

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/11
Passages

Key message

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

General comments

All three passages offered met with generally engaged responses and provided an appropriate challenge to the candidates. There was a preference for **Question 2**, “The Penny Dropping”, as the choice of optional question, something of a surprise in view of the wealth of dark, gothic imagery in the excerpt from Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca* in **Question 3**.

Stronger answers were focused and perceptive and succeeded in sustaining an overview of the passage while also demonstrating an awareness of individual effects and features. While less successful responses often demonstrated good understanding of parts of the text, they could have improved by ensuring a more sustained focus over a more extended range of the passage. Weak responses were often imbalanced, being either overly generalised, or otherwise restricted to considering only a limited range of features, sometimes at too great a length.

Relatively few candidates gave detailed or considered accounts of the structure of the passages or the effect of paragraphing. This was especially noticeable in **Question 2**, “The Penny Dropping”, where this was of especial significance.

Although there were relatively few unfinished papers, there is still some evidence of uneven time allocation to individual sections. This underlines the importance of addressing language features without preamble: devoting the first paragraph of the answer to summarising the contents of the passage is not helpful, and wastes time.

There was some fluent and perceptive writing in response to the directed writing tasks and a general observance of the stipulated word boundaries.

In each of the three questions, candidates were asked to base their answer on the style and language of the original; this does not imply that they should replicate what happens in the original passage. Sometimes, particularly in the case of the first passage, the responses were modelled too closely on the events of the original and in so doing restricted the effectiveness of the answer. Similarly, candidates should bear in mind that though they have been asked to base their writing on the style and language of the original passage, they should always use their own words.

Question 1(a)

This proved to be a generally accessible passage and there seemed to be few problems in the understanding of the writer's purpose and vocabulary.

Most candidates commented on the informal, often conversational tone employed by the author, though this was not always adequately supported by specific language examples. The very first sentence of the paragraph provided a good example of this informal register, when the author refers to being "dumped" at the post gate; this was not always picked up.

The use of parenthesis to convey a sense of writer-to-reader confidentiality was another feature which could have been more profitably considered. Alliteration was widely recognised, though its effects might have been defined in specific terms more frequently. Simple definition of a language feature is not generally helpful in defining the precise effects of style and language, as the following example attests: "Another resource she uses is alliteration...this catches the reader's attention and emphasises words." A stronger example was "Alliteration achieves the effect of creating rich images for the reader"; again, however, this is insufficiently precise to define the homeliness implied by the "solidly squat" Ferry Building among the tower blocks made "of silvery glass and steel."

Almost all the candidates remarked on the humorous nature of the passage but only a minority attempted to explain how the humour was created. The mock scientific acronym BABE was often mentioned but not always thought of as being comic. There was better understanding of the author's adaptation of "raining cats and dogs" but very little recognition of the comic hyperbole of the author's bags as "charges" and her bicycle as a "steed". Far better understood was the inclusion of very exact statistics to complement the whimsical invention of the piece and the use of a rhetorical question to give a snappy conclusion to the passage. Many of the best responses recognised the buoyant tone of the passage and the sense of fun and adventure that led to Christmas being forgotten. One candidate aptly described the passage as being "permeated with a sense of optimism and wonder at the place she had found herself in."

Question 1(b)

There was a largely purposeful response to this section, in which candidates were invited to describe the beginning of a cycle ride in their own country. There was some good understanding of both the style and purpose of the passage, demonstrated by some confident and imaginative writing. The candidates' depictions of their own countries were not always flattering and some took the opportunity to echo the initial disappointment of the writer in her surroundings: "I intended to cycle on hills and in forests ... the only places I found I could go ... were endless kilometres of asphalt."

Several features of the original which were often omitted in the commentaries found inclusion in the directed writing, with the use of parenthesis to give asides to the reader being a well-used feature: "I got to see a big city (I'll give them that) that looked the same as the other thousands I have visited ...".

The slightly whimsical and self-deprecating tone of the passage sometimes proved elusive, but some candidates caught it exactly: "With my conga line of baggage in tow, I darted back and forth, furiously flapping whatever finger I had available". Two of the features most commented upon in part **1(a)**, alliteration and the use of statistics, were not generally used in the directed writing.

A significant number of responses concentrated too much upon echoing the opening section of the original. Thus, there were too many lengthy descriptions of the baggage-tying and too few full descriptions of cycling in the country. Some of the most successful responses saw the possibilities of anti-climax at the end of the journey and exploited it effectively.

Question 2(a)

Surprisingly few responses took their cue from the title (in bold), “The Penny Dropping”. The most successful responses examined the process by which the penny finally dropped for Dr Nick and the often evangelical language which he employed to describe the process. Some candidates recognised that the structure of the passage was far from being a series of haphazard blog jottings: “Nick strategically structured his blog to sound slightly lost in life – later to realise that his passion could be achieved”. Most candidates commented on the inclusive tone of the blog and the author’s intention to create a sense of intimacy with the reader: “By the use of the inclusive pronoun, Dr Nick creates the sense of a virtual community”. More successful candidates ensured that they included a strong supporting selection of specific language effects, and often cited the fact that the blog begins with “Hello all” and ends with “Have a great week everyone” as a demonstration of the inclusive tone of the passage.

Many candidates commented on the use of parentheses and their inclusion in creating the “writer to reader bond”, such as in the following example: “The atmosphere of trust is also created with humorous observations between brackets (...ok, fire, a lot). The honesty of these comments makes the passage more informal and entertaining.”

There was also recognition that this blog was part of a continued conversation with the reader, in which a degree of intimacy had already been established.

It is worth repeating that as far as possible, candidates should always consider the whole text in their responses. There was too little attention to the conclusion of the passage with its use of abstract nouns and capitalisation to create a near religious sense of signing off to the reader.

Question 2(b)

The most conspicuous features of the passage were generally well represented in the responses, though the distinctive style and tone was not so easily reproduced.

Most candidates tried to emulate the clumsiness and sense of disclosure found in the original and many used features, such as the short, loaded sentences, which they had not remarked on in the commentary. There was also some very effective use of capitalisation, which cleverly echoed the original: “I am now happily off to work, (well not HAPPILY back to work, but – is there any other option?)”

Some of the better responses came mischievously close to parodying the occasionally schmaltzy tone of Dr Nick: “seeing noticeable differences (for the positive) in my always awesome patients is so warming.” Or “Don’t let your dreams be dreams! Anything is possible with the right mentality, all you need is to be willing. I should put that in a fortune cookie!”

Some of the weaker responses struggled to find fresh invention and these tended to rehash the original material with only marginal alterations.

Question 3(a)

This extract offered a sustained description of a setting laden with gothic imagery, particularly of night, dreaming and decay.

Several features were well understood and generally commented on; the personification of the trees and their roots was generally acknowledged and often well illustrated: “the description of the skeleton claws suggests that Death is lying in wait”. There was also a good understanding of the sense of malignity with which the author involves the whole of the natural world: “We feel as though the writer is attacked, persecuted by Nature, that seeks to destroy her” and “The personification of evil nature depicts a strong force changing the landscape”.

Less effective responses were far more generalised, mentioning the use of personification but with little supporting language detail. Some of the more gothic imagery of the passage was largely ignored, the “vault” and “archway” of the trees hardly mentioned. There was better understanding of other specific language effects: “the long, tenacious fingers” encroaching upon the drive were frequently noticed, and several candidates recognised the fearful associations of the writer being “possessed” with sudden “powers”. Likewise, other perceptive answers remarked on the sense of struggle which is developed as the narrator makes her way towards her vision of the house.

Some less successful candidates offered only very generalised summaries of the passage as “highly descriptive”, “gloomy and dull”, “morbid and depressing.” Sometimes, these compressed judgments were not significantly enlarged upon and the remainder of the response was simply a commentary on the events of the dream. A key feature of the passage was contained in the final two paragraphs, where Manderley was finally glimpsed, “a jewel in the hollow of the hand”. A full answer should have considered the change of tone and language which occurred in these paragraphs and the final hint of warning that all might not be well with the home itself. Relatively few responses gave full consideration to the effect of the final paragraphs, when, in contrast to all that went before, the “house stood inviolate”. At risk of repetition, candidates should remember that the whole passage must be considered, as the last line may be as significant as the first.

Question 3(b)

There were some very confident and purposeful responses to this task, with several features of the passage being enthusiastically taken up. A considerable variety of settings were chosen, a previous home being the favourite choice; others included a graveyard, a playground, and various mysteriously uncertain locations: “Under my bed, or at least what used to be my bed ... a little teddy bear that my father gave me years ago.”

The personification of natural processes was often effectively devised and the imagery of intrusive roots and branches widely used: “Time has settled in and taken over Formeville, enfolding it in its slimy arms.” A sense of the narrative inhabiting a dream world was another popular approach and often achieved a sense of genuine mystery and strangeness: “I called out to my mum for a key, I waited but nothing happened, then ... as I took a step forward ... the door opened.”

As is sometimes the case with directed writing that seizes the imagination, there were errors of grammar and punctuation that were not evident in the commentaries. Candidates should remember that accuracy is of particular importance in the directed writing.

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Key message

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General comments

There was some strong engagement with all the questions, particularly **Question 1**, where the political and social content was clearly to the taste of many candidates. In a few cases, this engagement interfered with a clear and accurate understanding of the passage, and it is worth stressing again how important it is to read the passage very carefully before responding.

There were many points of interest in both optional passages, though **Question 2**, “The Art of Travel”, proved the more popular choice, possibly because some of the language features, such as the use of personification, were more immediately obvious and attractive.

There is still a tendency for candidates to use the opening paragraph to describe the contents of the passage, in some cases doing little more than repeating the summary given in the paper. This is clearly a superfluous exercise, acting at best as an exercise in warming up for the answer proper and almost always losing time to no useful purpose. This is particularly important as there is still a significant percentage of responses which could be improved by considering a wider range of language examples and their overall effect. The recognition of two or three features is unlikely to constitute a fully developed response and it is important that style and language should be considered in both general and particular terms.

Directed writing responses for all three questions included some perceptive and accurate transitions from the original passage. Not all the candidates took the opportunity to exploit the possibilities of diary writing in **Question 1(b)**, but there was some fluent and confident writing in response to all three passages.

Candidates should always bear in mind that while they are generally asked to base their directed writing response closely on the style and language of the original passage, they should always use their own words in doing so.

Question 1(a)

There was a generally engaged and competent response to this passage. Sympathy with Julia Gillard's standpoint was widespread and there were relatively few short answers; in some cases, prolixity and repetition was a greater problem.

Most candidates understood the dynamics of the situation well, though there were some responses which suggested Julia Gillard was being accused of sexism and misogyny; this misunderstanding clearly diminished the effectiveness of the answer. There was also some misunderstanding about Tony Abbott's stance on the question of abortion, with some candidates asserting that Julia Gillard was offended by his pro-abortion view; this was clearly mistaken. There was also some misunderstanding about the conventions of parliamentary address and there was a common assertion that the speaker's language was formal throughout the passage when it was simply using parliamentary protocols as the occasion demanded. The majority of candidates recognised the various tones of anger and frustration expressed by the speaker and there was general recognition of the presence of sarcasm and mockery. There was some very good understanding of the rhetorical devices that Julia Gillard employed, such as in the following: "The repetition of the phrase 'offended personally' shifts the focus from a generalised remark to something more personal."

There was a variety of wholly acceptable descriptions of the tone, including "accusatory tone", "challenging and strident tone", "strong proclamations" and "unwavering strong tone." There was largely good understanding of the language of the speech, though the expression "battering ram" caused some confusion, some candidates assuming it was a description of Mr Abbott rather than his tactics.

There was also good understanding of the use of Mr Abbott's own speeches in focusing the case against him: "The factual approach ... helps to create a tone of formality and credibility". The overwhelming feeling was that Mr Abbott's views had been exposed and successfully ridiculed, but there were some dissenting voices, one candidate pointing out that "the quotations are hardly rebutted reasonably but suspended in the stewing indignation of the speaker."

