

English as a Second Language Students' Sample Writings

Department of English

GHAAZEE SCHOOL
Hulhumalè

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Writing 1 - Left your home country forever



Recently you left your home country forever.

Write a letter to your friend about this experience.

In your letter you should:

- explain why you left
- describe what you find attractive about the new place
- tell how you felt after leaving your country.

Dear Albert,

I heard your vacation in Mauritius is going pleurably but you'll have heartbreak when you hear I'm leaving this country forever. And, it's very sad you can't attend my leaving party; in fact, I don't think you even have a clue about why I'm going!

I'm migrating because my family's pockets are empty, hence we couldn't afford to pay rent. This is indeed an unfortunate turn of events, but there isn't any other choice we can opt for. I miss home, but living with my grandmother in Mexico is rather fun.

Mexico is pretty much a decent place to live in. To everyone's liking, my little brother is as happy as a clan, and so are my parents. I still feel homesick, however, the landscape and natural beauty shrouds my negative emotions.

I felt uncomfortable about leaving, obviously. I don't have a knack with getting along with strangers; after all, I'm ridiculously introverted. I knew I wouldn't make any new friends anytime soon because that happens once in a blue moon.

You were my first friend here, Albert. I feel very upset to leave without properly bidding you farewell, but I attached a picture of us and Merlin with this letter as a memorabilia of us for you to have.

Goodbye,

.....

Writing 2 - Too much pressure on teenagers

Parents and teachers place too much pressure on teenagers and expect them to work too hard at school and at home.

Write an article for the school magazine giving your views.

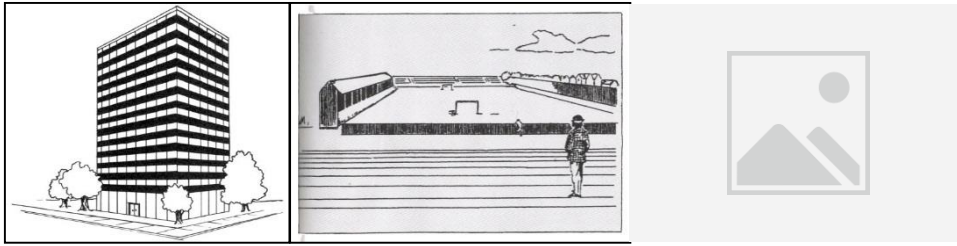
As today is the 21st century, individuals require a well-paying job to afford a decent lifestyle. They are expected to have certain qualifications in order to participate in such jobs. Considering this, parents and teachers pressurize the students to study both at school and home and claim that it is beneficial, but I disagree.

Of course, studying is essential to us because knowledge is an important element to strengthen our future. Almost everything around you is a result of education. In fact, the reason why you are healthy right now is an outcome of education. We should be pressurized to study and we should also aim for extraordinary results. We must study in order to thrive for a valuable, enjoyable future, so it is not wrong that we are being pressured.

However, I believe the keyword that disinterests us in studies in “pressure”. We should not be pressurized to study, instead encouraged. If you had to perform a job that you find undesirable, I doubt that you would give it your best. You would work for the sake of earning money. In our case, it would be to satisfy our parents. We should be given enough leisure time to compensate for studies, in order to maintain our mental stability.

Therefore, I have arrived to the conclusion that it is important to dedicate ourselves to education, although we should not be forced to do so. If you want the best result out of us, I believe you should encourage us, and give us a reason to work hard and succeed.

Writing 3 - Revisited a place you used to know well



You have recently revisited a place you used to know well only to find out that everything has changed.

Write a letter to your friend describing the visit.

In your letter you should:

- describe the place and your connection to the particular place
- explain the changes you observed
- tell how the changes made you feel.

Hey Rebecca,

I'm really sorry I haven't been replying to your letters. Actually, it was when I told my mom about the letters I got yesterday, that she remembered about the two letters you had sent before. I was not at home when the two came.

Becky, remember the park we used to go when we were little? The far-away one **where we used to go with your dad and we had so much fun. I haven't gone there for almost five years now, since you moved. But yesterday, I did. I went with Clare and Andy. You know, everything was so changed. The grass was greener than ever and there were more flowers and the red see-saw, "Reddy" (as you used to call it) wasn't even there. But there were two new blue ones and the little play house is bigger than I remember. There is a canteen added and another ice-cream stand, too.**

I want to be little again, Becky and I want to play with the little kids, climb the see-saw and play hide and seek again. I just can't help it. **But somewhere deep inside, I'm glad I'm a teen. I don't have to deal with saying from my parents "you are too young to understand that and you can do it when you're older". Not that much anyway.** But you know the park and all the changes made me realize that everything does really change and sometimes, changes are good.

Come and visit me in the holidays. You **can stay here. I've even talked to mom about it. I miss you.**

Love, Maya

Writing 4 - Dreams and success

Your school magazine is looking for articles on the following topic:

“Dreams are important in our lives to be successful.”

In this civilized world, we see teenagers living in a dream world. May be a fairy tale like world, but they will know about it better. But all we see is a bunch of lazy teenagers doing nothing. But there are kids who dream about what to do with their lives and try to make it true. In my view, dreams are the key to success.

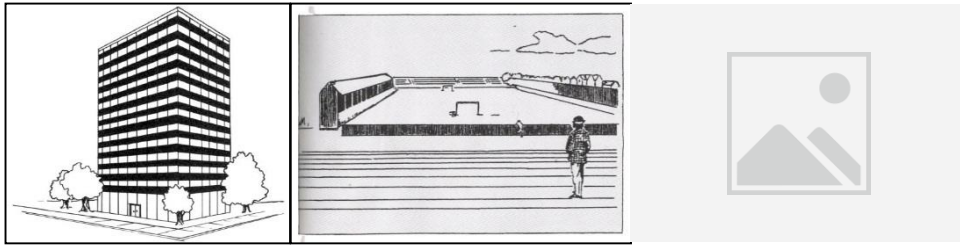
In the first place, a dream helps you to realize and know what you want or what you need. It helps you to work harder for it. It builds up your courage and shows you your path in life. But just dreaming will not do. You have to work for it – your dream, your future.

Secondly, dreams are the first phase of success. It is the rope that leads you to your ambition. Dreams help you achieve and build up a thirst for more, which means you will get more than you think you deserve but what you actually do because of your hard work for it.

On the other hand, dreams can be developed by doing nothing. You can just lie somewhere and dream. But that will not bring you any good or any progress. You need more than just a dream to get hold of success. You need the courage and the will power to do what you want.

In conclusion, dreaming is a really important part in life. As the saying goes “Life ends when you stop dreaming”, so do not stop dreaming and work hard for your dreams. You can win.

Writing 5 - Revisited a place you used to know well



You have recently revisited a place you used to know well only to find out that everything has changed.

Write a letter to your friend describing the visit.

In your letter you should:

- describe the place and your connection to the particular place
- explain the changes you observed
- tell how the changes made you feel.

Dear Spencer,

How have you been holding up with the continuous crashing of your cousins into **your room? Just kidding! I'm sure you're enjoying the holidays as much as I am.** Hope you and your folks are doing well.

I know it's summer vacations but I just can't help writing to you! Not after what I've seen here. Remember the pictures I showed you of Hulhumale' 3 years back when I shifted to Dallas? I can't believe this is the same place from those photos! Everything has changed so much. I nearly got lost finding my way back home just walking a few steps away from it.

It's still hard for me to digest that this is the same place I've lived for nearly a decade! Growing up from 7 years to my teens, I've had so many beautiful and special memories connected with this place.

