

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/11
Reading and Writing (Core)

General comments

Overall in this session the great majority of candidates were entered at the right level. A small number showed exceptional ability and would have benefited from being able to enter at the Extended level.

The paper included a range of tasks within the seven exercises, necessitating candidates to demonstrate a variety of practical skills, from short-answer questions, form-filling, note-taking and summary writing, to writing at length in two different styles and registers. Each exercise included intended degrees of difficulty, so differentiation was achieved within individual exercises and throughout the paper as a whole.

In this session there were few misunderstandings of the rubric for each exercise and clear evidence of good classroom practice could be seen, particularly in the comprehension exercises, **Exercises 1** and **2**, where many candidates produced responses of a good standard. More candidates attempted all sections of **Exercise 3**, although a significant number of answers were spoilt by carelessness in transferring information and inaccurate spelling of individual words. Centres are reminded that in **Exercise 3, Section C**, punctuation, spelling and complete sentences, in combination with the correct information given will receive credit. Details such as initial capital and full stop are an integral part of the marking criteria, and the absence of these will spoil an otherwise perfect response. **Exercise 4** continues to provide a challenge for weaker candidates, many of whom still continue to lift long sentences from the input text, rather than condense answers into brief notes. Examiners have reported that a significant number of candidates identified the correct section of the text, yet failed to gain marks through writing long irrelevant sentences. Advice for Centres in future would be to use the Mark Scheme closely as guidance for appropriately brief yet relevant answers. Encouragingly, more candidates attempted **Exercise 5** in this session, although Examiners noted that many wrote more than the stipulated word limit and frequently digressed from the required task. There was a good response to **Exercises 6** and **7**, with the vast majority of candidates finding the topics accessible and enjoyable. Continued improvement was noticeable in the differentiation between the less formal register and descriptive style required in **Exercise 6** and the more formal and discursive style in **Exercise 7**.

In general, the presentation of answers and handwriting were of an acceptable standard and it is pleasing to note that more candidates are using black ink. Centres are reminded that black is the preferred colour at Cambridge International Examinations and candidates should be encouraged to use this in future sessions. However, it was noted that a number of candidates' handwriting was so poor that Examiners had difficulty identifying the correct detail in an answer. Although handwriting itself is not an assessed criteria in this examination, the inability to decipher a correct answer will necessarily penalise a candidate. Evidence of good practice was noticeable in questions requiring two details for a mark, with candidates writing 1 and 2 at the beginning of the lines, clearly demonstrating an understanding of the needs of the question. Candidates who needed to use the blank pages at the end of the question booklet helpfully wrote a short note requesting the Examiner to look at those pages. This practice is to be encouraged in future sessions. However, it should be remembered that the amount of space and the number of lines provided for each answer is a guideline as to the appropriate length for that question and candidates should not consistently exceed this guideline. Most candidates successfully completed the paper and there was little evidence of time constraints. A small number of candidates wrote over-long answers to **Exercise 6**, thereby being unable to contribute fully to **Exercise 7**.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This exercise proved to be an appropriate introduction to the reading comprehension tasks and was well answered by the majority of candidates.

- (a) There was a very good response by most candidates, although a small number misread 'when' for 'where' and described Singapore's geographical position.
- (b) This was well answered, with the majority of candidates identifying both the required points. Marks were lost when a candidate gave an incomplete answer including only one detail, or omitted 'how' in the first point in the Mark Scheme.
- (c) There was a mixed response to this question. A number of candidates offered 'shopping' and 'eating', showing imprecise reading of the question, thus failing to achieve a mark. The misspelling 'herds' for 'herbs' could not be credited.
- (d) This was well answered. Most candidates correctly identified the key detail in the text of 'superb view', with many supplying credible synonyms 'wonderful, fantastic, excellent'. A number of candidates copied the entire sentence, which, although containing enough information to gain a mark, also meant that their time was spent writing irrelevant detail from the latter section of the sentence. Candidates are reminded that short answers are sufficient to convey understanding in this exercise.
- (e) Most candidates supplied an answer containing 'light/cotton clothes', but there were a number who continued to include 'plan for several changes of clothes'. This could not be credited, as the requirement in the question was for 'clothing and footwear'. 'Comfortable shoes' was the second detail necessary to achieve a mark.
- (f) This question was correctly answered by most, although a number either described the durian fruit or included the idea of taking the durian fruit on public transport as illegal, reflecting a lack of precision in reading the question.