The Prime Minister's refusal to call Mr Abbott by name but instead either as "Leader of the opposition" or "this man" was well picked up and largely understood. Inevitably, there was a temptation to write more about Julia Gillard's mood and intent rather than sustaining focus upon the language effects. Candidates who yielded to this temptation tended to produce answers that were repetitious, overlong and lacking specific language examples.

Question 1(b)

This question asked the candidates to make a diary entry based clearly on the material of the speech; style and language were not specified. This was an acknowledgement of the fact that the style and tone of the speech would not sensibly transfer to a diary entry. This offered the candidate the opportunity to convey a more private and possibly different version of Julia Gillard and of her feelings towards her opponent(s).

The transition to diary form did cause some problems and too often the combative tone of the diary made it sound as if the writer was lecturing herself. Candidates were also reluctant at times to dispense with the sense of outrage that dominated the speech and this tended to produce answers that lacked variety and imagination. Stronger responses demonstrated that it was perfectly possible to retain the abrasive character of the original, make a convincing diary entry and avoid rehashing the original: "Abbott, you can go to Hell, and your party to Purgatory – Hell is full".

The most convincing responses took the diary form and used it to their advantage, suggesting the private calculation behind the speech: "Refuting the motion may be difficult – off colour texts at this level are shaky grounds for dismissal ... best shoot this out of the water ASAP".

Other strong and convincing responses took the rasping humour and sarcasm of the text and added to it: "Australia would never put a WOMAN in power. Oh NO! ... they'd be mad to do that."

Some of the entries began with "Dear Diary" and ended with "Goodnight"; even allowing for Gillard's softer side, this seemed implausible.

Question 2(a)

This proved to be an accessible and engaging text which offered the candidates a range of language features, and was generally well understood. Most responses recognised the principal devices by which the author established the sense of a tranquil and blessed location where he seemed perfectly at ease.

The personification of the natural world was widely commented on and the sense of the island being unusually favoured by nature was also a common theme: “the word ‘unhindered’ conveys the uninterrupted flow of Nature.” The simile of the library was almost always mentioned but only a few candidates commented on how out of place it seemed in such a natural setting.

The second paragraph was also perceptively remarked on, while the personification of the coconut trees was another generally well recognised feature, and several candidates mentioned the ease with which the author “sank into a deck chair ... as if an invisible hand had placed the chair just for him.”

There were some perceptive remarks relating to the “kindly monster ... taking discreet sips of water.” One response suggested that the “monster is representative of the evolving stress within the writer”, another that the “monster” is too polite to disturb the writer.

The final paragraph represents a drastic change of tone and focus – “my attention was in truth far more fractured and confused than the foregoing paragraph suggests” – and there were a wide range of interesting and perceptive responses to this, and indeed to the passage as a whole. Weaker responses tended to acknowledge the change of tone but not to analyse its effect on the entire passage. Stronger responses suggested that the sense of unease was present throughout and that the theme of the passage was the contrast between nature at large and human nature.

There were several suggestions that the listing of the sore throat and other inconveniences suggested a “sense of endless problems” which prevented enjoyment of the paradise presented in the first two paragraphs.

Question 2(b)

There was a wide range of engaged and purposeful writing in response to this question; less purposeful answers often portrayed exotic locations, but without really utilising the language features that were noted in the commentaries. The wording of the question referred to the “style and language” of the passage and there was no obligation on the candidates to create a change of tone to conclude the response, though some did.

Personification was a popular choice of language device, and there was an interesting range of similes; weaker responses could have benefited from adopting a wider range of features from the original but.

The initial sense of tranquillity was generally transferred from the original and was then reversed or threatened in the final paragraph.

The strongest responses produced some genuinely elegant writing, often conveying the ambivalence of the original and the balancing of the developed and the natural world: “I almost forgot the busy streets of London, the ennui of city life and the blazing entitlement of the third world. Almost.”; “The aquamarine pool glistened, speaking to the sun through Morse code, on it shot rays off the surface.” Although there were exceptionally successful accounts of the style and language, there was a general sense of enjoyment and engagement in most responses.

Question 3(a)

This was the less popular of the two alternative passages, though in fact it offered as many points of interest and language features as the previous text. Almost all candidates remarked in some way on the apparently inconsequential opening sentence: "I knew it was my underwear." This was generally interpreted as a signal that the tone of the passage would be informal or conversational: "By starting off his diary entry like this, it engages the reader and makes them want to read more". Stronger answers related this sentence to the whole tone and style of the text: "A flippant and airy tone is created by phrases like 'just asking' and "The tone of this piece is more akin to a letter to a friend rather than a public posting".

Another candidate mentioned the "pleasantly disarming topic of underwear" and there was occasional recognition that this demonstrated the cramped, sometimes chaotic state of the boat. The rhetorical questions in the first paragraph were also generally considered but not always analysed beyond being credited with "adding humour" to the account.

The third and fourth paragraph could have been handled more productively; possibly the mathematical terminology was off-putting, although the ideas examined were not taxing at all. Perceptive responses recognised that the discussion of Euclidian dimensions established the strangeness of the adventure and tallied with some of the quiriness of the passage as a whole. Though the series of bullet points itemising the idiosyncrasies of the boat also occasioned some less effective responses, some perceptive answers picked up on the fondness of the phrase "little peculiarities", and there was some recognition that the list was affectionate rather than critical.

Stronger answers also conveyed an understanding of the message of the penultimate paragraph in which by "grouping the boat with friends, spouses or partners" the writer conveys how "a bond has been created with the boat". More attention was given to the final paragraph, and there was some good understanding of the valedictory tone of Dixey's farewell to the boat and the voyage: "The tautology of the 'absolutely, final, last' diary entry suggests the emotional struggle the writer is having in leaving the boat" and "The use of synonyms 'absolutely, final, last' to convey finality" was "comedically dramatic".

Less successful responses tended to make a few points about the opening paragraphs before moving to generalities and broad assessments of the passage.

Question 3(b)

There was a good deal of engagement apparent in responses to this question. The idiosyncratic and quirky delivery, interspersed with asides to the reader, was not always mastered but was nevertheless generally attempted: "I was a little worried that the dogs wouldn't remember me, now I wish they'd remember me less".

Some responses successfully emulated the digressive and meandering quality of the original and nautical references were cleverly employed: "I spent ten minutes wandering about the home, like Columbus in his search for Jordan". The lost items of the original often made reappearances and were sometimes inventively used.

There was much less use of the listing devices which occur in the original and few dared to develop the idea of non-Euclidian dimensions. Weaker responses tended to assert simply that it was good to be home and back amongst friends and relatives, sometimes the only hint at the voyage being a suggestion that the floor would not keep still. However, there were some highly effective and imaginative answers, final lines often suggesting future adventures: "A new chapter [of life] deserves new underwear" and "until next year – maybe".

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Key message

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General comments

The three passages for this series offered a wide range of styles and purposes and in each case posed an appropriate challenge for the candidates. There was a generally very good observance of the rubric and some strong engagement with all the passages. The choice of optional passages was fairly evenly divided, candidates rightly recognising that both passages, however different, had a large number of language effects to be commented on.

There was generally good understanding of the historical context of both **Question 1** and **Question 2**, together with a clear sense of sympathetic identification with the central figures of the passage.

In the case of all three texts, the strongest responses demonstrated an intelligent and structured overview of the passage augmented by specific reference to language effects. The tendency of weaker answers was to be far too generalised or to be concentrated on a very narrow range of language examples and effects.

Most candidates understood the need to examine the whole passage and not to concentrate on the opening paragraph at the expense of the rest of the text. This was especially relevant in the case of the final two passages where the concluding paragraphs are particularly powerful.

In the case of all three texts, more attention might have been given to the structure of the passage and the effects of paragraph length.

There was some perceptive, fluent and engaged directed writing, the voices of Emmeline Pankhurst and Helen Thomas being especially well caught. The distinctive styles of both women were exploited to create some very purposeful writing, military terminology being employed to great effect in the case of Pankhurst.

In some cases, candidates echoed phrases or even sentences from the original where they should have found their own equivalents. It is worth remembering that while candidates are asked to base their responses on the style and language of the original passages, they should always use their own words in doing so.

Question 1(a)

Several features of this passage were extensively commented upon and, largely speaking, understood. Pankhurst's use of military imagery, the analogy of "the men of Hartford", and the parallel of the two babies were generally appreciated.

The use of military terminology was particularly well understood, as was its application to "the men of Hartford" and the USA in general: "reference to the 'fields of battle' creates a sense of pride ... and would govern respect from the male portion of the audience" and "many would respond to the comparison of the women's rights battle to the USA War of Independence."

There was also a wide recognition of the speaker's use of pronouns in extending the sense of separation between the sexes: "...the use of the collective pronouns, such as 'we women' to unify the women listening" and "There is a clear separation in the speech between the men and the women, this is evident in the writer's continual reference to 'them, they' and 'the men'".

There was also some perceptive investigation of the tone of the speech, the sustained formality of the tone and the forthright quality of the language: "Pankhurst's tone remains challenging, passionate and empowering throughout" and "if this is such a simple fact then why do the people in power not understand it? ... this suggests that anyone opposing the movement must be rather simply minded."

The use of rhetorical questions was also frequently remarked on, though less frequently was it shown how decisively they were answered in the speech.

Another aspect of the passage which might have garnered much more attention was the growing momentum of the speech and its increasingly declamatory tone. Most candidates gave the first and the final paragraph equal consideration; the meaning of the parallel between these paragraphs was generally (though not always) understood but very few pointed out the alteration of tone and the language of pragmatism that comes with it.

Less successful responses tended to list features without clearly relating their specific effects; weak responses did little more than mention the presence of a few language features. However, this was a passage that was generally well understood and often with steady engagement.

Question 1(b)

Generally, there was a good understanding of the context and in many cases a strong identification with the material. A few candidates did not fully understand the context of the speech, though, and wrote as if women's suffrage had still not been granted. There was an occasional misconception that suffrage had been granted in the US rather than England and this underlines the importance of reading the question carefully.

War and battle provided, quite rightly, the dominant semantic field of most responses: "let us also applaud the many that fought alongside me – as soldiers". There were some very perceptive parallels drawn between the struggle of women for suffrage and the suffering of men in the world war: "The men that returned from the destruction of war are familiar with the happiness that turns to melancholy" and "This vote will be for all the men we lost to the violence of war".

Most candidates made creditable attempts to emulate the forthright tone of the original and there were some startlingly accurate echoes of the text: "My life will be no longer as a silenced person, under the laws of my husband in the confines of my home".

Many responses took the analogy of the two babies and used it as an image of the successful campaign: "Together we cried like that hungry baby, refusing to be silent until we were heard".

There was a gratifying absence of slang and comparatively few anachronisms, although spelling and punctuation often suffered in some of the most impassioned responses.

Several of the most effective speeches were not simply triumphant but determined to emphasise that the struggle continued: "Here you can see what victory looks like when the battle is won by women ... feel happy, yes, celebrate, but do not put down your arms yet, the war is still raging".

Question 2(b)

This passage elicited some heartfelt and perceptive responses. There was a mature understanding of the situation and much writing that was both sympathetic and at the same time aware of how the passage achieved its effect: “her purpose is remembering, recounting, comforting” and “‘I’ve always been able to warm you’ does not simply mean warmth but her love for him.”

There was general comment on “the semantic fields of warmth and cold” and of the juxtaposition of the weather outside and the “weather” within the cottage. There was some excellent emotional and intellectual understanding of the specific effects of the contrasts of temperature. The warmth of the couple inside and the enveloping cold outside were generally remarked upon and many responses noticed the sinister suggestion of the snow which “crept through the frost covered windows.”