As for the changes, instead of buses, trains are used which are superfast and we **don't have to travel by ferry to Male' because there is a bridge connecting both the cities now.** The whole city is greener to look. With lot of newly developed corporate building, shopping malls, movie halls, parks and housing units. Seeing all, it makes **me feel so epic and proud. These developments have been what I've always wished for.**

I'm getting clicks of nearly everything. I'll show it to you when I get back there. I miss you a lot, best friend.

Love

Writing 6 - Dreams and success

Your school magazine is looking for articles on the following topic:

“Dreams are important in our lives to be successful.”

There are two types of dreamers - people who dream in the dusty recess in the back of their minds and people who act on their dream with open eyes. The Lawrence of Arabia (T.E Lawrence) quoted in a similar way and as I believe, the first step taken to pursue a successful future will be to act on our dreams.

As a first reason why I believe so is that without dreams, a wishful ambition cannot exist. Here we do not take the meaning of literally dreaming in your sleep but creating a graphically virtual reality of how your future is going to be in your mind. Without dreams, it is easy for a person to go astray from his/her career/pathway.

On the contrary, dreaming is an act of creativity. One can easily change their minds regarding many things just based on estimated calculations. The choice to decide is a hard decision when you are in an unending realm of possibilities.

Even though dreamers have their disadvantages and challenges to face, I still believe that one perspective of a dream will always catch the **dreamers' attention** better than others for him to see through, follow it to the end till he reaches it.

In conclusion, I would say that never stop dreaming if you hope to keep up to your future ambitions. Never underestimate yourself because others can criticize you. Dreaming is no bad things. In fact, the more person dreams the more his courage builds up to fulfill his hopes and attain a successful life with pride and joy. It is one of the best foundations that could be laid to outline you future plans.

Writing 8 - Increase in the price of an entry ticket

The manager of your favourite cinema wants to make a big increase in the price of an entry ticket.

Write a letter to the cinema manager giving your views on this proposal.

Dear manager,

It came as a shock to hear from the media announcements about the dramatic increase of the entry ticket prices for your cinema. Shine cinema has always been **not only mine but almost everyone's favourite place to hang out** consequently this change may lead to a disapproval of our thoughts.

Your cinema, that is, the Shine cinema has been popular and well known for the huge cinema hall and also for the low and affordable prices. Yes, I accept that the price was raised for an acceptable reason. That is because of the high expenses in society that effect on the maintenance of the cinema. But what is the use of an expensive cinema if no one watches movie there?

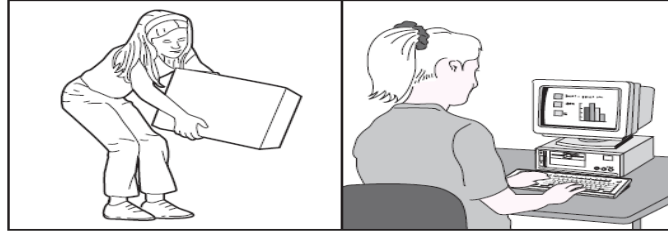
There can also be other ways to help in overcoming your expenses rather than increasing entry ticket **price that would fall the cinema's demand rapidly. Such a** ways could be opening a refreshment bar or a canteen at the cinema or conducting a fund raiser. I am pretty much sure that all your customers will give full support for this.

Shine Cinema has always been my favourite since the very beginning. So, I would like to request you to remove the high price barrier for us and make the price affordable. After all, there is nothing better than watching a movie at the Shine cinema.

Thank you

.....

Writing 9 - Finished four weeks of paid work



You have just finished four weeks of paid work during your last school holiday.

Write a letter to a friend in which you describe the job and say what you did.

In your letter you should:

- give details of where you worked and what you did;
- explain who gave you the job and why;
- describe what you learnt from the experience.

Dear Jim,

I bet you're having fun in Tokyo this holiday. After all, you've been dying to visit Japan! Unfortunately, my grandmother has burdened me with a part time job for the holiday, so I had to throw my holiday plan in the garbage.

The part time job involved absolutely 'FUN' things, like helping the customers search for goods, arranging the store items, and guiding my subordinates. Yes, I was the assistant manager of a supermarket. Here's the thing, supermarkets are fun when you're actually buying things, not when you're helping people purchase things. Worst of all, I hate Walmart.

My uncle is the manager there. He agreed to my grandmother immediately when she asked him if I could work under him for holidays. I hate my uncle; he is such an inconsiderate person. Apparently, my grandmother says the job is supposed to **"improve my mental and social health"**, but you know, all it has really done is make me a nervous wreck.

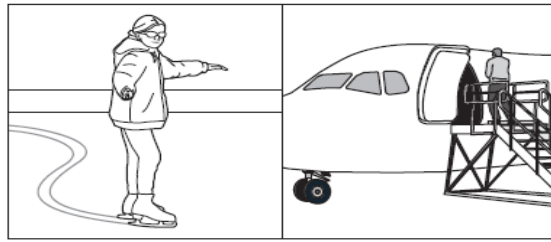
I did learn a 'couple of things' from this experience. Firstly, not to bother communicating with annoying Chinese old ladies. Secondly, I learned that I'm irresponsible and that the chances of me doing anything that requires responsibility without messing up is as good as nothing.

This holiday has been terrible for me. Sarcasm apart, at least I wasn't forced to go to Japan to meet my father's boring relatives like you were.

Regards,

James

Writing 10 - Did something for the first time



People say there is a first time for everything. Recently you did something for the first time in your life.

You decide to write a letter about your new experience to a friend.

In your letter you should:

- say what gave you the idea to do it;
- describe what you did for the first time;
- explain why you would or would not like to repeat the experience.

Dear Dexter,

What's new in LA? Has Margaret turned 6 yet?

Well, things here have been very good actually. Remember how I always wanted to cliff dive but was scared to do it because I am afraid of heights?

Well, I finally got over that phobia and cliff dived. Actually, at first it was more like me shutting my eyes out and screaming at the top of my lungs as I jumped off the cliff of **Breckin's most famous** cliff diving spot into the turquoise waters of Green River. But after the second time, it turned out to be much more fun than I expected it to be.

So, to say that I hogged the spot the whole day would be right. I think I dived at least 7 times from that cliff. Even when evening came and everyone wanted to go home, I just pouted like a child, wanting to do it again. But I agreed to go home at last because my muscles were sore and my body was calling for a good, warm and relaxing bath.

That night, my brothers laughed at me and joked about how I complained that I could never cliff dive. I laughed along with them and thanked them for the dare. Speaking of, I forgot to mention before, how it all started was because my brothers dared me to dive off the cliff and you know I always complete my dares.

Visit us around November, and we can go cliff diving together. I'd do it over and over again until I can't. That's how much I love it now.

Love,

P.S: my love to Maggie and the folks.

Writing 11 - Advantages and disadvantages of the car

Your school year group is doing a project on the advantages and disadvantages of the car as a means of transport.

As the world has developed, our means of transport has exceeded beyond our imaginations. However, the most common and favorable transport happens to be cars. Cars have brought about many advantages to the people. But like everything else, even cars have their drawbacks. The question is which is more? In my view, cars are more advantageous than non-beneficial.

