistently linked the benefits and disadvantages to their local context, offering examples of types of small businesses and specific named illustrations. These were also the candidates who made a reasoned decision about the feasibility of setting up small businesses based on benefits and disadvantages, including government co-operation and subsidies.

Question 4

Most responses focused solely on how educational qualifications guaranteed better jobs and how a high social status is automatically accorded to the educated. More successful candidates made consistent links between their education system and its impact on work attitudes, for instance, how skills learned at school were transferable to work. Some highlighted the role of education in changing societal views of females entering work or the kinds of jobs available while others suggested that culture and family were more

influential. A handful of responses were critical of how certain subjects, examinations or teaching methodologies poorly prepared candidates for the workplace.

Question 5

Most responses focused on the causes and effects of global warming, and of environmental measures to try and counter them with the conclusion that climate research would be useful and provide solutions. More successful responses considered global and political approaches, including references to various summits and the attitudes of various countries. Some suggested that there were other priorities and funding might be spent more usefully elsewhere. The best responses did examine 'short-sighted', considering the effects on future generations and concluding that unless climate research became a global issue then interest and funding would dry up.

Question 6

Most responses considered congestion, pollution, convenience, cost and civil liberties/privacy as well as health and crime implications. Many saw such moves as desirable but not possible because of public resistance or the reliance on government subsidies, with the concept of 'free' being too expensive and open to abuse. Some responses confused government-run public transport with privately-run public transport and presented a descriptive list. More successful responses decided upon a combination of either desirability and/or possibility, a few recognising the scope of transport options, from bicycles to trucks to trains. Such responses also suggested that banning private transport was not just confined to personal use but would also have consequences for both commerce and industry.

Question 7

Most responses had plenty of material to work with and presented strong views with both balanced assessments and examples, some of which were personal. Such material included the cost of health care in private and public hospitals, the attitudes and competence of medical staff, the discrepancy between rural and urban areas in healthcare provision, resources, equipment and expertise. More successful candidates did name their specific country, constantly developing and evaluating opinions in relation to the examples given. Such responses often concluded that the effectiveness of medical services ultimately depended on government input and monitoring, and whether such services were accessible to everyone.

Question 8

Less successful responses either tended to focus on their country's history in general or considered cultural traditions/pride, but did not link to a specific family. Responses which did name a family tended to focus on stories passed down from the generations, relating to specific events or the passing on of such skills as cooking. More successful responses attempted to focus on 'explore' by considering such issues as the emotional and medical impacts on those who investigate family histories, such as the sadness of discovering an ancestor's suffering or the discovery of an inherited medical condition. The best responses discussed the implications of such exploration if found to be adopted, classifying it as a 'good thing' in the context of being able to search and discover new relations but also balanced this against the shame, depression and family rejection which could be the consequences of it.

Question 9

Less successful responses tended to generalise about 'beginnings and endings' and then narrate large sections of chosen books. 'Harry Potter' was the most common example although more referencing the films than the books. Many responses considered what made a 'beginning and ending' rather than addressing whether 'the ending is as important as the beginning' of a story. Most agreed that the narrative required attention throughout, with the beginning important as a 'hook' and the ending tying up loose ends. More successful responses understood that the ending should be memorable, with an unsuspected twist or link to the beginning, in order to derive reader satisfaction. Also, some responses addressed series of books like 'Harry Potter' as franchises whereby the endings had to not only tie up loose ends but, alternatively, leave the protagonist with new problems to solve by introducing new characters or situations. Successful conclusions focused on the idea that 'beginnings and endings' were of equal importance but had totally different roles in fiction, with the beginning encouraging readers to read on and the ending making the experience memorable.

Question 10

Less successful responses confused fine art and culture with craft work but were clearer on 'commercial world', understanding that anything produced of value by a specific country contributed to its economy. Most responses acknowledged that interest in local culture and traditions had declined, especially amongst the young, meaning that handmade local crafts were no longer cherished in such modern times. More successful responses did consider both aspects of the question, considering handmade craft work as of more value than mass produced in certain contexts, such as tourism, but also arguing that this could encourage commercialism to produce fake goods to satisfy demand. Also such responses gave specific examples and considered the idea that traditional crafts people probably produced such items for their intrinsic value as cultural or religious representatives, where the commercial world had no place.