There was also some acute analysis of the interchanges between the couple and there were contrasting but wholly valid views on some of the poet’s words: “‘Helen, Helen, Helen’, the use of repetition shows the importance that these words have for Edward” or “The lullaby repetition of ‘Helen’ and ‘ever and ever.’”

There was also good recognition of how profoundly the sense of impending loss is conveyed: “The juxtaposition of ‘I was nothing’ and ‘would be nothing’ aptly describes the significance of the couple’s separation.”

There was also some clear understanding of the structure and effect of the short paragraphs, laden with emotion, which conclude the passage: “emotional sentences ... that show the reader the depth of pain felt by Thomas, as her thoughts are condensed into short, sad phrases.”

The sombre, despairing note of the conclusion was broadly understood, especially the effect of the diminishing “coo-ee” as the parting became final.

More attention could have been profitably paid to the final sentence, or to the significance of the “laden feet” and the way in which Helen “groping” her way to the “empty” house suggests her sense of loss.

Weaker responses tended to describe only the generalised sadness of the occasion and there were some digressions into the history of the First World War. However, this was a passage which produced some excellent and sensitive writing.

Question 2(b)

There was some strong and sympathetic writing in the responses to this passage, with some creditable adaptations of the style of the original: “My children will not feel the weight of my sufferings, this would only add to theirs.” There was a generally successful transference of the emotional openness of the passage to a frank and unreserved tone in the letter: “I could feel his warmth, but it wasn’t enough to cut through to my cold, sorrowful heart.”

There were also some effective adjustments of style to capture the sense of period and the poignancy of the situation, and this was sometimes impressively sustained. There were some anachronisms, but these were exceptional rather than general. Not all reference to the text was successfully managed and there were some clear instances of misunderstanding: “he would say Helen, Helen, Helen, anything to get any attention.”

Several aspects of the passage were particularly well developed, notably the valedictory echoes of Thomas’s voice: “In my dreams I still hear his faint Coo-ee coming over the hill towards me.”

There was some brutal reference to the poet’s forebodings about his return to France: “Did your husband show such fear as well?” Most responses, however, made a sympathetic identification with the writing and writer, and this was reflected in the successful adoption of the original style and tone.

Question 3(a)

Candidates sometimes waste their opening paragraph in defining target audiences when this has no great relevance to the style and language that the writer employs. In the case of this passage, however, style and language were specific to an audience of concerned parents, for whom a tone of authority and unassailable knowledge was necessary. Not all candidates commented on the connection between audience and tone, though there was widespread recognition of the author's direct address to the reader and the use of personal pronouns: "The use of 'you' and 'your' create a connection with the reader and also impart a sense of responsibility."

Several responses perceptively pointed out the sermonising quality of some of the writing: "The use of declarative sentences remind readers of their duties as parents."

There was also some good understanding of the sense of unity established by the opening of the final paragraph when the readers are enjoined to look to themselves – "as adults". Similarly, many responses understood the effect of the use of "us" in the final sentence to clearly merge the writer's objectives with those of the reader.

"Long, complex sentences ... which confer a sense of intelligence" were commented on, as was the use of lists and professional jargon, "a facsimile of individualised attention and self-paced simulation."

There was some fluent understanding of the purpose of the passage and the impression left on the reader: "The cumulative effect of the techniques used in the final paragraphs is to create a mood of understanding and empathy."

Weaker responses tended to home in on the passage's use of "negative" and "positive" aspects of gaming and, in some cases, did little more than make a list of both categories. There was also disappointingly little attention to the use of the present continuous tense and too much listing of the contents of the passage.

There were some developed and perceptive reactions to the passage but in some cases candidates settled for relatively few language examples when the text offered a considerable variety of language features and points of interest.

Question 3(b)

This passage made a very direct address and although not stiffly formal, had a tone of distinct authority and scrupulous balance.

The straight-talking tone was successfully utilised by some candidates in the opening sentences of their responses: "So, what can we do to minimise the risk of playing video games?" or "Timing is everything ... we like to plan our day ... children are similar."

There was also a general attempt to echo the balancing of "positive" and "negative" aspects of video game usage, though this sometimes resulted in a simple listing of contrasting arguments with little else. Widespread reference was made to studies and research projects to bolster the credibility of the responses and some of these were wholly convincing. There were some accurate and perceptive echoes of the original passage in which the sense of balance and authority was nicely caught: "restrictions should not be so tight that your kids feel unable to have fun ... you have to make sure to keep their perspectives in mind when coming to an agreement."

Less successful responses were often conversational in their approach, making the direct address of the original far too chatty and informal. Weak responses needed to more fully develop new ideas, tending instead to reproduce the arguments of the passage with very little alteration. There were also some instances of careless spelling and grammar; candidates need to remember the importance of sustaining accurate expression in their writing.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/21
Writing

Key Messages

Candidates should focus on the instructions within each question – for example, concentrating on ‘drama and suspense’ for **Question 1** and ‘mood and emotions’ for **Question 6**.

Time management skills are essential: overlong narratives in **Section A** often lead to short, underdeveloped answers for **Section B**.

Candidates should be prepared to spend a few minutes writing out a short plan to ensure the sound and effective structure of an answer. A lack of a plan often leads to diffuse, rambling work.

General Comments

In preparing for **Section A: Imaginative writing**, candidates should safeguard against the confusion of tense forms. If a candidate begins an imaginative writing task in the present tense, they should not switch randomly to the past tense. Candidates tend to produce more effective work when they do more ‘showing’ than ‘telling,’ and thus make the reader feel as if they are in the world created by the narrative or description. Candidates should also try to use a broad range of effects in their work. The descriptive pieces were more successful when the candidate was able to structure the piece around more than one factor. Attempts to invoke the passing of time were more effectively managed in, for example, a piece alternating between the ocean and the beach as the storm raged.

When preparing for **Section B: Writing for an audience**, candidates should be clear about the tone, register and format of magazine articles and print newspaper correspondence (where available), and should prepare various modes of discursive writing in the media. Some appropriate skills in composition and rhetoric should continue to be the focus of exercises. The contrasting pieces were less successful when the candidates were unable to differentiate between the voices or points of view. Candidates should try to use language to convey excitement or hesitation, rather than relying on exclamation marks and dashes. They were more successful when the candidates had strong views themselves or were already well-versed in the arguments surrounding the topic at hand. Many excellent responses contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Others needed to develop thoroughly-explained and balanced arguments in order to achieve higher marks.

There was frequent evidence of candidates referring to ‘amounts’ rather than ‘numbers’ of people, and the confusion of ‘less’ and ‘fewer’ occurred even in some of the more competent submissions. Some candidates needed to be more careful with syntax: they either created comma splices or ended sentences without main verbs. Incorrect apostrophe use was evident in some cases, but a more common error was the absence of punctuation. Some candidates seemed to neglect capitals at the beginning of sentences completely. Dangling modifiers were in evidence: candidates needed to remember the danger of beginning a sentence with ‘By ___ing’ formations, especially if participles were not related to the grammatical subject of the sentence. Candidates should also make sure that vocabulary is correctly deployed.

Across **Sections A** and **B** there was a range of technical and structural errors which often impacted on the clarity and accuracy of expression. It was the ability to avoid this tendency which marked the most successful responses.

Generally speaking, centres have prepared their candidates appropriately for this paper. Candidates seemed to enjoy writing **Section A**; in **Section B**, examiners saw a preparedness to argue both sides of the question with a degree of development.

In **Section A, Question 1** was more popular than **2** and **3**. However, candidates seemed more confident writing a narrative response than the descriptive piece asked for in **Question 3**. There was still a tendency to write stories in **Question 3**, when descriptive writing was required. Some who did write descriptive pieces needed to make sure not to load sentences and phrases with excessive and inappropriate adjectives. The stories for **Question 1** were more successful when the candidates were able to make good decisions about how much information their readers needed to follow the plot. Structure and vocabulary were sometimes affected negatively when candidates employed flashbacks, dream sequences, and rambling asides in an attempt to 'fill the reader in'.

In **Section B**, all questions were approximately equally popular. The more successful *Writing for an audience* answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Less successful candidates needed to remember to use the conventions of different forms, and to establish a mature, credible voice or develop a well thought out, logically organised line of argument. This was particularly true of some responses to **Question 5**, which asked for two reviews, and implied an inherently structured response.

Comments on Specific Questions

Paper 21

Question 1

This was the most popular question. The idea of creating drama and suspense was handled effectively by a good proportion of candidates. However, a number of candidates wrote a story that included a train journey at the beginning but the journey had no real relevance to the plot. Some answers seemed to be adaptations of previously written material.

A lot of the best answers were told from an omniscient point of view, thus enabling the writer to have more narrative control. Many good answers finessed a cliffhanger ending to this 'opening to a story', providing the reader with plenty to think about. The characters sometimes had a chance to be reconciled to their fate. Many worthy attempts at realistic dialogue did not quite succeed in signalling characters' intentions or explaining their motives. Less successful responses typically had no new paragraphs introduced to start a 'new speech', or quotation marks were either partially or wholly missing. Quite often the given opening sentence was either not followed by a comprehensible consequence, or was missed completely.

Question 2

There were some lively answers to the 'restaurant' scenario, reflecting the very different priorities of the luxury-hunting patrons and rushed-off-their-feet 'skivvies' in the kitchen. Some candidates seemed unsure whether to treat this question with a narrative or descriptive approach; either approach was fine, as long as the focus was on 'mood and place'. Better candidates managed to evoke through particular details a real sense of the restaurant's mood and place, while less successful candidates wrote purely narrative responses without focusing on the differing sense of mood and place required by the question. Sometimes the second half of these responses was much shorter than the first.

Question 3

There were some imaginative responses, with some effective description, possibly as this was a subject in which students could draw upon personal experience. However, a lot of candidates provided answers that were mainly narrative, rather than descriptive. In common with previous series' emphasis on extreme weather situations, this question seemed to provoke more narrative situations with perceived suspense and drama woven into the answers. Although candidates were invited to write a 'descriptive piece', some leeway was given to those who included (some) narrative elements, if enough descriptive contrast was evident. The descriptive piece was most effective when candidates wrote about storms they had apparently actually experienced – a piece on a hurricane in Florida and another from the point of view of a person caught out on a boat during a squall – were excellent due to the realism and immediacy of the writing. It is best, however, to avoid writing too much narrative in response to such a task as this – the descriptive elements are what count.

Question 4

In less successful responses to this task on the subject of shopping, though most candidates were able to formulate some sort of balanced argument, the obvious opposition of the (former) practice of shopping in a small outlet as opposed to the (current) obsession with either mall-entrancement or online consumption often led to clichéd responses. The best candidates were aware of the style required for a magazine article and produced quite professional articles. Less successful candidates limited themselves to a description of the changes in shopping habits without any real attempt to engage the audience. The more successful responses analysed how motivations for shopping, the objects of desire, and the methods of shopping have all evolved and changed over the decades.

Question 5

The most successful answers to this question wove contrasting viewpoints into the reviews very well. Reviews of the school exchanges could be more effectively written when the audience (one's peers presumably) were identified clearly – although some candidates' desire to contrast at all costs sometimes seemed to make the exchange seem like two different occasions. The less successful answers lacked a differentiation in voice between the two points of view.

Question 6

This was a fairly popular question and was generally well handled by candidates, although there was very occasionally some confusion as to who was leaving. Many candidates were successful in using a range of language and rhetorical devices. Candidates wrote coherent and cogent speeches, with a good balance of emotions and factual recollection of the years in the job, often focusing on individual relationships with other members of the company, and how the speaker rose up from the ranks to become the director. Less successful candidates were unable to imagine what a director would say in his final speech. They focused on telling the staff how wonderful they were, reciting problems that they had faced – usually in quite a general way – and wishing everyone the best for continued success. Better answers recalled 'specific' incidents and people who had made an impact on the director. Such details made a piece of work more convincing.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/22
Writing

Key Messages

Candidates should focus on the instructions within each question – for example, concentrating on ‘suspense and mystery’ for **Question 1** and ‘passion and urgency’ for **Question 6**.