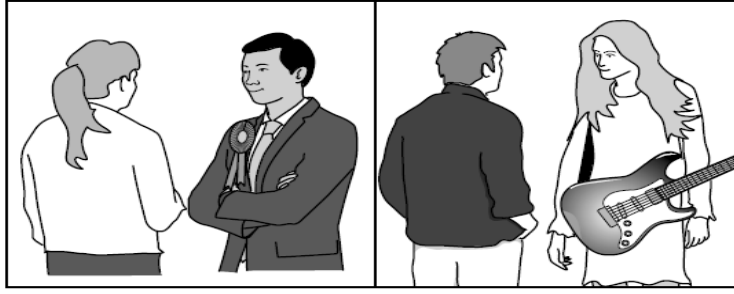
The cars have solved a major problem that majority of us face, which is time management. It is true that public transport like buses are cheaper and all. However, with cars, we can rush to work or school and still stay fresh and relaxed unlike in buses where the atmosphere is unpleasant and crowded, as a result, our minds are at ease when we arrive at our destination and our work is much easier.

On the other hand, as critics may argue, that with the increase in number of cars, the pollution levels will also escalate. Meaning that, the air we breathe in maybe filled with toxic gases which are harmful to us. However, with the introduction of converters, even this problem may be solved. These converters can convert the harmful gases into less harmful gases.

It is also a known fact that if we were to travel as a family, it will be faster, easier, more relaxing and enjoyable if we use a car instead of taking the smelly bus which will cause headaches and make us grumpy and annoyed by the time we have reached our destination.

To conclude, even with the disadvantages cars have, I believe that cars are more beneficial to people than public transport because cars allow us to save time and yet stay relaxed and ready for our work. Furthermore, with converters the risks of harmful gases will be evaded. Moreover, cars are more fitting for a family rather than **others like buses. Wouldn't you agree so?**

Writing 12 - Met a person who is famous in your country



You recently met and talked to a person who is famous in your country.

Write a letter to a relative, describing what happened.

In your letter you should:

- give details of the famous person and where you met
- explain what you talked about
- describe how you felt afterwards.

Dear Yammo,

I heard someone is getting a baby sister **soon**. **Good for you. Anyway, that's not why I'm writing this letter to you. You won't believe what happened the other day.**

Last Sunday, I was doing some last minute shopping for mom when a stranger asked me if I could recommend a type of chocolate to buy for his sister. I immediately ran over to the chocolate isle and handed him my favorite, Cadbury Dark Forest.

He laughed and thanked me. Then, as we pushed our carts to the queue in front of the cashier, we discussed about art since he had seen the few brushes in my cart. **Apparently, he knew a lot about art and by the time it was my turn to pay, I'd known quite a few things about art I didn't know.**

He even gave me his card and told me to call him if I'd a question about art. I was so happy and excited that I didn't even check the card. Only when I got home, I checked the card and found El Yardey printed on the card. Remember how I used to idolize about this El Yardey the artist? Well, it was him.

I couldn't believe my luck. I felt so excited that when he picked up the phone, I went all fan girl on him. But he said he didn't mind because I was an enthusiastic artist. He also told me he'd check out my art if I brought it to him. So that's what I'm doing next Thursday. Want to come with me?

Give me a reply soon.

Love,

Writing 13 - An event to raise money for a local charity

You recently organised an event to raise money for a local charity.

Write a letter to a friend, explaining:

- why you chose your particular charity
- how you planned the event
- whether or not you felt the event was successful.

Dear Lana,

How're you doing? Hope you and your family are having a great vacation in Miami. I expected mine to be boring at home but I was very wrong about that. Let me fill you in with the details.

I was out for a walk by the orphanage Sunshine one fine evening. I thought I saw **Mrs. Vans' car parked outside. You do remember her right? She taught us math when we were 9. Since I wasn't getting late to go anywhere I went inside to go say hi** to her. I met her inside alright but with a worried look upon her face.

I asked her what the matter was and she explained that she had been among the board members of Sunshine for a long time and that the government was trying to usurp the land and they needed to pay a certain amount of money to stop them from doing so. I gave them the idea of a fundraising event and volunteered to manage it myself.

I distributed fliers around town that there was a sand castle building competition at the beach 3 days later. I got dad to sponsor the winning prizes. The basic idea was to build anything out of sand that was detailed and could stand, in a 3D position. Luckily, some tourists were also there that day and they were all professional 3D artists. I told them of the situation and they were more than glad to help. A lot of other people also took part.

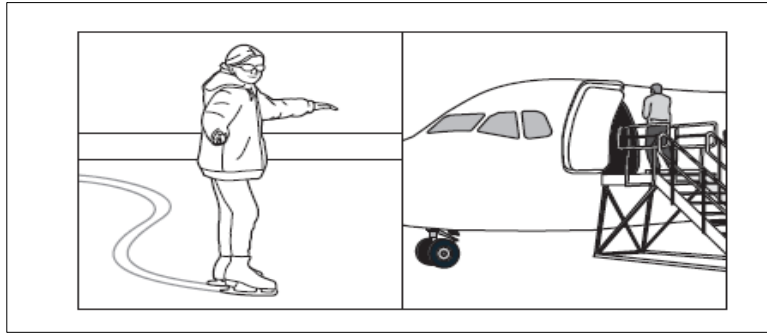
By the end of the day, we'd collected about 3000 dollars by the entry fees and by generous donations made by various people. Sunshine wasn't going to be demolished anymore. I was gifted a 100 dollars for managing the event successfully. It was all very fun.

Waiting for your reply restlessly. Send my love to your folks and do tell how you find the pictures from the event.

Lots of love,

.....

Writing 14 - Did something for the first time



People say there is a first time for everything. Recently you did something for the first time in your life.

You decide to write a letter about your new experience to a friend.

In your letter you should:

- say what gave you the idea to do it;
- describe what you did for the first time;
- explain why you would or would not like to repeat the experience.

Dear John,

We've not been in touch with each other for a long time and I'm sorry. Things would not have happened this way, had I not been so busy with studies. But a few weeks ago a hard working five days of school gave way to the most amazing weekend of my life!

I've been watching the discovery channel a lot lately in the hope of learning something valuable. And I could not help being attracted to a program which features a man in the wild. My family was planning a visit to an uninhabited island that weekend so I thought it would be awesome to explore the island like this man in the wild.

To my surprise the island we visited was huge. At nine in the morning my cousin and I set out to explore the place carrying only a bottle of water with us. We wandered through the thick trees finding beautiful places, rare plants used for local medicine and most remarkable of all, an ancient artifact half buried in the sand. When we brought it to the camp my grandfather said it was used to in the early centuries to preserve food temporarily.

That experience was the best I've ever had because it gave me a different feeling, a curiosity to find what lays in the unexplored. When you return from India we should plan a trip like this.

Love

Writing 15 - Discovered an old piece of paper hidden

While working on a school project you discovered an old piece of paper hidden on a book. The paper had some surprising information about something.

You decide to write to your friend who left your school to join another school.

In your letter you should explain:

- Who had written it and when it was dated
- What was written on it
- Your reaction to the news and what you think should be done.

Dear Philip,

I've recently been as busy as a bee studying for exams so I'm sorry I haven't written to you for such a long time. You're really lucky your exams are next week, so good luck with that.

I'm really excited to tell you about a strange occurrence at school yesterday. It all started when Rashifa and I were perusing through the library books to find something to help me on my project on successful businesses. It was like finding a needle in a haystack, there was nothing good there. All of a sudden, eagle-eyed Rashifa was squinting at a piece of paper sticking out of an old history book.

I carefully took the crumpled old paper and read it. I almost fell over backwards when it said there was a bomb in one of the cupboards of the cafeteria! Shockingly though it was written in 1992. We should have told the teacher but we decided to look for it ourselves. In the blink of an eye, we had shuck into the cafeteria and found the bomb behind a coffee can. Luckily it had been diffused. You could have reached it if you were here.