Exercise 2

This exercise proved to be more challenging, but a significant number of candidates successfully addressed the key points and supplied brief answers. Overall, the interpretation of the graphic was successful. Some answers were incomplete and at times candidates failed to attempt a question. The full range of marks was awarded across the exercise as a whole.

- (a) This question required candidates to identify the two details of 'delivering lunch boxes' and 'to office workers'. In some cases the second key point in the answer was omitted, thereby losing the mark. Alternative answers 'transporting' or 'taking' were acceptable, although 'providing' was not considered to be sufficiently precise.
- (b) Similarly, candidates were asked to provide answers containing 'female occupants' and 'to homes'. A considerable number of answers included only the first detail and thus no mark could be credited to these candidates.
- (c) Correct answers hinged on the candidates' reading of 'nowadays' in the question. They were required to differentiate between transport used in the past and that in use today. Many candidates failed to continue reading to find this comparison and offered the incorrect answers 'by hand cart' and 'horse-drawn carriage'. Other candidates were careless in writing 'bicycles and bikes'.
- (d) Candidates were asked to supply two details of the benefits received by the dabbawallah's family. The majority of candidates immediately noted the financial benefit in salary and most identified 'healthcare and education', although not all managed 'for their children' which was necessary for the mark. Incorrect answers included references to the future of the business, or the idea of helping them read and write.
- (e) This was well answered by the majority who were clearly able to pinpoint the correct proportion relating to the two years, 1950 and 2010, in the graphic.

- (f) This question proved to be a good discriminator and candidates were more challenged. Examiners were looking for the connection between people of different religions having different dietary rules. Many candidates located the key information in the text, but offered answers that failed to convey the concept of differences – ‘religions that observe strict dietary rules’ could not be credited without the specific ‘different religions’ or ‘different dietary rules’.
- (g) This question asked for a reason why dabbawallahs had been invited to lecture. Most candidates supplied a copied answer from the text, ‘This is an impressive statistic and their business is so efficient’. Candidates are reminded that brief and succinct answers are required, and that copying long sentences is time-wasting and will certainly include irrelevant or inaccurate content.
- (h) Candidates were required to identify two ways in which the food distribution service had resisted competition from other outlets or corporations. A significant number of candidates merely reiterated the idea that it ‘has so far resisted competition’, without supplying details of how this was done. As in the Mark Scheme, ‘traditional’ and ‘home-made’ were necessary for the first mark, and ‘cheaper’ provided the second.
- (i) A good number of candidates offered the correct answer ‘collect the empty containers’, although Examiners frequently had difficulty locating this point in an over-long copied answer from the final paragraph of the text. Weaker candidates relied on copying the last sentence, ‘The old ways are best and it is a privilege...’, which referred to his opinion, rather than his next task, as the question demanded.

Exercise 3

Candidates showed evidence of good classroom preparation and a clear understanding of the conventions of form-filling, with the majority gaining more than half the expected marks. However, in this session Examiners noted a significant number of careless misspellings in transcribing the necessary information, thereby negating an otherwise correct answer. **Section B** was particularly well answered, with the conventions of ticking boxes and deletion clearly understood. An increasing awareness of and preparation for the task in **Section C** was pleasing to note in this session, with an encouraging number of candidates using the first person to start each sentence, reflecting an understanding of the requirements of the question. There still remained a minority of candidates who related the question to their own personal life, and gave an answer that bore no resemblance to the information in the text.