Time management skills are essential: overlong narratives in **Section A** often lead to short, underdeveloped answers for **Section B**.

Candidates should be prepared to spend a few minutes writing out a short plan to ensure the sound and effective structure of an answer. A lack of a plan often leads to diffuse, rambling work.

General Comments

In preparing for **Section A: Imaginative writing**, candidates should safeguard against the confusion of tense forms. If a candidate begins an imaginative writing task in the present tense, they should not switch randomly to the past tense. Candidates should also do more ‘showing’ than ‘telling,’ so as to make the reader feel as if they are in the world created in their narrative, and try to use a broad range of effects in their work. The descriptive pieces were more successful when the candidate was able to structure the piece around more than one factor, not just the passing of time.

When preparing for **Section B: Writing for an audience**, candidates should be clear about the tone, register and format of magazine articles and print newspaper correspondence (as applicable), and should prepare various modes of discursive writing in the media. Developing appropriate skills in composition and rhetoric should continue to be the focus of preparatory exercises. The contrasting pieces were less successful when the candidates were unable to differentiate between the voices or points of view. Some candidates relied on exclamation marks and dashes rather than language to convey excitement or hesitancy. Compositions were more successful when the candidates had strong views themselves (e.g. age of leaving school) or were already well-versed in the arguments surrounding the topic at hand (e.g. global warming). Many excellent responses contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Others needed to develop more detailed, balanced, or thoroughly explained arguments in order to achieve higher marks.

There was frequent evidence of candidates referring to ‘amounts’ rather than ‘numbers’ of people, and the confusion of ‘less’ and ‘fewer’ occurred even in some of the more competent submissions. Some candidates needed to be more careful with syntax: they either created comma splices or ended sentences without main verbs. Incorrect apostrophe use was evident in some cases, but a more common error was the absence of punctuation. Some candidates seemed to neglect capitals at the beginning of sentences completely. Dangling modifiers were in evidence: candidates needed to remember the danger of beginning a sentence with ‘By ___ing’ formations, especially if participles were not related to the grammatical subject of the sentence. Candidates should also make sure that vocabulary is correctly deployed.

Across **Sections A** and **B** there was a range of technical and structural errors which often impacted on the clarity and accuracy of expression. It was the ability to avoid this tendency which marked the most successful responses.

Generally speaking, centres have prepared their candidates appropriately for this paper. Candidates seemed to enjoy writing **Section A**; in **Section B**, examiners saw a preparedness to argue both sides of the question with a degree of development.

In **Section A**, **Questions 1** was more popular than **2** and **3**. Candidates seemed more confident writing a narrative response than the descriptive piece asked for in **Question 3**. There was still a tendency to write stories in **Question 3**, when descriptive writing was required. Some who did write descriptive pieces needed to make sure not to load sentences and phrases with excessive and inappropriate adjectives. The stories for **Questions 1** and **2** were more successful when the candidates were able to make good decisions about how much information their readers needed to follow the plot. Structure and vocabulary were sometimes affected negatively when candidates employed flashbacks, dream sequences, and rambling asides in an attempt to 'fill the reader in'.

In **Section B**, **Question 4** was the most popular, followed by **Question 5**. **Question 4** was more successfully answered when candidates adopted an enthusiastic tone which appealed to older teenagers, in offering advice and guidance on how to survive away from family. Candidates who attempted **Question 6** need **not** write 'stage directions' for their TV documentary script for a voiceover; visual aspects of the documentary should be made apparent through the language of the voiceover. It is more important that they spend the time using language persuasively and convincingly. The more successful *Writing for an audience* answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Less successful candidates needed to remember to use the conventions of different forms; to establish a mature, credible voice; or to develop a well thought out, logically organised line of argument. This was particularly true of some responses to **Question 5**, which asked for two speeches, and implied an inherently structured response.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

This was the most popular question in **Section A**, and produced a wide range of openings to stories pertaining to the evocative title, 'Missing'. The idea of creating suspense and mystery was handled effectively by some candidates. A lot of the best answers were told from an omniscient point of view, thus enabling the writer to have more narrative control. Many good answers executed a cliffhanger ending to this 'opening to a story', providing the reader with plenty to think about. Among the less successful were those where the missing person was a first person narrator or where the 'chapter' ended with the person going missing. Some candidates mistakenly wrote the whole story, and once again some seemed to be adaptations of previously written material.

Less successful responses often only mentioned that the character was 'missing' in the final few lines. Many worthy attempts at realistic dialogue did not quite succeed in signalling characters' intentions or explaining their motives. This attempt was often obscured, in any case, when no new paragraphs were introduced to start a 'new speech', or quotation marks were either partially or wholly missing.

Question 2

The 'two contrasting pieces about a town' were not a particularly popular choice. There were quite a few examples of discursive rather than imaginative writing, sometimes accompanied by vocabulary from an inappropriately formal register. The fact that the question is in **Section A** means that imaginative writing is expected, and this clarification should be made with the candidates. More successful candidates answered this question well, with clearly contrasting perspectives. Some less successful versions attempted to use a first person narrative to reflect the rather unrealistic passing of 50 years in one viewpoint. Often the clichés of a pre-industrial age were opposed to a city mired in a present-day or futuristic environmental disaster, usually falling into a list of devastations after the collapse of a rather unreal utopia. Some candidates seemed unsure whether to treat this question to a narrative or descriptive approach, with somewhat confused results. Individually, either approach is fine, as long as the candidates use details and language effects to create a 'sense of place and atmosphere'. Sometimes the second half of these responses was much shorter than the first; and sometimes, this second part was not set later than the first. Candidates should remember to plan their responses to both parts equitably.

Question 3

The 'view from the window' produced some imaginative responses. The most successful candidates seemed to draw on their own experiences for this question, writing a clearly descriptive piece, rather than narrative. Some highly imaginative scenarios were observed, including describing views from a moving taxi – e.g. one that contrasted grey New York in the daytime with the lights of New York at night, or the feelings evoked of freedom and liberty as viewed through the bars of a prison cell window. Too many simply described general lovely countryside with birds chirping happily and lush green grass. Also, a number of less successful candidates provided answers that were mainly narrative, rather than descriptive. These answers generally attempted to attach labels of 'colours and light' to every object, thus desensitizing the reader's reaction to any possibility of descriptive contrast.

Question 4

This was the most popular question and produced a wide range of answers. The best candidates wrote in a suitably lively style and produced quite professional articles. Many wrote well-balanced and developed pieces which included practical advice and adopted an appropriately 'friendly' and often humorous tone. Most candidates were able to apply strategies to explain and offer advice to their readers in the appropriate form and tone. Stronger answers concentrated on the given topic of 'travelling' and focused their comments on connections to family and how best to combat the perceived 'homesickness' in positive ways – the general feeling was to promote good planning to prevent possible disasters, losses and so on. Effective responses often took on an informal tone without losing authority. However, some weaker candidates attempted a too-casual, over-friendly tone, often with comedic asides, which was not usually helpful. Less successful responses were repetitive on the subject of the importance of having the chance to travel or wrote only on ways to cope with being homesick.

Question 5

This question, about school leaving age, was also quite popular; it was generally handled well, with some very successful, persuasive answers which created differing attitudes and viewpoints effectively. Stronger answers focused on the practical application of time gained or lost, leading to possible careers; many also commented on the more social or psychological subtopics of gaining maturity and/or worldly experience. Some candidates clearly had more experience of debating than others and this was reflected in the standard of the work, while others wrote in less convincing styles. Less successful responses centred round the importance to a society of education and lost sight of the disadvantages and advantages of the different ages.

Question 6

This was a less popular question, and when attempted, candidates' work did not always demonstrate that it was a voiceover. The voiceovers for the documentary entitled 'Our Planet' often seemed more like a debating speech or a magazine article. Apart from a few examples in which reference was made at the beginning and end of the piece to a television programme there was almost no effort to relate what was being written to what might be appearing on screen. Candidates need to tie in the content with some visual elements of a television documentary, not merely writing an essay with a passionate argument or a quasi-speech exhorting young people to 'step up to the plate'. Others tried to insert 'directions' to indicate visual elements, only to make these as long as the text, which causes problems for examiners when calculating whether an answer infringes the rubric by brevity. There is no need to write 'stage directions'; candidates should instead write so as to reference the imagined visual components in the documentary.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/23
Writing

Key Messages

Candidates should focus on the instructions within each question – for example, concentrating on ‘suspense and drama’ for **Question 1** and ‘enthusiasm as well as caution’ for **Question 6**.

Time management skills are essential: overlong narratives in **Section A** often lead to short, underdeveloped answers for **Section B**.

Candidates should be prepared to spend a few minutes writing out a short plan to ensure the sound and effective structure of an answer. A lack of a plan often leads to diffuse, rambling work.

General Comments

In preparing for **Section A: Imaginative writing**, candidates should safeguard against the confusion of tense forms. If a candidate begins an imaginative writing task in the present tense, they should not switch randomly to the past tense. Candidates tend to produce more effective work when they do more ‘showing’ than ‘telling,’ and thus make the reader feel as if they are in the world created by the narrative or description. Candidates should also try to use a broad range of effects in their work. The descriptive pieces were more successful when the candidate was able to structure the piece around more than one factor.

When preparing for **Section B: Writing for an audience**, candidates should be clear about the tone, register and format of magazine articles and print newspaper correspondence (where available), and should prepare various modes of discursive writing in the media. Some appropriate skills in composition and rhetoric should continue to be the focus of exercises. The contrasting pieces were less successful when the candidates were unable to differentiate between the voices or points of view. Candidates should try to use language to convey excitement or hesitation, rather than relying on exclamation marks and dashes. They were more successful when the candidates had strong views themselves or were already well-versed in the arguments surrounding the topic at hand. Many excellent responses contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Others needed to develop thoroughly-explained and balanced arguments in order to achieve higher marks.

There was frequent evidence of candidates referring to ‘amounts’ rather than ‘numbers’ of people, and the confusion of ‘less’ and ‘fewer’ occurred even in some of the more competent submissions. Some candidates needed to be more careful with syntax: they either created comma splices or ended sentences without main verbs. Incorrect apostrophe use was evident in some cases, but a more common error was the absence of punctuation. Some candidates seemed to neglect capitals at the beginning of sentences completely. Dangling modifiers were in evidence: candidates needed to remember the danger of beginning a sentence with ‘By ___ing’ formations, especially if participles were not related to the grammatical subject of the sentence. Candidates should also make sure that vocabulary is correctly deployed.

Across **Sections A** and **B** there was a range of technical and structural errors which often impacted on the clarity and accuracy of expression. It was the ability to avoid this tendency which marked the most successful responses.

Generally speaking, centres have prepared their candidates appropriately for this paper. Candidates seemed to enjoy writing **Section A**; in **Section B**, examiners saw a preparedness to argue both sides of the question with a degree of development.

In **Section A**, **Questions 1** was more popular than **2** or **3**. Candidates seemed more confident writing a narrative response than the descriptive piece asked for in **Question 3**. There was still a tendency to write stories in **Question 3**, when descriptive writing is required. Some who did write descriptive pieces needed to make sure not to load sentences and phrases with excessive and inappropriate adjectives. The stories for

Question 1 were more successful when the candidates were able to make good decisions about how much information their readers needed to follow the plot. Structure and vocabulary were sometimes affected negatively when candidates employed flashbacks, dream sequences, and rambling asides in an attempt to 'fill the reader in'.