We left it there, and that's where the story ends. May be we could show it to you next time you come over.

Your friend

.....

Writing 16 - Home education

The Academic Club is interested in hearing your views about home education.

Write an article for your school magazine giving your views.

Are you someone who learns better in a group with the atmosphere of learning reflected all around you? Or do you find it easier to learn from a tutor in the comfort of your home? While every coin has two sides, I belong to the former. The topic of where the next generation should learn their trade has become a highly debated topic. Even though homeschooling has its advantages, I believe we should stick to the traditional way.

First and foremost, the sheer joy of co-operation together with friends cannot be replicated in homeschooling. In homeschooling the focus and the spot light is on you, so it is easier to clarify doubts with the teacher. However, some information can only be shared with friends and the friendly competition among students is also a kick in the step to study well.

Secondly, traditional schooling is a tried and tested method which has been known to produce outstanding students. As of now, there is no guarantee that homeschooling can help a student to succeed. A study conducted earlier this year by the University of Chicago showed the ratio of pass to fail in schools is 5:1 compared **to homeschooling's 2:1. Well, you reap what you sow.**

In a nutshell, traditional schooling is statistically better than homeschooling. However, homeschooling might pick up some steam in the following years. After all, Rome was not built in a day.

Writing 17 - Lost something important

Dear Smith,

I've been meaning to write for ages but I'm afraid, things kept me cropping up and I just haven't got round to it.

I thought I'd drop you a line to let you know something about what happened to me last week. You know, I was at Liberty Plaza with John to buy a gift for my younger sister, Helen. It was drizzling at the time we went into the shopping mall. I was in a hurry as John wanted to see his Mom at hospital. I collected a small but a nice gift and hurried home. You believe or not, I was horrified to realize, I'd lost my ID card somewhere else.

I can't tell you how I felt it, as you know, the exam is just around the corner, just imagine, I collapsed on to the Sofa and couldn't stop feeling on edge. It wasn't until some time later, when Dad came home. He soon took me to the shop where I'd bought the gift. I was lucky because the shopkeeper had kept it safe. What could you do if you were in my position?

I'm running out of my space. Don't forget to tell this to Uncle, Sam. Tell me all your news.

Love from

Ray

Writing 18 - A Virus Has Been Detected

As a school student, I can sadly announce that a majority of students have got an addiction worse than heroine. And it is computer gaming. A wise man once said “Too much of anything is bad for you”, so it can be deduced that even computer gaming has its pros and cons.

Research has shown that computer gaming can figuratively corrode your mind if it's in high doses. The time spent playing games leaves students hardly any time to study. Staying awake to play games brings a lack of sleep which disrupts your schedules. This is when we get headaches and our minds explode.

On the other hand, it is argued that computer games spark intelligence in children and help develop language skills. All work and no play make Jack a dull boy. So it is necessary to keep the mind fresh by playing games.

In conclusion, from my point of view playing computer games is alright but the problem arises when we go beyond limits. Students need to learn how to manage time between studying and playing computer games. Do you have the antivirus to destroy this virus that is spreading like bonfire? Or are you already addicted to it?

Writing 19 - The only thing that is constant is change

“The only thing that is constant is change” and undoubtedly it can be said that change is the spirit of life as only change can fight monotony and stagnation. Despite the argument that changes can have a telling effect on culture and traditions, I believe that changes are inevitable.

There are compelling reasons to believe that changes are, most of the times, for the better and they bring more opportunities without which a nation cannot progress. Moreover, no nation can remain the same for ages as the new generation cannot necessarily afford to be satisfied with what was there decades before or with what is available now. On the other hand, some are conservative in their outlook and are adverse to change believing that changes can shake the foundation of a nation. However, improvement in living standards is impossible without changes and no one can deny the fact that change is the rule of life.

Another significant argument in favour of change is that it helps in the technological advancement and provides necessary medical and transportation facilities other than being instrumental in the development of a nation- politically and economically. Furthermore, if something does not change over a period of time, it is the same as being dead and nobody wants to be in a set-up that is no more alive.

To sum up, it is obvious that man would have remained primitive if the predominant attitude was that of apathy towards change. If not convinced yet, just think who would be willing to live with the amenities of Stone Age men?

Writing 20 - Looked out of the window and saw something

Dear Nancy,

I've been meaning to write to you but I was busy moving to the new flat. You know, whenever I sit to write my younger brother runs away with the pen.

Anyway, I can't wait to tell you what happened last evening. I felt at a loose end and was waiting for Jenny, the new student who joined our school last month, to go out fishing. I just looked out of the window for I'd see from there if Jenny came. Then, I saw someone moving near the window of the flat opposite to mine. I wanted to play Nancy Drew when I saw the man jumping in through the window.

A shock went through my spine and I felt I should do something. Out of the blue, I got an opportunity to get noticed in my new place. At the flash of a second, I rang the police and told them a thief has entered flat no.5. Nancy, as you can imagine, how proud I felt and I ran across to the opposite flat and knocked on the door.

After what seemed like ages, I heard footsteps from inside and the door was opened. The man who jumped in through the window was standing in front of me. He was a tall, stout man with broad shoulders. I told him not to try to run as I've called the police. He started laughing and said he lives there. He locked himself out of his flat and it was Hobson's choice for him to try the window. I saw the police car stopping and cops coming out! I wanted to flee but my feet would not move! Somehow, I apologised and saved my skin but was all the more embarrassed when I saw Jenny in the front of the crowd that gathered!

Now, I can hear my younger brother coming and let me stop. I'm dying to hear from you soon.

Love from

.....

Writing 21 - Received a ticket for free entrance to an event



You recently received a ticket for free entrance to an event in your city. You went to the event.

Write a letter to a friend about the event.

In your letter you should:

- say how you got the ticket
- describe where you went and what happened at the event
- explain your feelings afterwards.

Dear Yang,

It's been a long time since we last exchanged words. How's everything at Signal High School? It's kind of boring here at Beacon Academy since you left. Anyway, you won't believe what happened four days back!

I woke up when mom called me downstairs and told me I've got a letter from someone. It turned out to be a letter from Roosterteeth! Apparently, I've won a ticket for free entrance to the premiere of their movie RWBY. I was so excited that I almost **didn't see the note that** came along with it. It said I had got the ticket because I won a lucky draw by watching the movie trailer.

The movie was scheduled for next day. I was so happy that I couldn't sit still at school! After school, I got ready to go as I would have to take two trains and a taxi ride to get to the cinema. After I got in, I discovered my delight that it was in 3D! **Well, I'm not going to** spoil the movie for you but it was awesome! At the middle somebody actually fell asleep because apparently she had been awake for 2 days just to get into the cinema.

Overall, it was the best movie I've seen in a long time. After it was finished I was feeling rather frustrated that I'd have to wait 2 more months till it'll be actually released so that I'd see the movie again.

Well, I hope to hear from you soon. My regards **to all. Let's meet up again sometime.**

Your friend

.....

Writing 22 - Advertisements rob us

Advertisements are everywhere around us. Are they a benefit or not?

Advertisements rob us

Nowadays, advertisements are getting more and more frequent in our daily lives. They show us products which are overpriced but somehow use the skill of persuasion to subconsciously make us crave for something we don't even need. In my opinion, advertisements are bad for us.