Question 11

Less successful responses just considered 'live performances' with little reference to 'open spaces' or 'the street'. However, most did respond to the wording of the question and discussed the advantages (accessible to a wider audience, affordability, greater exposure, publicity for the performers and attraction for tourists) and disadvantages (disruption, annoyance, noise and crime). Overall there were very few examples but more successful responses widened the scope and explored the physical features of being outdoors as well as the cultural significance of performance, as part of a street festival or occasion. Conclusions focused on whether a live performance could have sufficient audience impact on the street in the context of audience behaviour and inevitable distractions, or whether a more formal venue would be a more suitable location. The best responses suggested that, in the end, it depended on the purpose of the live performance.

Question 12

Less successful responses focused solely on the cinema, with little reference to 'home entertainment'. However, most wrote convincingly about the factors which make the cinema experience special and which cannot be replicated by home entertainment (social benefits, sharing a common experience, including a meal, ambience, superior audio visual equipment and seeing films as soon as they were released). More successful responses did compare with 'home entertainment', with its more flexible arrangements, convenience, privacy and cost. Conclusions suggested that, despite the increasing accessibility of films on home entertainment systems via the internet, people would always desire the cinema experience now and again, enough to assure its popularity in the future.

GENERAL PAPER

Paper 8004/13
Paper 13

Key messages

Content

- Answer the set question and focus on the key words.
- An introduction should immediately address the key words of the question and show understanding of it.
- Support your main points with appropriate examples which should move beyond 'your country' if the question requires it.
- Use solid details/examples and avoid vagueness.
- Keep anecdotal/personal evidence to a minimum.
- A conclusion should be a reasoned assessment of the arguments made.
- Time should be spent considering what the question requires to ensure that all aspects of the question are addressed.
- Often a balanced view is required.
- Responses should be of sufficient length (500–600 words) to enable adequate coverage of the question.
- Re-visit the question after each paragraph.
- Use discourse markers (however, consequently, in addition) to link ideas and paragraphs to produce a clearly structured, cohesive argument.

Use of English

- Leave time to check English thoroughly to avoid basic errors.
- Use commas to clarify meaning and avoid using them as full-stops.
- Use apostrophes, especially in contractions (you're, we're).
- Concentrate on using an appropriate and varied vocabulary so expression is fluent and precise.
- Basic sentence structure/grammar needs to be accurate to ensure clear communication of content.
- Paragraphing accuracy is essential if there is to be a clear structure.
- Avoid using a casual/informal vocabulary ('kinda', 'wanna', 'he ready to roll', 'a lot of times').
- Conversational English is inappropriate in a formal examination context. The correct tone needs to be found for a discursive essay.

General comments

Generally, responses did address the chosen questions and were structured within a paragraph framework, using an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

More successful responses answered all aspects of the question as set, focused on the key words and included a variety of examples to illustrate the main points of the essay. Such points were sometimes developed to add depth, and make the argument more convincing, thus avoiding vague generalisations. Limited anecdotal evidence is acceptable but should not dominate the whole essay and should be used in conjunction with other details. Also, essays should be in a formal style appropriate to a structured discussion and show an awareness of audience (some questions which required a more personal response could appear like 'advice columns' rather than measured discussions). A 'chatty' style is inappropriate.

When the set question demands 'your country' then it is acceptable to restrict examples to the candidate's own country but there should be a broader focus otherwise. More successful responses demonstrated good topic knowledge and included local, regional and global examples to support points as well as presenting an informed, persuasive debate. Sometimes candidates chose questions where they were either insufficiently familiar with the topic or did not understand all aspects of the question. Candidates need to spend time studying the chosen question to make sure they understand what is being asked and then re-visit after every

paragraph to check that key words are being addressed. Not only will this add to their essay writing skills but will also help to improve their confidence as they progress through it.