In **Section B**, **Question 4** was the most popular, followed by **Question 5**. **Question 4** was more successfully answered when candidates adopted an enthusiastic tone which appealed to older teenagers, in offering advice about the nursing profession. Candidates who attempted **Question 6** need **not** write 'stage directions' for their TV documentary script for a voiceover; visual aspects of the documentary should be made apparent through the language of the voiceover. It is more important that they spend the time using language persuasively and convincingly. The more successful *Writing for an audience* answers kept the target audience in mind throughout and adopted language and structural techniques to match that audience. Less successful candidates needed to remember to use the conventions of different forms; to establish a mature, credible voice; or to develop a well thought out, logically organised line of argument. This was particularly true of some responses to **Question 5**, which asked for two speeches, and implied an inherently structured response.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

This was the most popular choice of the three possible questions. Most candidates were able to fulfil the sense of 'suspense and drama'. A lot of the best answers were told from an omniscient point of view, thus enabling the writer to have more narrative control. The 'twist in the tail' element also involved some of the protagonists seeming as though they were trapped until the last moment. The stipulated 'ending of a story' could have been a tricky option, with the writer having to integrate a 'backstory' into a continued narrative, but this aspect was handled very well by a number of candidates, especially when they did not overburden the reader with the life-history of the endangered character. Less successful attempts at realistic dialogue did not quite succeed in signalling characters' intentions or explaining their motives. Such attempts were often obscured, in any case, when no new paragraphs were introduced to start a 'new speech', or when quotation marks were either partially or wholly missing.

Question 2

There were quite a few very good answers to this question, with some realistic 'grandmotherly' feelings, often deluded in supposing they had a closer or more loving relationship with the granddaughter than was the case and, as expected, the more able candidates had a sure understanding about what would motivate a younger person, the granddaughter, to possibly manipulate that relationship.

Question 3

Although candidates were invited to write a 'descriptive piece', some leeway was given to those who included (some) narrative elements, if enough descriptive contrast criteria were evident. The best writing for this was seen in some highly imaginative depictions of deep sea creatures, with their movements juxtaposed against the movement of the submarine. Less successful answers generally attempted to attach labels of 'sounds, space and movement' on every object, thus desensitizing the reader's reaction to any possibility of descriptive contrast. 'The Submarine' brought forth some bizarre examples of metaphorical language including a sandwich convention (as in 'sub') and the psychologically hidden 'deep' feelings of submerged (i.e. unrequited) passion. Even some attempts at realistic descriptions of claustrophobia encountered by submarine passengers and crew became an excuse for mawkish melodramatic narrative, rather than primarily description.

Question 4

The speech given by a nurse was often very effective and candidates generally spoke clearly about both the 'rewards' and 'challenges', sometimes with moving descriptions of patients either overcoming serious illness, or succumbing to fatal conditions. Treating relatives with respect was a common subtopic, usually handled with sensitivity. The challenges were not ignored by better candidates, however difficult it might first appear to convince the audience that the job was still worthwhile. Less successful responses were repetitive,

adopted too humorous a tone, or limited themselves to a description of a nurse's day without any real attempt to engage the audience.

Question 5

This was also a reasonably popular question and was generally handled well, with some very successful, persuasive answers creating differing attitudes and viewpoints effectively. The replies to the 'global warming' newspaper article were sometimes hampered by the fact that candidates seemed to have little to say when agreeing with the statement, presumably because it is a common experience for all students to be very well educated about the reality of global warming nowadays, hence this part of the answer was often too short or excessively repetitive. Stronger responses were able to marshal a number of cogent arguments against the statement.

Question 6

This was a slightly less popular question and, when attempted, candidates' work did not always demonstrate that it was a voiceover. Apart from a few examples in which reference was made at the beginning and end of the piece to a television programme there was little effort to relate what was being written to what might be appearing on screen. Candidates need to tie in the content with some visual elements of a television documentary. Some tried to insert 'directions' to indicate visual elements, only to make these as long as the text, which causes problems for examiners when calculating whether an answer infringes the rubric by brevity. There is no need to write 'stage directions'; candidates should instead write so as to reference the imagined visual components in the documentary.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/31
Text Analysis

Key Messages

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

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

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting the aspects of language from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate the specific effects that are created.

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

General Comments

Many candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. However, a sizeable proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than carefully analysing the texts themselves. It is good to note that very few candidates resorted to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the style and language of the accompanying text, in this paper the transcription from an online video in which the speaker, Roger Haeske, describes his top three anti-ageing tips. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this paper it was the promotional text for the back cover of a book about anti-ageing written by Haeske. Careful consideration of the target audience (potential purchasers of Haeske's book about anti-ageing techniques) and the requirement to clearly convey a particular perspective (the publisher's view as to what the general public might find enticing about Haeske's book) is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120–150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)** where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the promotional text to appear on the back cover of Haeske's book, produced for **1(a)**, with the style and language of the transcription. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis, and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Recognition of the level of fluency and the range of lexical choices exhibited in the transcription and comparing the effects produced with those in the candidate's own reworking were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach this session – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is again worth reminding both Centres and candidates that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

The pieces of directed writing candidates produced usually featured solid engagement with the form and style of a promotional text appearing on the back cover of a book and suitably reworked references to the original text. Most candidates decided middle age readers were the main target audience for Haeske's book and successfully catered for their potential anxieties connected to ageing – wrinkly skin, loss of energy and spiritual *ennui* – in opening declarative statements or rhetorical questions cast in the second person. Brief descriptions of the three top anti-ageing tips Haeske outlines in the original text were usually communicated in crisp third person sentences (occasionally set out as bullet points to highlight key features of content within the book available for purchase). Most candidates ensured the author was clearly identified in their promotional texts as an authority in the field of anti-ageing strategies and incorporated suitably laudatory references to his online video; understandably a considerable number of candidates also embellished Haeske's media profile by representing that blogging and public speaking were also plausible aspects of his previous promotional activities.

Weak responses were often belaboured, consisted primarily of details extracted from the original text (often verbatim or through excessive listing in chronological order) and intently focused on praising Haeske himself at the expense of his anti-ageing strategies or making claims for them that do not bear much scrutiny. The tone of such responses was usually too strident, with liberal use of 'hard sell' vocabulary, exclamation marks, and upper case letters to simulate a raised voice.

In strong responses candidates employed a wide range of techniques to responsibly market the book itself. A header, usually addressing the potential reader's anxieties about the ageing process, preceded any reference to Haeske or his techniques in a clear attempt to establish a tangible need on the part of the potential purchaser. Suitable celebratory endorsements (Oprah Winfrey's was a popular persona to adopt) and testimonials from acolytes of Haeske often featured, usually at the end of the text, occasionally alongside short quotations from notional advance reviews. Particular care was taken with the use of adjectives describing the strategies (e.g. 'unique', 'effective', 'proven') so that the reader may be suitably impressed and convinced about the veracity of their effects. There was also clear recognition of Haeske's educational intent (the transcription opens 'I will share with you...') captured in imperatives such as 'discover' and 'explore' and some emphasis on the spiritual fulfilment strategy ('focus on being happy' as Haeske advises in the transcription) alongside the more obvious physical health strategies. Such responses were convincing in their reworking of the original material, accurate and eloquent in expression and convincing in their awareness of audience and purpose.

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

Question 1(b)

This question rewarded candidates who attempted to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, the transcription from an online video in which the speaker, Roger Haeske, describes his top three anti-ageing tips, and the promotional text to appear on the back cover of Haeske's book produced in response to 1(a). Only a few candidates failed to recognise the nature of the transcription or did not apply a suitable methodology to analyse it. The purpose and hence the conventions of a transcription consisting of utterances with regular pauses were not appreciated by these candidates, some of whom attempted to compare the punctuation and grammar of their promotional text to the transcription, often at considerable length but to little analytical effect. Simply using the comparable words 'spoken' and 'written' in the opening sentence of their responses ought to have ensured these candidates were immediately on the correct analytical track. Overall it was apparent that most candidates had been adequately prepared to analyse a transcription of a monologue (featuring a sole speaker such as Haeske).

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

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

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate or better knowledge and understanding of at least some of the conventions of a sole speaker addressing an unseen audience (especially frequent use of first and second person pronouns) and the purposes of both persuading and entertaining an audience primarily consisting of educated, knowledgeable and middle-aged adults. They could at least briefly examine the informality exhibited by the transcription (citing some of Haeske's colloquial turns of phrase, such as 'a lot of you guys' and 'was like man') and the register of the promotional text (usually mixed, tending towards formal) and appreciate the persuasive and informative intent of the speaker as opposed to the chiefly persuasive nature of the promotional text. There was often far more consideration of the transcription than the promotional text. Many candidates exerted a lot of effort to merely list the elements of semi-spontaneous speech they found in the transcription, especially voiced pauses and instances of repetition. From their promotional texts candidates usually selected and examined examples of the deliberate clichés they employed to describe Haeske's book (e.g. 'it is the real deal', 'a life-changing read') and also recognised how the promotional text could be edited and polished by the publisher of the book whereas the speaker's delivery could not – although most candidates plausibly argued Haeske's monologue might have been pre-scripted and rehearsed but delivered without use of a teleprompter. Weak responses were often brief, focused too much on the detail of Haeske's anti-ageing tips and summarised the content of both texts.

In strong responses candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted succinctly and analysed in detail. In relation to the transcription they examined the speaker's frequent use of unvoiced pauses in the middle of long utterances to assist the viewer in processing the information delivered, the occasional use of stressed syllables to emphasise both key points and more nuanced ones (e.g. 'prematurely old', 'as much joy in your life at all times') and how he created a simple yet effective structure for his monologue by using numerals as deliberate discourse markers to clearly demarcate each of his three anti-ageing tips. Candidates additionally compared these and other aspects of the transcription with those they employed in their pieces of directed writing, usually concluding that both texts were cohesive and had well-defined structures, and comparatively analysed the effectiveness of numerous examples of persuasive language selected from both texts. In discriminating responses it was recognised that the speaker's regular use of high frequency lexis enabled him to remain relatable to his audience throughout his long address whilst the deliberate inclusion of statistics in conjunction with low frequency lexis ('five hundred percent more human growth hormone', 'doubling if not tripling their greens intake') ably demonstrated the main intention of achieving scientific credibility with his audience.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A (perhaps as the candidates were better accommodated by an entertaining style with its variety of figurative language features) than Text B. Some candidates often dealt too much with the content of both Texts; others concentrated too much on punctuation, sentence and paragraph length. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a sure grasp of how Text A may be considered more accessible than Text B, usually citing Text A's euphemistic and slightly provocative heading ('...It's Because Of Our Dirty Minds'), short paragraphs, colloquial lexis, frequent shifts from the third to the more accommodating second person and its humorous extended metaphor concerning how 'the brain's garbage men' can more efficiently 'clean out the build-up of brain junk' during sleep as the main reasons. In comparison Text B was found to be much more perfunctory in its purpose (as signalled by its dry heading, 'Theories on the purpose of sleep' and use of adverbs to start some sentences: 'However...', 'Instead...'), consisting mainly of long, complex sentences laden with field-specific scientific terminology and academic references (author's surname and year of publication in parentheses) and only occasionally lightening the tone with some colloquial phrasing (e.g. 'there may be some truth in the concept of "sleeping on a problem" and the saying "sleep on it".') There was usually associated consideration of the Texts' very different audiences in relation to the above observations: Text A's more youthful, non-specialist audience that likely discovered it courtesy of a search engine as opposed to Text B's biomedical students consulting it due to a lecturer's recommendation or as a result of browsing the reference section of a university library.