In modern advertisements, we see all these fancy, advanced technology with colourful graphical presentations and deceptive words which hold subliminal messages rather than a form of informing us the use and purpose of a product. It is used as marketing sham to make us buy something we are not even clear about. Advertisements only make the rich, richer.

On the other hand, a handful of advertisements do actually inform us the use and benefits of a product which is really worth our time and money. Advertisements are also one of the only ways which we can actually find out about a new product without checking in the aisle of your nearby shop every few hours.

Bottom line is, the advertisements used are not fulfilling their purpose of informing us, but rather demanding us to buy an overpriced product because we ought to have it. Therefore, in my opinion advertisements are bad for us.

Writing 23 - Organised an event to raise money for a charity



You recently organised an event to raise money for a local charity.

Write a letter to a friend, explaining:

- why you chose your particular charity
- how you planned the event
- whether or not you felt the event was successful.

Dear Khan,

I'm sorry I wasn't able to write to you sooner as I was busy with football.

As you know the mid-term break holidays just passed by and what I did was something I call "being useful" in this society. I organized a charity event to raise money to donate to all the homeless orphans in Gaza. I call it "Save a few, don't be a Jew." You may ask why I chose this particular charity so I'll phrase it in a way you'll understand; Ladies love it.

Planning this event **wasn't a walk in the park but eventually I pulled it off** remarkably. The events were creative and the entry pass was acceptable. There were stalls set in the Hall of Ghaazee School with an entry pass of 10Rf. There were many stalls **contributed by students and some by myself** such as the "shoot a Netanyahu", it's a game where you have to throw a ball at a distance towards a doll, then there's "Bomb Israel" where you have to throw a bomb shaped dart onto Israel on the world map from a distance.

Overall the event hit over MVR100000 and it gained a huge applause. But I still felt it needed more feel into the event, nevertheless it was successful. Just wished you were here to see it.

Awaiting a reply soon.

Your friend,

.....

Writing 24 - Advantages and disadvantages of the car

Your school year group is doing a project on the advantages and disadvantages of the car as a means of transport.

Experiencing life on the fast lane, with everything going by so fast we hardly catch a glimpse of it. But, in this world we have to accept that it is the way it has to be. Rare chances and special moments come and go, they pass and are lost forever in the blink of an eye. Hence, the importance of being fast by riding a car particularly come in handy.

Unlike public transport like buses and trains, cars offer much more reliable services, that save more time and money if you look at it as part of the long run. For instance, they would deliver us to the right place without any unnecessary stops along the way and the fuel bills would be much cheaper than bus or train fares. It would be a small price to pay considering all the time we could save without the burden of waiting for the bus to come by.

I am not denying the fact that cars do cause more pollution and traffic than any other **man made contraption. But I don't think that anyone would dare to oppose that cars** are a blessing in however horrible disguise that pollution and congestion is. It can be argued that electricity and solar powered cars are solutions to these concerns. And if that is too much of a change there is always carpooling. Sharing rides with people **going to the same area. It would be much cheaper, more efficient...if not more fun.**

Taking everything into consideration, cars are indispensable to our day today life compared to any other mode of transportation.

Writing 25 – Building highways

Highways- are they necessary for our country today?

Countries these days are leaping as high as they could to get a firm grasp on the highly sophisticated developments of science through technology. The building of highways is one such development which as I believe, is very useful for the people. I believe that like this project, similar ones should be introduced and carried out. This is all with good reason.

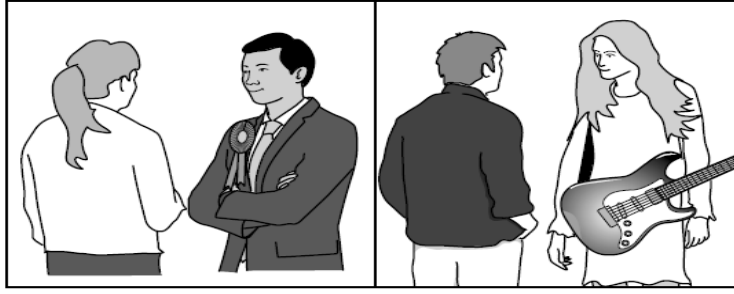
Firstly, highways help to clear out problems regarding crowded roads. Traffic jams caused by too many vehicles on the road at the same time can be cleared with ease if there is an alternate spacious road to the same destination.

It is said that it is easier and cheaper for people to travel to faraway places in their own vehicles. For instance, the cost of taking public transport is more than the amount to be paid as the highway toll, collected in order to maintain the roads, before taking that certain route.

On the other hand, the building and maintenance of such structures are costly. The space taken up for the building of the highways could be fertile lands which could be used for farming or for other more suitable purposes. It is a great loss for nature, welcoming more pollution than it can already tolerate.

Taking highways as the solution to the crowded roads and for the comfort of the people into account, I believe that highways are indeed to be considered by the governments of countries around the world.

Writing 26 - Met a person who is famous in your country



You recently met and talked to a person who is famous in your country.

Write a letter to a relative, describing what happened.

In your letter you should:

- give details of the famous person and where you met
- explain what you talked about
- describe how you felt afterwards.

Dear Caroline,

I haven't heard from you for a long time now. That's understandable with the IGCSE **exams coming up. For sure** I've been studying day in and day out. Anyways you **won't believe whom I met when I decided to take a short study break and went to** super market!

You know how crazy I am about the Korean band Shinee. I happened to meet one of them in the super market. It was morning so it was pin drop silence in the market. I was going through a bunch of cereal boxes when a man with dark shades and a Yankee baseball hat walked over and pointed out a good cereal.

I was shocked first and looked at him. Then, he removed his disguises making me weak in the knees! It was the lead vocalist Jonghyun! Our conversation started off with the cereal then we talked about singing. He said I just might have a chance to become a star!

So now I'm under supervised training in the SM town which is the birth factory of super stars. I was truly lucky to meet him in the supermarket or else I wouldn't have won this rare opportunity to become a star. It's like finding a four leafed clover. I hope to see you soon to tell you everything in detail!

Lots of love, Alex

Writing 27 - Received a ticket for free entrance to an event



You recently received a ticket for free entrance to an event in your city. You went to the event.

Write a letter to a friend about the event.

In your letter you should:

- say how you got the ticket
- describe where you went and what happened at the event
- explain your feelings afterwards.

Dear Suwun,

I've seriously made up my mind to learn how to juggle. I've been trying a lot but, believe me; it's not as easy as it looks!

Before you go ahead and label me as being nuts, you have to know what made me even to think of juggling. You remember my grandma, **don't you? Not the one who lives with us but Mamaw who lives all the way over the other side of the town.** You know how she always sends us presents from time to time. Well, this time she somehow managed to get her hands on a ticket for the sold out show, the visiting Circus in our town. Guess who she sent it to! Me!!!

There was only one ticket so, obviously I had to go alone but I met some buddies **from summer camp (you remember Angie and Stella, don't you?)** and we managed to grab some seats from the second row.

The show started after a while and there were a lot of amazing acts: clowns, acrobats and even a **baby elephant! I'm sure you would have loved it! The thing that captured my attention the most was the boneless man. He didn't look like he was boneless when he entered the ring at first but then, he started slithering like a snake and it was like he was made of jelly! And while doing all that, he started juggling! My eyes nearly popped out of head.**

I felt kind of disappointment at the end because of the fact that the show is over but, I also felt happy to go back home with some boasting stories to tell to my little brother!

Hope you come and visit soon! Love.