Most candidates used the time reasonably efficiently and were able to produce two clearly structured essays of around the recommended length but when the specified word limit was not reached then range for both content and use of English could be restricted. Introductions may have been long at times but a majority did attempt to address the question and this was reflected in the remaining response. Even though there is a time pressure here, candidates should attempt to produce a conclusion which arrives at a reasoned assessment of the main arguments rather than just summarising what has already been written.

Rubric infringements were rare but there were a few occasions when only one question was answered or two were taken from the same section. Sometimes too much time was spent on the first response so the second one could appear unfinished. Usually sentences were grammatically correct and punctuation accurate but often sentences lacked variety, containing too much informal phrasing and vocabulary. More successful responses had acquired a wide-ranging English vocabulary but sometimes needed the phrasing to be more precise.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Less successful responses tended to generalise without giving specific examples to illustrate the points made. However, most followed a similar pattern, usually focusing on choice of subjects for university or a career, concluding that planning was important because that was the way to be successful in life and to make a lot of money – those who did not plan usually risked ending up working for fast-food restaurants. More successful responses provided balance and addressed ‘to what extent’ suggesting that freedom and spontaneity were more important than planning when young but acknowledged that the process of education could not be ignored if financial security was to be achieved. Some considered other factors such as at what age planning should start and the extent to which relationships could be part of planning or distract from it. Conclusions considered the importance of maintaining balance and accepting that plans can either collapse or change as you get older but then planning was dependent on individual circumstances anyway.

Question 2

Most responses relied on generalisations about the ease of catching ordinary random criminals or using examples of organised crime derived from films and television police shows. Such responses also interpreted ‘organised’ as meaning planned as opposed to unplanned. Consequently, real-life crime examples referred to 9/11, school shootings and the actions of Al Capone. More successful responses did attempt to analyse the activities of the Mafia and Latin American drug cartels and explore such difficulties for the authorities as bribery and corruption, well defined hierarchies and sophisticated infiltrations of businesses with respectable facades. These were balanced against witness protection schemes (incentives for informants) and more advanced surveillance methods to put the authorities one step ahead. However, such responses concluded that cybercrime and terrorism were more the organised crime of today. Differentiation depended on candidates’ knowledge of the activities of both organised crime syndicates and police tactics.

Question 3

Most responses considered types of government and described the amount of power wielded, with specific reference to the extent of people power in a democracy like the United States. More successful responses considered how absolute the power of leaders actually was. The most successful responses analysed power in relation to other factors such as the limitations imposed on the US President by the constitution or the figure head role of the Queen of the United Kingdom, with power in the hands of an elected parliament. Some did consider corruption and the reliance of some types of leadership on the power of the military, concluding that the power endorsed by leadership was a necessary evil if total anarchy was to be avoided.

Question 4

Most responses considered racial, gender and sexual orientation and usually provided appropriate illustrations but were less successful when discussing how well equality laws could be enforced. The most successful responses gave specific examples of occasions when a law was shown to be inadequate but could not always be enforced because it is not possible to control how the public thinks. Such responses concluded that although it was impossible to change individual discriminatory attitudes it was still the

responsibility of the law to support equality within the work place and the general community to enable protection and fairness. However, some responses suggested that this could also be impossible in certain cultures and regimes.

Question 5

Most responses were in favour of a national health service than were opposed to it but were not too clear on the details. There were references to doctor commitment to their patients on both sides but that money was still a defining factor in creating privilege for private patients (speed of access, more personal attention, a luxury environment). With a national health service it depended on a government's priorities, as to whether sufficient funding would be provided. More successful responses considered, in some detail, the situation in Canada with slight reference to the situation in the United States. Such responses were able to compare public and private systems, concluding that there would always be a divide between the rich and poor in such a set up.