In the strongest responses candidates explored the Texts' structures and analysed language more efficiently, placing an emphasis on the similarities as well as the differences that were most pertinent. In Text A candidates demonstrated how colloquial language – 'we get cranky, a bit loopy', 'science has been a little iffy about it [sleep]' – is used to accommodate a potentially wide audience before the sparing use of low frequency, specialist language ('lymphatic system', 'cerebrospinal fluid') is gradually introduced. In a similar fashion, Text B's opening paragraph introduces its subject before concepts are treated in the ensuing ones. Candidates noted how declarative sentences and listing were employed in both Texts to convey information quickly and that the citing of sources mainly found in Text B is somewhat mirrored in Text A through the direct quotation of a named researcher. It was occasionally observed that Text B makes use of the passive voice and tactfully eschews assertion when dealing with disputed or more controversial concepts about sleep (e.g. 'none is well established') whereas Text A is less circumspect in evaluating the present state of scientific knowledge on the subject: 'Now, we're finally getting some insight into what sleep does for our bodies'. The particular effects of individual words and phrases selected from both Texts were explored in a consistently discriminating manner in the very best responses.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32
Text Analysis

Key Messages

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

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

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting the aspects of language from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate the specific effects that are created.

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

General Comments

Many candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. However, a sizeable proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than carefully analysing the texts themselves. It is good to note that very few candidates resorted to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the style and language of the accompanying text, in this paper two extracts from a transcription of an American television talk show called *Balanced Health*. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this paper it was an advisory and informative piece written by a teacher for the 'Top Ten Tips for Students' section of a school's website. Careful consideration of the target audience (students) and the requirement to clearly convey a particular perspective (conveyed through the advice and ideas about how to have enough sleep each night shared by the teacher) is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120–150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates were required to compare the style and language of the school website piece produced for **1(a)**, containing advice and ideas about how students can get enough sleep each night, with the style and language of the transcription of the television talk show. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses were the ability to both recognise the level of fluency and range of lexical choices exhibited in the transcription, and compare the effects produced with those in the candidate's own reworking.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for a comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach this session – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is again worth reminding both Centres and candidates that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses.

Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

The directed writing candidates produced usually featured solid engagement with the form and style of a piece for the 'Top Tips for Students' section of a school website and suitably reworked references to the original text. Most candidates successfully created the persona of a concerned, friendly teacher and contextualised the advice and ideas about how to have enough sleep each night with clear reference to the demands of preparing end of term essays or undertaking examination revision. There were usually initial vivid descriptions of the physical symptoms students suffering from the effects of sleep deprivation might exhibit ('walking like zombies', falling asleep in lessons), clearly intended to inject a little humour so that the teacher may be deemed to be suitably relatable to a young audience. Most candidates ensured that the idea that sleep deprivation adversely affects cognitive abilities such as memory and concentration, especially relied upon by students when they are working to a deadline and facing the tyranny of the clock in the exam hall, was a key aspect of establishing a clear justification for the advice imparted. The advice was usually listed (sometimes as bullet points) and was often demarcated as 'Dos' (e.g. schedule enough time each day to complete all school work in order to ensure there is an opportunity to have sufficient sleep each night) and 'Don'ts' (e.g. working through the night, depending on stimulants such as caffeine, and using mobile devices after lights out).

Weaker responses often sought to issue advice at the expense of reflecting ideas contained in the transcription. In particular the idea that the cumulative effect of sleep deprivation can result from having as little as thirty minutes less sleep per night than usual was rarely noted nor reflected in advice to catch up on sleep deficits immediately. The tone of such responses was usually too strident, at times including an overly harsh berating of students by teacher personas that evidently know better.

In stronger responses candidates employed a wide range of techniques to ensure the student reader could easily access and appreciate both ideas and pieces of advice. A topical heading clearly identifying the specified category of 'Top Tips' being addressed was often utilised, even one as simple as 'How to Get Enough Sleep'. A degree of empathy on the part of the teacher persona was both established early and maintained; the admission of bitterly regretting having 'pulled an all-nighter' with disastrous consequences during the teacher's 'student days' was a popular tactic in this regard. Ideas from the original text were usually neatly distilled in phrases such as 'sufficient sleep makes it easier for you to grasp concepts' and 'being well rested helps you maintain high levels of concentration during even the longest exam'. There was a greater variety of pertinent advice issued, such as to maintain extra-curricular activities to help reduce stress (and thus sleep more soundly) and to read or listen to peaceful music as precursors to sleep. Such responses usually concluded with offers by the teacher persona to be consulted for further information or advice, and occasionally with hyperlinks or telephone numbers to put students in contact with appropriate third parties.

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

Question 1(b)

This question rewarded candidates who attempted to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, two extracts from a transcription of an American television talk show called *Balanced Health* and a school website piece produced in response to 1(a). Only a few candidates did not recognise the nature of the transcription nor apply a suitable methodology to analyse it. The purpose and hence the conventions of a transcription consisting of utterances with regular pauses were not always appreciated by these candidates, many of whom attempted to compare the punctuation and grammar of their website pieces to the transcription, often at considerable length but little analytical effect. Simply using the comparable words 'spoken' and 'written' in the opening sentence of their responses ought to have ensured these candidates were immediately on the correct analytical track. Overall it was apparent that most candidates had been adequately prepared to analyse a transcription of a television talk show.

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

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

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate or better knowledge and understanding of at least some of the conventions of a conversation between a number of speakers (especially turn-taking with some speech overlaps) and the purpose of relating information on a set topic for the benefit of a general, chiefly adult, television audience. They could at least briefly examine the varying degrees of formality exhibited by the transcription (citing some of Dr Mouton's prominent use of low frequency vocabulary in relation to his hosts' use of colloquial language) and the register of the website piece (usually mixed) and appreciate the informative intent of the conversation as opposed to the chiefly advisory nature of the website piece. There was often far more consideration of the transcription than the promotional text. Many candidates exerted a lot of effort to merely list the elements of spontaneous speech they found in the transcription, especially voiced pauses and instances of repetition and repairing. From their website pieces candidates usually selected and examined examples of imperatives to drive home some of the pieces of advice being imparted, and also recognised it could be edited and polished by the teacher before posting it to the school website (perhaps after review by a member of the senior management team) whereas the speakers' discourse could not; nevertheless, most candidates recognised that as an expert Dr Mouton had possibly been in similar situations previously, and that his hosts had likely been at least briefed about the topic of sleep deprivation (if they had not researched it themselves). Weak responses were often brief, focused too much on the detail of the speakers' varying knowledge and experience of sleep deprivation and summarising the content of both texts.

In strong responses candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted briefly and analysed in detail. In relation to the transcription they examined the speakers' occasional use of stressed syllables for emphasis ('three hours', 'each night', 'is cumulative over time') and how Dr Mouton holds the conversational floor with his more frequent and usually longer utterances. Candidates could additionally compare these and other aspects of the transcription with those they employed in their pieces of directed writing, usually concluding that their website pieces were (or should be) more cohesive, and comparatively analysed the use of jargon to convey scientific ideas to audiences with varying degrees of prior knowledge. In discriminating responses it was recognised that the conversation was highly cooperative: the hosts (especially Shirley) used back-channels in deference to their learned guest; Joe's main contribution (beginning 'right there I'll interrupt you') is intended to help the television audience understand the import of 'the word deprivation' through an explanation of a related scientific study; and Dr Mouton's summative 'absolutely absolutely' is in confirmation of Joe's conclusion that '(.) some people do need more sleep than other people'.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A than Text B. Some candidates often dealt too much with the content of both Texts and listing techniques they could identify. Some concentrated too much on punctuation, sentence and paragraph length. Some ability to recognise the use of form and language to inform the readers of each Text, but in isolation from each other, was usually demonstrated. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a sure grasp of how Text A has a more objective focus on the nature of cities than does Text B. It was usually understood that Text A was an informative introduction to a longer work about a range of cities whilst Text B was an extract from a work of prose fiction set in a particular urban location and narrated by a particular inhabitant, a homeless person. Candidates could establish how the audiences for both Texts might be quite narrow as both are found in printed works (with perhaps Text B being potentially more accessible as it is from a short story that might be part of an anthology or more readily shared by readers who enjoy fiction outnumbering those who consulted illustrated reference guides). Candidates also appreciated that Text A has a more positive view of cities than the narrator does of the city location featured in Text B, with Text A's heavy use of adjectives ('remarkable', 'myriad') and verbs ('marvel', 'spills out') in the opening paragraph usually examined alongside those found in the opening paragraph of Text B ('swollen', 'stifling'; 'stains', 'seethe'). Examples of figurative language in each Text were often at least identified, especially the extended imagery comparing a city to a human being from the second extract of Text A (ll. 20 ff.) and people to puppets (ll. 9–12), stars (ll. 22–23) and 'pack animals' (ll. 23–24) in Text B. Basic differences in the subject-specific language used were usually appreciated, for instance Text A's use of cultural terminology ('fashion', 'theatre', 'nightlife') contrasted with Text B's more frequent use of descriptive language to convey the atmosphere of the city observed ('its stench and its sounds', 'parched pavements', 'washing the city in blue neon')

In the strongest responses candidates explored the Texts' structures and analysed language more efficiently, noting the similarities and differences that were most pertinent. Text A's structure was usually deemed to be more complex given its heavily punctuated compound and complex sentences with its few short sentences serving as discourse markers (the opening '*The Cities Book* is a celebration', 'Cities are individuals' early in its second extract). Candidates often noted the anaphoric sentences commencing 'Of the...' in the first paragraph of Text A that listed the material, human and sensory dimensions of cities to be considered later in greater length and the use of a statistic ('the urban populace is increasing by about 60 million people per year') to establish the on-going importance of the subject and the reference guide genre it belongs to. In Text B candidates usefully considered the constant, restless shifts between the first and third person with the single instance of the second person (l. 19) pointedly alerting the reader to the narrator's outsider status (whereas in Text A it is employed in plural forms to insist on a shared urban heritage: 'cities come to us as a gift from the ancients', 'our urban ancestors'). It was usually appreciated that extensive use of low frequency lexis prominently features in both Texts and their particular effects were explored in a consistently discriminating manner in the very best responses.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/33
Text Analysis

Key Messages

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

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

For **Question 1 Part (b)** candidates need to ensure they compare both the style and the language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting the aspects of language from both texts that may be analysed to demonstrate the specific effects that are created.

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

General Comments

Many candidates were evidently well prepared for a Component designed to test their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of linguistics and to analyse texts in a comparative fashion. However, a sizeable proportion of the responses to **1(b)** and **2** appear to have been primarily based on candidates 'gleaning hints' from the information provided in the Questions' instructions rather than carefully analysing the texts themselves. It is good to note that very few candidates resorted to simply quoting large tracts of the relevant text(s), linked together with short passages of superficial commentary.

Question 1(a) is a Directed Writing task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed *by* the style and language of the accompanying text, in this paper the transcription from an online video in which the speaker, Roger Haeske, describes his top three anti-ageing tips. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this paper it was the promotional text for the back cover of a book about anti-ageing written by Haeske. Careful consideration of the target audience (potential purchasers of Haeske's book about anti-ageing techniques) and the requirement to clearly convey a particular perspective (the publisher's view as to what the general public might find enticing about Haeske's book) is required. Candidates are instructed to produce responses of 120–150 words in length and were expected to write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)** where candidates are required to compare the style and language of the promotional text to appear on the back cover of Haeske's book, produced for **1(a)**, with the style and language of the transcription. Here candidates are assessed for the ability to select and analyse specific textual details, for example those concerning purpose and register (varying levels of formality), format and choices of lexis, and the ability to support with close textual reference their evaluation of the language found in both texts. Recognition of the level of fluency and the range of lexical choices exhibited in the transcription and comparing the effects produced with those in the candidate's own reworking were key discriminators in the most informed and substantive responses.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed for: comparative appreciation of the texts' forms and conventions and awareness of their effects; an understanding of how purpose, context and audience shape meaning; and, an appreciation of linguistic techniques. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a concluding section can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts and the relative strengths of each. It is good to see that a significant proportion of candidates adopted a topical approach this session – these also tended to be the candidates who demonstrated more comprehensive linguistic knowledge.