Vocabulary/phrases to describe an important person

An extraordinarily able	Gifted
Who can influence	Best known for/ as
Highly educated	Multi -talented
Left his mark on politics/architecture/linguistic	Tall / short
Well-built with striking features and memorable physical presence	
Sensitive in personal relations	
Involved in political/religious/social controversies	A public figure
Very private person	Has keen interest in
An outstanding example of	Admirable in many ways
Respected for his/her	Economically independent
Believed in the importance of ...	
Deserves respect for his / her influence on	Long lasting effect

Vocabulary to describe people

calm and cool	neat and tidy
friendly and outgoing	shy and reserved
honest and sincere	strong and independent
kind and generous	wild and crazy
laid-back and relaxed	

Vocabulary to describe temperament:

calm, serene, composed, gentle, charming, delightful, jovial, cheerful, jolly, hearty, serious, matured, natural; impressionable, impassionate, spirited, excitable, grave, sedate, demure, playful, unaffected; affected, quick, ferocious, acute, cutting, incisive, fiery, hysterical, heady, hot, sentimental, over-sensitive, restless, boisterous, impulsive, gloomy, moody, melancholic, sharp, cheerless, nervous, hot-headed, emotionally stable, fussy, impulsive, cynical, mature.

Vocabulary to describe Energy:

alert, energetic, active, quick, industrious, diligent, laborious, persevering, passive, steady; inactive, lazy idle, sluggish, slow, drowsy, fatigued, tired; painstaking, absent-minded

Vocabulary to describe readiness to accept responsibility:

ready, willing, enthusiastic, keen, eager; reliable, helpful, dutiful; unwilling, reluctant, , composed, half- hearted, unreliable, irresponsible, timid, unstable, careless, persevering.

Vocabulary to describe Punctuality:

excellent, punctual, regular; irregular, late, early, always, frequently, often, generally, seldom, sometimes, rarely, scarcely, never.

Vocabulary to describe special aptitudes:

musical, artistic, scientific, mathematical, dexterous, systematic, entertaining, mechanically- mind, skillful in, proficient in.

Phrases related to problem:

Recognizing problems, aggravate a problem, avoid a problem, cause a problem, deal with a problem, identify a problem, ignore a problem, run into a problem, solve a problem

Expressions about sleep:

be fast asleep, be sound asleep, be wide awake, drift off, feel drowsy, have a sleepless night, nod off, sleep like a log, take a power nap, toss and turn

Informal Phrasal verbs:

burn out, calm down, chill out, drop off, perk up, race off, sleep over, turn in, do away with, do with, get down to, jog along/on, lose out (to), make off, rake in scrape along/by (on), take up on, whistle for, yank off, zero in (on)

Expressions with keep and stay:

keep connected, keep in touch, keep one's grades up, keep out of trouble, keep things in perspective, keep up, stay awake, stay connected, stay in touch, stay out of trouble

Expressions of annoyance:

drive someone crazy, drive someone mad, drive someone up the wall, get on someone's nerves, get someone down, get someone's goat, get under someone's skin, make someone mad, make someone sick, make someone's blood boil

Describing ethics and attitudes:

acceptable / unacceptable,

agreeable / disagreeable

approving / disapproving

ethical / unethical

fair / unfair

honest / dishonest

legal / illegal

logical / illogical

rational / irrational

responsible / irresponsible

scrupulous / unscrupulous

trustworthy / untrustworthy

VOCABULARY/PHRASES TO DESCRIBE A CITY

Deafening noise

Congested roads

Sparkling limousines

Dusty rickshaws

Countless hordes of people stream past the pavements

Crowded narrow alleyways

The senses of pedestrian are bombarded with bewildering variety of exotic sights

Cramped city centre

Tranquil mountains

breathhtaking backdrop

towering skyscrapers

Below the bright neon lights, visitors would see ...

An unforgettably unique experience

The roads lead up to

Walking through the street, you are greeted with/by

Customers queue up / passengers rush to the train

Template for Exercise 7

Introductory Paragraph

These days, many argue that _____.
(generalization sentence)

However, in my opinion, _____
(state your opinion)

Supporting Paragraph

One of the major reasons _____.
(first point to support your opinion)

For instance, _____.
(an example or pieces of evidence to support the idea)

Moreover, _____.
(second point to support your opinion)

Consequently/ As a result _____.
(the consequence)

Paragraph with counter arguments

On the other hand, it would be argued that _____.
(first point to oppose your opinion)

This means that, _____.
(an example or pieces of evidence to support the idea)

Therefore _____.
(the consequence)

Concluding Paragraph

In conclusion, even though _____,
(second point to oppose your opinion)

it cannot be denied that _____
(third point to support your opinion)

Therefore, I believe that _____.
(Make a final comment, a recommendation or suggestion)

or

Therefore, taking everything into consideration, the advantages of _____

Examiner's Comment – 2013 & 2104

General comments

An increasing number of candidates used **black ink**. This is the preferred colour at Cambridge International Examinations and teachers should encourage all candidates to use this in future sessions. Overall, the standard of handwriting was good this session. Centres are reminded that candidates **should not make pencil notes in the answer space and then write over these in ink**. This often makes the script difficult to read.

Candidates should be discouraged from writing in other areas, especially in the column 'For Examiner's Use Only', and on pages 12 and 14, which contain the rubric and the prompts for Exercises 6 and 7. Candidates should use the blank page at the end of the booklet as a continuation of their answers, especially for Exercises 6 and 7, but they need to indicate clearly where extra work has been added.

Generally, candidates should be advised that throughout the paper **the spaces and number of lines are arranged to guide them as to the length of answer required and they should not consistently exceed this**.

Advice for Centres

In order to improve the quality of response in the first two exercises, candidates should be encouraged to read both the text and the questions **at least twice**. Thereafter they should seek to answer using **precise but brief answers**. No response should need to go beyond the one or two line space on the Question Paper.

Candidates should ensure that handwriting is clearly legible in terms of size and formation. In cases where letters or whole words are difficult to decipher, it may not be possible to achieve a mark. The blank final page of the question paper or additional sheets of paper are available for candidates' use, so handwriting does not need to be uncomfortably small in order for candidates to complete their responses.

Candidates should take great care not to misspell words taken from the texts. In Exercises 1, 2 and 4, incorrect spelling is only tolerated when **it does not create a new word and change the meaning, or make meaning unclear**. In Exercise 3, **correct spelling throughout is essential**. In Exercises 5, 6 and 7 frequent incorrect spelling may affect the overall mark awarded.

In Exercises 1 and 2 each question must be read carefully for the requirements to be understood. Responses must connect to the question and candidates should also note the **question word and whether it is 'how', 'what' 'which', 'who', 'when', 'why' or 'where'** to guide them to the correct response. Answers should be concise, containing all the appropriate information. Responses need not be given in the form of a sentence and it is not necessary for candidates to use synonyms of words in the text for key information required in responses. Synonyms for words in the rubric should be sought in the text and recognised to enable candidates to locate appropriate responses. **When required to make comparisons, candidates should**

ensure that they focus on the key aspect in the question, not what this is being compared to.

In Exercise 3, candidates need to allow time to check through their form once they have completed it to see if, for example, they have used the correct annotation (tick, circle delete or underline) and to be sure that they have correctly transcribed names and addresses. They need to make the capital letters on all proper nouns stand out clearly, particularly the letters 'm', 's' and 'k'.

Strategies should be taught to assist candidates to cope more confidently with Exercise 5, such as the **appropriate use of linking words** to pull the summary together and to give it organisation.