Question 6

Most came to the conclusion that such knowledge was not really necessary as long as those studying a subject understood the concepts. The most popular example was 'garage mechanic' with a need to be familiar with increasingly specialist terms to be ahead of the latest car technology. The most successful responses mentioned learning foreign languages if desiring to work abroad or become an interpreter. Such responses were often balanced and gave examples from art and music with a specific focus on the necessity of learning and using mathematical and scientific/computer jargon in order to be able to operate in the modern world.

Question 7

This was a popular question although many responses focused on how the use of the internet *affects* rather than *reflects* personality, that it made you either a 'cyberbully' or a more 'sociable and confident' individual. Such responses tended to consider 'social media' and its associated sites but not moving beyond this. The most successful responses were those that explored the possibility that the way people use the internet may reveal aspects of their characters about which they are unaware: a selfish attention seeking personality through the need to establish as many 'internet friends' as possible, for example. A desire to learn or further one's knowledge could be an attitude reflected in the constant searching for information on search engines. Some concluded that the internet could be considered as nothing more than a functional tool used to email, shop, play games or do homework when needed and does not reflect personality or attitude.

Question 8

Most responses tended to describe existing alternative energy sources rather than engage with how enthusiastic people were to develop them in the present day. Specific examples (wind turbines, solar, tidal, hydro-electric) were features of such responses. More successful responses suggested that, because such alternatives were now familiar and mainstream, it was understandable that there would seem to be less enthusiasm for them. The best responses suggested that enthusiasm had declined because alternatives had proved inefficient, expensive to set up and occupied vast tracts of land or sea space.

Question 9

Most responses gave examples of musicians with wide or specific fan bases, with reasons ranging from 'different tastes' to 'the degree of offensiveness of the lyrics'. Often different types of music were described with names mentioned and then general reasons given. More successful responses gave a range of examples and considered more specific reasons such as genres, the wide appeal of some artists, niche markets and the degree of mainstream fame already achieved. Such responses also considered such factors as 'touring' (as a way to promote wider appeal) or 'age-related' (the enduring appeal of older artists adding to an already loyal fan base). Conclusions suggested that publicity, and being current, were essential to widening a fan base but that an artist still needed to produce a wide range of music (across genres) for this to work. Also, there were now so many genres that specialist fan bases were inevitable.

Question 10

Most responses focused on recent 'shootings' and therefore concentrated on 'school security' with suggestions of how this might be improved (wider corridors, more exits). Some complained about crowded classrooms, outdated technology and the poor state of repair in schools. Only one or two suggested that the

design of the school could enhance its reputation and that appropriate colour co-ordination, open plan spaces and tasteful soft furnishings could improve a School's ambience and affect both candidate behaviour and attitude. Very occasionally there was a specific example from the candidate's experience. However, conclusions suggested that, like all work places, it should also be a functional building accommodating all that is necessary for educational achievement.

Question 11

Most responses generalised about 'own country' focusing on the idea that a writer could be more detailed and creative with familiar locations and locals more willing to read them because of this. Here 'success' was measured in terms of money made and reputation gained, within the country, with the suggestion that local authors would be happy with that. Some moved beyond this and mentioned George Orwell but had a limited understanding of 'fictional settings'. More successful responses did identify the fantasy settings of 'Lord of the Rings' and 'Harry Potter' recognising that a writer's setting could be an imaginative creation but could still be incorporating certain features of 'your country' to flesh out the details. Such responses concluded that 'success' could then be measured in terms of international appeal with the writer skilfully making readers believe that such fantasy settings actually existed.

Question 12

This was a popular topic and candidates wrote sensibly about the way television programmes offered 'reliability' for their viewers. However, most responses referred to situational comedies and dramas featuring actors, which were slight misunderstandings of the question. More successful responses did consider 'ordinary people in real-life situations', discussing that popularity here was because the audience identified with such situations and recognised the emotions, embarrassments, tragedy or comedy created by such programmes. The best responses provided balance and concluded that these were programmes designed for entertainment, with ordinary people in extra-ordinary situations, therefore there was always the potential for staging actions and events. In the end some candidates questioned the extent of the spontaneous behaviour seen and how real the 'real-life' actually was.