It is again worth reminding both Centres and candidates that **Question 1(a)** accounts for only one-fifth of the total marks available and that the analytical and comparative nature of the tasks for **Questions 1(b)** and **2** require adequate time for thorough assessment of the texts and the writing of detailed responses. Candidates are therefore strongly advised to complete **Questions 1** and **2** within one-hour time allocations, having begun to carefully assess all the Texts (three in total) in the initial fifteen minutes of the examination (the total length of the examination being two hours and fifteen minutes).

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

The pieces of directed writing candidates produced usually featured solid engagement with the form and style of a promotional text appearing on the back cover of a book and suitably reworked references to the original text. Most candidates decided middle age readers were the main target audience for Haeske's book and successfully catered for their potential anxieties connected to ageing – wrinkly skin, loss of energy and spiritual *ennui* – in opening declarative statements or rhetorical questions cast in the second person. Brief descriptions of the three top anti-ageing tips Haeske outlines in the original text were usually communicated in crisp third person sentences (occasionally set out as bullet points to highlight key features of content within the book available for purchase). Most candidates ensured the author was clearly identified in their promotional texts as an authority in the field of anti-ageing strategies and incorporated suitably laudatory references to his online video; understandably a considerable number of candidates also embellished Haeske's media profile by representing that blogging and public speaking were also plausible aspects of his previous promotional activities.

Weak responses were often belaboured, consisted primarily of details extracted from the original text (often verbatim or through excessive listing in chronological order) and intently focused on praising Haeske himself at the expense of his anti-ageing strategies or making claims for them that do not bear much scrutiny. The tone of such responses was usually too strident, with liberal use of 'hard sell' vocabulary, exclamation marks, and upper case letters to simulate a raised voice.

In strong responses candidates employed a wide range of techniques to responsibly market the book itself. A header, usually addressing the potential reader's anxieties about the ageing process, preceded any reference to Haeske or his techniques in a clear attempt to establish a tangible need on the part of the potential purchaser. Suitable celebratory endorsements (Oprah Winfrey's was a popular persona to adopt) and testimonials from acolytes of Haeske often featured, usually at the end of the text, occasionally alongside short quotations from notional advance reviews. Particular care was taken with the use of adjectives describing the strategies (e.g. 'unique', 'effective', 'proven') so that the reader may be suitably impressed and convinced about the veracity of their effects. There was also clear recognition of Haeske's educational intent (the transcription opens 'I will share with you...') captured in imperatives such as 'discover' and 'explore' and some emphasis on the spiritual fulfilment strategy ('focus on being happy' as Haeske advises in the transcription) alongside the more obvious physical health strategies. Such responses were convincing in their reworking of the original material, accurate and eloquent in expression and convincing in their awareness of audience and purpose.

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

Question 1(b)

This question rewarded candidates who attempted to analyse style and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, the transcription from an online video in which the speaker, Roger Haeske, describes his top three anti-ageing tips, and the promotional text to appear on the back cover of Haeske's book produced in response to 1(a). Only a few candidates failed to recognise the nature of the transcription or did not apply a suitable methodology to analyse it. The purpose and hence the conventions of a transcription consisting of utterances with regular pauses were not appreciated by these candidates, some of whom attempted to compare the punctuation and grammar of their promotional text to the transcription, often at considerable length but to little analytical effect. Simply using the comparable words 'spoken' and 'written' in the opening sentence of their responses ought to have ensured these candidates were immediately on the correct analytical track. Overall it was apparent that most candidates had been adequately prepared to analyse a transcription of a monologue (featuring a sole speaker such as Haeske).

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

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

The majority of candidates demonstrated adequate or better knowledge and understanding of at least some of the conventions of a sole speaker addressing an unseen audience (especially frequent use of first and second person pronouns) and the purposes of both persuading and entertaining an audience primarily consisting of educated, knowledgeable and middle-aged adults. They could at least briefly examine the informality exhibited by the transcription (citing some of Haeske's colloquial turns of phrase, such as 'a lot of you guys' and 'was like man') and the register of the promotional text (usually mixed, tending towards formal) and appreciate the persuasive and informative intent of the speaker as opposed to the chiefly persuasive nature of the promotional text. There was often far more consideration of the transcription than the promotional text. Many candidates exerted a lot of effort to merely list the elements of semi-spontaneous speech they found in the transcription, especially voiced pauses and instances of repetition. From their promotional texts candidates usually selected and examined examples of the deliberate clichés they employed to describe Haeske's book (e.g. 'it is the real deal', 'a life-changing read') and also recognised how the promotional text could be edited and polished by the publisher of the book whereas the speaker's delivery could not – although most candidates plausibly argued Haeske's monologue might have been pre-scripted and rehearsed but delivered without use of a teleprompter. Weak responses were often brief, focused too much on the detail of Haeske's anti-ageing tips and summarised the content of both texts.

In strong responses candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their response, for example by proceeding from word- to sentence-/utterance- to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of style, quoted succinctly and analysed in detail. In relation to the transcription they examined the speaker's frequent use of unvoiced pauses in the middle of long utterances to assist the viewer in processing the information delivered, the occasional use of stressed syllables to emphasise both key points and more nuanced ones (e.g. 'prematurely old', 'as much joy in your life at all times') and how he created a simple yet effective structure for his monologue by using numerals as deliberate discourse markers to clearly demarcate each of his three anti-ageing tips. Candidates additionally compared these and other aspects of the transcription with those they employed in their pieces of directed writing, usually concluding that both texts were cohesive and had well-defined structures, and comparatively analysed the effectiveness of numerous examples of persuasive language selected from both texts. In discriminating responses it was recognised that the speaker's regular use of high frequency lexis enabled him to remain relatable to his audience throughout his long address whilst the deliberate inclusion of statistics in conjunction with low frequency lexis ('five hundred percent more human growth hormone', 'doubling if not tripling their greens intake') ably demonstrated the main intention of achieving scientific credibility with his audience.

Question 2

As was the case for **1(b)**, candidates who did not attempt in responding to **Question 2** to analyse Text A and Text B's language and style in a comparative fashion demonstrated only limited appreciation of the techniques employed and awareness of the effects created. Very rarely did candidates simply paraphrase information contained in the Texts and offer a brief summary of their contents, usually demonstrating a surer grasp of the meanings produced by Text A (perhaps as the candidates were better accommodated by an entertaining style with its variety of figurative language features) than Text B. Some candidates often dealt too much with the content of both Texts; others concentrated too much on punctuation, sentence and paragraph length. Candidates who eschewed a comparative approach also struggled to identify and clearly explain the differences in purpose and audience between the two Texts and the significance of the differences in their forms and the ways conventions were employed.

Most candidates demonstrated a sure grasp of how Text A may be considered more accessible than Text B, usually citing Text A's euphemistic and slightly provocative heading ('...It's Because Of Our Dirty Minds'), short paragraphs, colloquial lexis, frequent shifts from the third to the more accommodating second person and its humorous extended metaphor concerning how 'the brain's garbage men' can more efficiently 'clean out the build-up of brain junk' during sleep as the main reasons. In comparison Text B was found to be much more perfunctory in its purpose (as signalled by its dry heading, 'Theories on the purpose of sleep' and use of adverbs to start some sentences: 'However...', 'Instead...'), consisting mainly of long, complex sentences laden with field-specific scientific terminology and academic references (author's surname and year of publication in parentheses) and only occasionally lightening the tone with some colloquial phrasing (e.g. 'there may be some truth in the concept of "sleeping on a problem" and the saying "sleep on it".') There was usually associated consideration of the Texts' very different audiences in relation to the above observations: Text A's more youthful, non-specialist audience that likely discovered it courtesy of a search engine as opposed to Text B's biomedical students consulting it due to a lecturer's recommendation or as a result of browsing the reference section of a university library.

In the strongest responses candidates explored the Texts' structures and analysed language more efficiently, placing an emphasis on the similarities as well as the differences that were most pertinent. In Text A candidates demonstrated how colloquial language – 'we get cranky, a bit loopy', 'science has been a little iffy about it [sleep]' – is used to accommodate a potentially wide audience before the sparing use of low frequency, specialist language ('lymphatic system', 'cerebrospinal fluid') is gradually introduced. In a similar fashion, Text B's opening paragraph introduces its subject before concepts are treated in the ensuing ones. Candidates noted how declarative sentences and listing were employed in both Texts to convey information quickly and that the citing of sources mainly found in Text B is somewhat mirrored in Text A through the direct quotation of a named researcher. It was occasionally observed that Text B makes use of the passive voice and tactfully eschews assertion when dealing with disputed or more controversial concepts about sleep (e.g. 'none is well established') whereas Text A is less circumspect in evaluating the present state of scientific knowledge on the subject: 'Now, we're finally getting some insight into what sleep does for our bodies'. The particular effects of individual words and phrases selected from both Texts were explored in a consistently discriminating manner in the very best responses.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/41
Language Topics

Key messages

Candidates are expected to provide analysis from a linguistic stance; responses will move towards the higher bands where this analysis is developed by applying appropriate theoretical examples to an argument (and possible counterargument) and by carefully selecting quotations from the context provided as justification.

In the lower bands, the candidate's control of English may be partial or there may be a simple or generalised response to the passage provided. In the middle bands, there will be a developing analysis including a detailed and informed exploration of language, structure, purpose and context (**Questions 1 and 3**) or a detailed and informed exploration of the linguistic issue (**Question 2**). In the higher bands, the response will be full, comparative, balanced and articulate.

General comments

Candidates engaged well across the three topic areas and were able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding gained from wider reading in many cases. In **Questions 1 and 3**, however, there was some evidence of candidates lacking familiarity with the conventions of Conversation Analysis transcription. In **Question 2**, candidates should fully explore the linguistic issue rather than merely paraphrasing the context provided by the stimulus text.

More confident responses appeared to benefit from making short plans before beginning the essay and ensuring that theoretical examples were entirely appropriate to the point being made. Less confident responses offered brief comments on language theory which was not applied to the context provided, leaving the essay undeveloped and the passages not fully explored.

Stronger responses were from those candidates able to use a full range of linguistic terminology with confidence. Weaker responses used basic descriptors for language features, thereby not providing a sufficiently technical linguistic analysis. Misuse of the terms 'elision' and 'ellipsis' often demonstrates confusion, as does incorrect application of the concept of deixis, although more confident candidates are able to evidence these appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

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

The nature of the exchange between Ben and Jane led to ample opportunity to analyse language use. Candidates who sought to make the most of Ben's dominance in the exchange as being an example of gender dominance were missing the nature of the context: Ben's role was necessarily dominant as he was describing his own experiences. The supportive role played by the mother was more accurately reflected upon, as she fulfilled this role with both pride and maternal fondness clearly evident. Many candidates

displayed evidence of their understanding of the non-fluency of speech in exchanges such as this, where the impact of excitement and enthusiasm was readily identifiable.

Theorists such as Tannen and Lakoff were often referenced constructively, as were Grice's maxims, though at times Tannen's theories were not applied appropriately. There was a genuine understanding evident of the nature of the supportive role of the mother, and the colloquial nature of the conversation was reflected upon positively. Jane was not seen in a subservient role but a supportive role. This aspect was evidenced in the stronger responses. Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron, although discussion was not always developed. Some responses have been improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists.

Responses could also have been improved by not only discussing dysfluency features such as micropauses or referring to lack of interruption, but including the key indications of narrative, perhaps using Labov's theoretical model. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response.

Stronger responses maintained linguistic rather than sociological analysis; some extraneous discussion on the speaker's socioeconomic, regional or intellectual status was evident, when this was not required by the question. Candidates should be aware that this approach may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2

This question included an accessible extract, offering much to say about the linguistic issue. However, a number of candidates did not mention this source, thus restricting their mark. On the other hand, some weaker responses included large amounts of text simply copied from the extract provided – this also led to a less successful exploration of the linguistic issue. Such candidates could have produced more successful responses by using the extract as a springboard, instead of relying on the source material so heavily.