In Exercises 6 and 7, when writing a story or describing a past event, candidates need to know how to **use the range of past tenses correctly**, for example to be able to use the simple past, past perfect and past continuous without mixing them up.

In Exercise 6, candidates need to keep in mind to whom the letter is being written. If, as in this paper, it was to a friend, then the vocabulary and the style of the letter should reflect this. A similar consideration needs to be kept in mind when writing the article for the school magazine. There should be a clear difference in the style between the two pieces.

Examiner's Key notes on Ex 6

A number of candidates used formal discursive devices, such as 'moreover, to sum up', which detracted from an otherwise a satisfactory response. **There is still a tendency on the part of some candidates to over-use idioms and flowery language in their writing.** The correct use of idioms should enhance the writing, but all too often candidates used unnatural language, such as 'I decided to make this letter come into being'; inappropriate language, such as 'to feed my charity bug', or unsuccessful collocations, such as 'excruciatingly beautiful' or 'a menacing amount of money'. **Centres should be aware that this type of language can obscure what the candidate is trying to say, and so lose marks.**

Candidates should be encouraged to

- adopt a natural conversational tone and avoid the use of 'moreover' and 'to sum up'
- avoid the use of spoken colloquialisms, such as 'stuff', 'soo', 'wanna' and 'gonna'
- avoid the use of out-of-context idiomatic phrases
- practise grammar exercises using verbs in the past. Correct grammar leads to more efficient communication and higher marks.
- be aware of and interact with the reader, 'You remember I told you about...', 'You'll never guess how much we raised

Exercise 6 – General comments

There are three prompts in Exercise 6 and candidates are advised to use a paragraph for each prompt. More able candidates used paragraphs to good purpose and they provided an effective division between the different ideas that the candidates needed to address. There was often a good attempt to supply a suitably brief introduction and concluding statement, in an informal register.

It should be noted that prolonged greetings and conclusions, which are often pre-learnt set expressions and not always relevant, can be counter-productive. It is recommended that candidates restrict these to about three lines only. In the worst cases, candidates use an inordinate number of words at the start and finish of the letter which would be better employed developing the requirements of the bullet points.

In addition to the bullet prompts, there is a visual guide to help candidates when selecting content for their writing. It must be emphasised that candidates should try to develop their own ideas and those that do often produce pieces which have greater originality and ambition.

Candidates must, of course, address and develop the three bullet prompts to achieve the higher bands on the grade criteria for Content. Centres should remind candidates that all three bullet points should be covered in some depth and that detail should be more evenly distributed across each. In addition, candidates should convey a good sense of purpose and **engage the reader's interest**. The highest marks are awarded to those candidates who can **demonstrate a more vibrant style and provide some innovative detail**.

Candidates need to be aware that **pre-learnt phrases and expressions do not always work in certain contexts**. Some candidates **fill their writing with a wide array of inappropriate and poorly chosen idioms**. Individually these idioms can be very effective but a succession of these in an essay is **unnatural and counter-productive, and proverbs should not be included for their own sake**. Colloquialisms need to fit the situation and should be chosen with care and not used excessively. In an attempt to use extravagant language, meaning is sometimes obscured and the language mark may be adversely affected.

Examiner's Key notes on Ex 7

Centres are reminded that responses are considered to **be more effective and will gain higher marks if candidates can understand and interpret the prompts, but then go beyond those limits to provide their own individual thoughts and opinions.**

Candidates should be encouraged to

- organise their writing into paragraphs and include paragraph starters such as, 'On the other hand', 'Similarly...', 'All in all...'
- avoid simply repeating the ideas in the question
- avoid a conversational tone and adopt a more formal register
- remember to include their own opinion
- practise language exercises:

(a) to distinguish between 'there is...' and 'it has...'

(b) to consolidate agreement between subject and verb in the sentence.

Exercise 7 General comments

There was a selection of four prompts - two for and two against the proposal in the title - to guide candidates. Less able candidates tended to stay very close to these cues, at worst copying them directly with little or no development or personal contribution. **In similar fashion, some candidates often used the prompts as 'quotes' from 'other candidates'.** For example, "One of my friends said 'There is no doubt that travel broadens the mind' and another candidate said, 'Each country is losing its identity with so many tourists... etc'". If candidates **simply copy or make little attempt to change the wording of the prompts, it severely reduces the amount of language that can be credited.**

It is recommended that candidates are **selective in their choice of prompts, perhaps one for and one against, and attempt to develop those in some depth rather than giving superficial coverage to all four.** There needs to be evidence that candidates can **develop arguments and persuade the reader of their convictions in order to gain access to the higher mark bands.**

Word limits were well-observed and it appears as though time constraints at this stage of the paper were not a problem for the majority of candidates. There were some candidates

who had obviously left themselves short of time and resorted to copying the prompts with little or no individual comment. It is recommended that Centres work with **their candidates on time management for this** paper so that they have an idea as to how many minutes should be spent on individual exercises. The final two exercises carry more than 40 percent of the total marks and candidates should leave themselves enough time to complete them fully.

Candidates are not penalised for exceeding the number of words recommended and indeed may provide more fully developed pieces of writing, whereas significantly short answers are unlikely to be satisfactory in terms of content, and the language mark can also be affected since the range of language will be limited.

There were some examples of abbreviated 'text' language, **particularly with the use of 'u' for 'you' and lower case 'i'**. **This is the accepted norm for writing SMS messages**, but is not appropriate in the format and context here and should be discouraged.

Key messages by the Examiner on Paper 32 and 42

Candidates need to be reminded to provide clear and legible responses. The formation of individual letters must be clear. Where handwriting cannot be read, no marks can be awarded.

In responses where one idea or detail is required, candidates are advised just to put one response. Where two items are required, candidates should write only two.

When making phonetic attempts, it is recommended that candidates try to mimic the number of syllables in the word that has been heard, and also to try to re-create the main consonant sounds, and also the stressed vowel sounds.

Try to predict the answers in the gap-filling exercises based on an accurate grammatical fit.

Candidates often lose marks when what has been placed in the gap causes the meaning to become unclear. This is a key feature of Questions 7 and 8 on this Paper and candidates should check their responses carefully.

Candidates should try to establish what a longer question is asking for, by highlighting the question words, e.g. how, why, when, and/or the key words in the question. Establishing what the question requires gives a strong indication of the type of answer that is likely to be successful. In most cases, a short, direct response is most successful.

More pronunciation awareness activities, particularly of connected speech, would be beneficial to learners. Candidates should use a pen, not a pencil, and simply cross out responses which need to be altered.

Examination tips:

This section gives you advice to help you do as well as you can. Some of the tips are general advice and some are based on the common mistakes that learners make in exams.

Reading and Writing: Paper 1 – Core tier

Paper 2 – Extended tier

Exercises 1 and 2

- Read quickly (skim) through the text – concentrate on finding the main idea in each paragraph. As you read, underline any names, numbers or dates. Use the pictures and other visuals to help you understand.
- Read the questions carefully and make a note of any questions that need two pieces of information in the answer.
- **Underline the question word and think about what it means: ‘Where’ means ‘a place’; ‘How’ means ‘in what way’, and ‘Why’ means look for a reason or cause.**
- Underline other important words in the question – nouns and verbs provide information that you might need to find in the text.
- Try to match the words in the question with the correct point in the text. This is called **‘scanning’**. **When you locate the sentence, read it more carefully to find the exact answer. If you can’t match any words, remember, the word in the question might be a synonym of the word in the text. If you still can’t locate the right answer, read up or down from the sentence you found, or make a guess.**
- **Don’t write full sentences in your answer. Keep your answers short – a date or number or a few words will be enough to get a mark. Too much writing can waste your time, and, if you give too much information, you might include wrong details which could mean you lose a mark.**
- You can copy the words from the text – **you don’t need to use your own words. If you write in your own words, you won’t lose a mark as long as you include all the correct information needed in the question.**
- **Look out for and learn the meaning of signpost phrases such as ‘apart from’, or ‘rather than’, or ‘According to the graph’, and make sure you understand what they refer to.**
- Remember that the questions follow the order of the text in Exercises 1 and 2. The only exception to this is in Paper 2 – Extended Level – in Exercise 2 you need to look back at the whole text to find answers to the last question.