Stronger responses used relevant theories to explore points raised in the extract. In particular, some answers competently discussed the issue of language spread in relation to external experience. While it is admirable that students use personal experience in this question, this approach should be applied and developed appropriately. Stronger responses explored relevant theory, but could have been made more successful still by augmenting this with relevant examples. Those candidates who explored the more contentious aspects of the extract, such as Widdowson's reference to 'distribution' and 'spread' were more successful.

Some candidates chose to include long discussions on the history of the English language which resulted in less focus on more relevant discussion.

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

Stronger responses discussed distinctions between world, global and international English and the perceived advantages and disadvantages of a globally-intelligible language. Most candidates discussed language death, though such responses could have been improved by not making this the sole focus.

Question 3

This question allowed for a range of language acquisition theory to be applied and was, on the whole, well answered. Stronger responses were those that considered the context and purpose of the talk rather than an overview of subjects covered.

The teacher was seeking to engage the child in conversation, and was often correctly identified as adopting a caretaker role and helping Diego by encouraging a response from him. The way in which the teacher did more than just simply ask questions but actually encouraged responses was also reflected upon. There was nevertheless some misreading of the child as either truculent or reluctant.

Weaker responses missed the opportunity to reflect upon the extent to which Diego's language did in fact show development within the passage. Encouraged by the teacher, Diego moves away from simple, seemingly terse responses towards more complex utterances as he becomes more engaged. The teacher's use of his or her brother's experiences on the bicycle in encouraging and identifying with Diego was seen in stronger responses as evidence of the caretaker role being used very successfully. The work of Skinner was seen by the more confident to be of particular significance, with strong points being made about

reinforcement in particular. Inevitably Piaget also featured strongly, as did Bruner, and again the teacher's role was accentuated here.

A lot of candidates picked up on the onomatopoeic nature of the sounds made by Diego – 'PSSSSST Whoooooom!' and successfully identified it as indicative of enthusiasm and cooperation. The overall nature of the exchange was well identified as being in adjacency pairs, with turn-taking dominant rather than interruption or overlap. This view was often supported by close analysis of the caretaker's encouraging role.

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

Theorists, such as Skinner, Bruner, Chomsky, Piaget and Vygotsky, were incorporated into most responses, with stronger responses selecting examples from the text, providing a linguistic discussion of the example, and then explaining why and how this example tests the theory. Strong and confident responses demonstrated knowledge of child-directed speech and how it was being used in the extract provided. Responses could have been improved by analysing the extract and applying the Hallidayan functions that were most appropriate in this case. Some candidates applied Grice's maxims, which were less appropriate, as were those who applied genderlect study.

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42
Language Topics

Key messages

Candidates are expected to provide analysis from a linguistic stance; responses will move towards the higher bands where this analysis is developed by applying appropriate theoretical examples to an argument (and possible counterargument) and by carefully selecting quotations from the context provided as justification.

In the lower bands, the candidate's control of English may be partial or there may be a simple or generalised response to the passage provided. In the middle bands, there will be a developing analysis including a detailed and informed exploration of language, structure, purpose and context (**Questions 1 and 3**) or a detailed and informed exploration of the linguistic issue (**Question 2**). In the higher bands, the response will be full, comparative, balanced and articulate.

General comments

Candidates engaged well across the three topic areas and were able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding gained from wider reading in many cases. In **Questions 1 and 3**, however, there was some evidence of candidates lacking familiarity with the conventions of Conversation Analysis transcription. In **Question 2**, candidates should fully explore the linguistic issue rather than merely paraphrasing the context provided by the stimulus text.

More confident responses appeared to benefit from making short plans before beginning the essay and ensuring that theoretical examples were entirely appropriate to the point being made. Less confident responses offered brief comments on language theory which was not applied to the context provided, leaving the essay undeveloped and the passages not fully explored.

Stronger responses were from those candidates able to use a full range of linguistic terminology with confidence. Weaker responses used basic descriptors for language features, thereby not providing a sufficiently technical linguistic analysis. Misuse of the terms 'elision' and 'ellipsis' often demonstrates confusion, as does incorrect application of the concept of deixis, although more confident candidates are able to evidence these appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

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

The choice of passage proved stimulating for candidates and gave them the opportunity to answer the question fully. It worked well as a vehicle for candidates to explore the use of language. The question made

a specific point of asking candidates to explore the context of the exchange and here there were some errors in interpretation from weaker responses.

Stronger responses fully understood the nature of the exchange in terms of context and were able to successfully argue that this was a probably partially scripted conversation and the lack of overlapping was as a result of the experience of both participants in dealing with this kind of exchange. Weaker candidates sometimes saw the exchange as a colloquial conversation between people comfortable with each other and missed the inevitable constraints of the context. Whilst it was true that the atmosphere between the two was extremely cordial it was also true that this was in essence a formal interview.

Stronger responses included reflections on the work of Tannen, Lakoff and Grice although candidates making use of gender-based theory sometimes struggled to make observations relevant within this context.

Responses could have been improved with more analysis of the nature of the questioning from Piers Morgan. Beyond observations about the nature of his hero-worship of Bolt there was more to be said about the closed/open nature of questioning. Basic observations about pauses and micropauses were often the refuge of weaker responses. Simply identifying upward intonation is not an analysis.

Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron and confident candidates developed a counterargument to these by referring to Beattie, and Zimmerman and West. Some responses could have been improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists. Many candidates also referred to Grice. When doing so, candidates could have improved their work with further explanation and development.

Responses could also have been improved by maintaining linguistic rather than sociological analysis. Some discussion of the interlocutors' socioeconomic, regional or intellectual status was evident, but this was not required by the question. Candidates should be aware that such an approach may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2

The stronger responses to this question were from candidates who could appreciate the complexities of language elitism and bidialectalism; not all candidates wrote about these aspects. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response

Many candidates had made use of the 'Relevant areas for study' in the syllabus. Stronger candidates had made explorations beyond these and were able to include them into articulate responses. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response. A more accurate response will describe 'standard' and 'nonstandard' language and argue in a balanced manner the advantages of these forms. Candidates should be aware of the differences between pidgins and creoles and the manner in which they are created and used.

Many candidates wrote well on the relationship between Global English and business. The information from the extract regarding the effect of Global English on tourism could have been more effectively managed, as some responses including this information were rather generalised, uneven and underdeveloped. Weaker responses merely paraphrased the passage material, while slightly stronger answers added in references to theory or research. The strongest responses were able to engage with the issues from a personal standpoint, relating illustrations either from their own individual experiences or by reference to their country's/area's approach to official languages and use of English in education or business. Some of these answers were clearly very thoughtful and used the passage materials more as a steer for their argument, rather than a crutch.

Some responses ignored the issue of language complacency that is hinted at, without being fully explored, in the passage. There was some engaged exploration of the 'Women speak better English than men' passage, although this sometimes drifted into less pertinent analysis. The passage was not seeking to position gender specific points as central to the article; sometimes, in weaker responses, a gender issue tends to dominate where it is not necessarily appropriate.

Some candidates chose to include long discussions on the history of the English language which resulted in less focus on more relevant discussion.

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

Question 3

This question allowed for a range of language acquisition theory to be applied and was, on the whole, well answered. Stronger responses were those that considered the context and purpose of the talk rather than an overview of subjects covered.

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

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

Piaget and Halliday were used regularly, and more or less appropriately, in answer to this question. With regard to Halliday it was pleasing to see the various functions of language reflected upon accurately. Weaker responses demonstrated knowledge that Halliday was relevant but did not identify where within the passage the regulatory or representational function could be identified. Stronger responses used Skinner appropriately, fully recognising the contribution of the father in the passage. The same was true of the use of Bruner.

Weaker responses sometimes misunderstood the way in which Rebecca wandered the room, and interpreted this as a lack of interest in what the father was doing, whereas in fact it was part of her creative play. Identifying this as a paralinguistic feature showing apathy or boredom was evidence of this misreading.

The question gave candidates ample opportunity to see the development in the child's language and the role of the father in this development. More successful responses identified the importance of Rebecca's utterance "there. Shop. Pretend shop", seeing this as proof of the child's involvement and development.

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

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/43
Language Topics

Key messages

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General comments

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Stronger responses were from those candidates able to use a full range of linguistic terminology with confidence. Weaker responses used basic descriptors for language features, thereby not providing a sufficiently technical linguistic analysis. Misuse of the terms 'elision' and 'ellipsis' often demonstrates confusion, as does incorrect application of the concept of deixis, although more confident candidates are able to evidence these appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

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The nature of the exchange between Ben and Jane led to ample opportunity to analyse language use. Candidates who sought to make the most of Ben's dominance in the exchange as being an example of gender dominance were missing the nature of the context: Ben's role was necessarily dominant as he was describing his own experiences. The supportive role played by the mother was more accurately reflected upon, as she fulfilled this role with both pride and maternal fondness clearly evident. Many candidates

displayed evidence of their understanding of the non-fluency of speech in exchanges such as this, where the impact of excitement and enthusiasm was readily identifiable.

Theorists such as Tannen and Lakoff were often referenced constructively, as were Grice's maxims, though at times Tannen's theories were not applied appropriately. There was a genuine understanding evident of the nature of the supportive role of the mother, and the colloquial nature of the conversation was reflected upon positively. Jane was not seen in a subservient role but a supportive role. This aspect was evidenced in the stronger responses. Many candidates referred to the genderlect theories of Lakoff, Tannen and Cameron, although discussion was not always developed. Some responses have been improved by providing a fuller explanation of theoretical principles rather than solely providing the names of theorists.

Responses could also have been improved by not only discussing dysfluency features such as micropauses or referring to lack of interruption, but including the key indications of narrative, perhaps using Labov's theoretical model. A restricted view on what is 'correct' English will usually limit the response.

Stronger responses maintained linguistic rather than sociological analysis; some extraneous discussion on the speaker's socioeconomic, regional or intellectual status was evident, when this was not required by the question. Candidates should be aware that this approach may not produce a linguistic line of argument.

Question 2

This question included an accessible extract, offering much to say about the linguistic issue. However, a number of candidates did not mention this source, thus restricting their mark. On the other hand, some weaker responses included large amounts of text simply copied from the extract provided – this also led to a less successful exploration of the linguistic issue. Such candidates could have produced more successful responses by using the extract as a springboard, instead of relying on the source material so heavily.

Stronger responses used relevant theories to explore points raised in the extract. In particular, some answers competently discussed the issue of language spread in relation to external experience. While it is admirable that students use personal experience in this question, this approach should be applied and developed appropriately. Stronger responses explored relevant theory, but could have been made more successful still by augmenting this with relevant examples. Those candidates who explored the more contentious aspects of the extract, such as Widdowson's reference to 'distribution' and 'spread' were more successful.

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Weaker responses missed the opportunity to reflect upon the extent to which Diego's language did in fact show development within the passage. Encouraged by the teacher, Diego moves away from simple, seemingly terse responses towards more complex utterances as he becomes more engaged. The teacher's use of his or her brother's experiences on the bicycle in encouraging and identifying with Diego was seen in stronger responses as evidence of the caretaker role being used very successfully. The work of Skinner was seen by the more confident to be of particular significance, with strong points being made about

reinforcement in particular. Inevitably Piaget also featured strongly, as did Bruner, and again the teacher's role was accentuated here.

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

Theorists, such as Skinner, Bruner, Chomsky, Piaget and Vygotsky, were incorporated into most responses, with stronger responses selecting examples from the text, providing a linguistic discussion of the example, and then explaining why and how this example tests the theory. Strong and confident responses demonstrated knowledge of child-directed speech and how it was being used in the extract provided. Responses could have been improved by analysing the extract and applying the Hallidayan functions that were most appropriate in this case. Some candidates applied Grice's maxims, which were less appropriate, as were those who applied genderlect study.

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