Exercise 3

- The first thing to remember is that this exercise is not only a test of reading and comprehension, but also a test of writing. This means that you must be completely accurate in spelling.

- Handwriting is important too, because you often have to write names, addresses, or other proper nouns. Examiners are looking for the correct use of capital letters, so you must make these completely clear when you write.
- If you have to write an answer on the line, remember to make it a short answer.
- Do you know how to use the instructions Tick, Underline, Circle, and Delete? If not, ask your teacher to explain.
- **Remember that you're completing this exercise as if you are the person in the text, so you must use 'I' or 'we'. Answers with 'he', 'she', or 'they' will get no marks.**
- The last section of this exercise is different:

Extended Level – one sentence – make sure it is a) within the word limit, b) completely accurate, c) relevant (it answers the question).

Core Level – two sentences – make sure they are a) completely accurate, b) relevant (they answer the question).

What does accuracy mean?

- i) start your sentence with a capital letter
- ii) finish your sentence with a full stop
- iii) write a full and complete sentence, using a subject and verb
- iv) don't start your sentence with 'and', 'but' or 'because'.**

Exercise 4

- Use the same skills for reading and understanding as you did in Exercises 1 and 2.
- Try to connect the headings with parts of the text, so that your answers **correspond to the right heading. Correct answers in the wrong place don't get any marks.**
- Notice the bullet points at the beginning of each line and write short answers that fit the space on the line – remember this is a note-taking exercise.
- Although your answer must be short, make sure you include all the key information.

Exercise 5 – General advice

In this exercise you need to write a summary based on the text you have read.

In a summary you should:

- Keep to the word limit – before the examination, check how many words you **write on a line, then you'll know how many lines you will need.**

- Include all the key facts relating to the subject of your summary. This will mean looking again at the entire text and underlining relevant points.
- Try to connect your ideas into a paragraph using linking words.
- If you use your own words instead of copying from the text, you have more chance of getting a higher mark for language.

Paper 1 – Core tier

- Use your notes from Exercise 4, but you might not need all of them.
- **Don't just make a list of the points in your notes. Try to write connected sentences.** Linking words will help you do this.
- Keep on the topic and use your own words if you can.

Paper 2 – Extended tier

- Read the instructions carefully – do you need to summarise the whole text or **just part of it? Don't waste time reading unnecessary parts of the text.**
- Practise synonym exercises to help you use your own words.
- Practise connecting phrases to create sentences, and connecting sentences to create paragraphs.

Exercises 6 and 7 – General advice

These exercises ask you to write in two different styles – usually an informal piece and an opinion piece of writing.

Make sure you:

- Write at least the minimum word length.
- Use paragraphs to show your different ideas.
- Keep to the topic – **it's easy to wander away from the subject. Remind yourself by looking again at the question.**
- Try to write fluently – use words and phrases to connect your thoughts.
- **Don't use mobile/cell text language** – this is a test of English language.

Exercise 6

- Think about who you are writing to.
- **Try to write as if you are talking to this person and you'll automatically use the right tone and register.**
- **Don't forget any of the bullet points – you'll lose marks if you do.**
- Write a paragraph for each bullet point – it will give your writing good balance.
- **It's a good idea to give your writing a start and a finish. If you don't, it can become more like a story, and you might lose the tone.**
- Try to make your writing enjoyable to read.
- If you like using idioms, be careful not to use too many. It can make your writing sound unnatural.

Exercise 7

- **Decide right at the start if you're going to write about the topic from two sides** (for and against) or from just one (your opinion).
- If you write a two-sided (**balanced**) piece of writing, **don't forget to include your opinion** in the last paragraph.
- If you want to write only from your own point of view, include it in the first paragraph.
- You can use the phrases and opinions given in the question, but if you want to get higher marks, you must develop these ideas and not just copy them.
- Try to think of your own ideas on the topic.
- Remember to organise your writing: include an introduction, one paragraph for each idea in the middle section, and a conclusion.
- Try to keep a few minutes at the end to read through and check your spelling and grammar.

Listening: Paper 3 – Core tier

Paper 4 – Extended tier

General advice

- Make sure you read the introduction to each question, as this often provides clues as to what will happen in the exercise.
- **Anticipate (predict) who's going to speak; where they are; what they're going to talk about.**
- Remember, part of the skill of listening is to be able to predict what might be **said next ('pre-listening')**
- You hear everything twice – concentrate all the time and make notes or underline words to help you.
- Be careful with numbers – if you write a number in your answer, you might need to include a unit – is it kilos, \$, metres, tonnes?
- Notice any question that needs two details to get one mark or two marks, and make sure you separate the answers clearly.
- In gap-filling exercises, use your knowledge of grammar to help you work out what kind of word could fit in the gaps (could it be a noun, verb, adverb?)
- For longer answers, make sure you have communicated the idea clearly. **If you don't know a word, try to write exactly what you hear.**

Supporting materials for Exercise 7

Some current and international issues that you can read about, hear, and discuss prior to your examination.

Topic	Points for	Points against
<p>RAISE THE SCHOOL LEAVING AGE TO 18</p> <p>In many countries children are required by law to attend school up to a specific age. When children reach this required age they then often have the choice to remain in education or leave in search of employment opportunities.</p> <p>The age that children are allowed to leave school is often linked to the age that they are considered to be adults because governments do not want to force adults into staying in education if they do not wish to. But rights are not gained all at once some, such as the right to legally have sex, drive, and leave school are acquired before the right to do things like vote in elections</p>	<p>More education brings more opportunities</p> <p>Raising the school-leaving age is a crucial investment in society's future</p> <p>Raising the school leaving age promotes equal opportunities</p>	<p>Forced education achieves little</p> <p>Not all skills are best learnt in a classroom environment</p> <p>There are cases where leaving school early is necessary</p>
<p>HOMEWORK SHOULD BE BANNED</p> <p>Homework is a task (often called an assignment) set by teachers for students to do outside normal lessons – usually at home in the evening. Schools have been setting homework in developed countries for over a century, but until the past few decades usually only older students had to do it. More recently younger students have also been given homework by their primary or elementary schools.</p> <p>Countries, schools and subjects differ a lot on how much homework is set, and at what age, but almost all high school students have to do at least some most nights. Most children have never liked homework but from time to time it is also debated by politicians, parents and teachers</p>	<p>Marking homework reduces the amount of time teachers have to prepare good lessons</p> <p>Homework reduces the amount of time for students to do other activities</p> <p>Homework puts students off learning</p> <p>Homework is about 'winning' on tests, not learning</p>	<p>Homework encourages students to work more independently</p> <p>Homework ensures that students practise what they are taught at school</p> <p>Homework provides a link between child, school and the home</p> <p>Homework is an essential part of education, allowing students to learn information beyond that which they are taught at school.</p>

To be continued.....