Order Form

Section A

This section proved to be problematic for many candidates, who, despite locating the key information of name, home address and home country, were unable to transcribe correctly. Mistakes were incurred when candidates failed to use initial capitals or misspelt, as ‘Musos’, ‘Osama’ for the name. The correct word order for the home address was also challenging, and a significant number incorrectly offered ‘Kuala Lumpur’ rather than ‘Malaysia’ as the home country. Further marks were lost through inaccuracies, such as ‘Malyasia’, ‘Kuala Lampur’, and the use of prepositions ‘at, in’ with address, ‘at 32C’ or ‘in Jalan Pinang’. Regarding orthography, Examiners noted a number of capitals ‘P’ and ‘J’ written through, rather than on the line, thus losing marks for the candidate. Centres are asked to continue to focus carefully on the detail of spelling in this exercise.

Section B

This was generally well attempted, with a good number of completely successful answers. It was encouraging to note that very few candidates used a cross instead of a tick in this section. Marks were lost through the inclusion of a mobile phone number in place of the reference number in the first item. Some candidates misinterpreted the text, ‘he does not have enough money to pay for the whole year’ and ticked the box for paying in instalments. Continued careful reading was required to find the detail ‘pay all the subscription immediately’. Most candidates were successful at identifying the correct option ‘An Advanced Guide to Websites’, and supplied the correct brief answer ‘local newspaper’. Marks were lost through incorrect spelling ‘newpaper’, two words ‘news paper’, or the inclusion of ‘his local newspaper’.

Section C

Candidates were asked to imagine that they were Musa and answer for him regarding his past experience and future intentions. This was well addressed by most candidates, who identified the key contextual information and supplied answers in the first person. Marks could not be awarded, however, for the common grammatical inaccuracy, 'I'm a member of the team since 2008', rather than 'I've been a member'. Other frequent misspellings were 'intresting' and 'technican'. Centres are also asked to remind candidates that credit is only given for full and grammatical sentences, thus answers written as bullet points cannot be awarded any marks. A further point to emphasise is that where only one sentence is offered, even if all the required information is supplied, a maximum of two marks is awarded. It is therefore recommended that candidates continue to practise writing two accurate answers. It is encouraging to notice that very few candidates in this session were unable to offer an answer, either through lack of understanding or time constraints. Nevertheless, there remain a number who continue to answer from a personal point of view. The answers to **Section C** will always be found in the stimulus text and no credit can be given for candidates' own creative writing. Centres are asked to remind candidates of this point.

Exercise 4

Most candidates attempted this task and showed enough understanding to be able to extract relevant information, although very few gained full marks. It was disappointing to note the number of over-long answers. The exercise requires brief note-form answers and candidates who extend their answers beyond the space provided will have included superfluous detail and so may not be awarded a mark. Over the exercise as a whole, candidates were more successful in the second section, as many of the required points could be found in the same paragraph of the stimulus text.

Special requirements for food in space

The most common key point 'food which does not break' was correctly identified by the majority, although there was a significant amount of duplication, with many offering 'moist enough to stick together' as a separate point. Candidates need to ensure that they select clearly different points for each of the notes, so as not to risk duplication and thus lose a mark. A considerable number of candidates over-generalised, with 'food in liquid form' and 'pre-sliced vegetables', without the specifics of 'salt and pepper' and 'tomatoes'.

Challenges for the voyage to Mars

A good number of candidates correctly noted the point that 'the timeline is long', although the reason for the length of journey time, 'great distance', was a duplicate answer and could not be credited as a separate point. Similarly, the effect of the long distance on the food, 'food needs a five year shelf life' was repeatedly offered as an extra item. Candidates thus lost the chance to gain extra marks. The idea that travelling such long distances could involve 'unpredictable weather' and 'mechanical problems' was recognised by many candidates, although 'unpredictable problems' was not considered to be specific enough. The problem relating to the growth of bacteria was missed by most candidates.

Exercise 5

It was pleasing to note that the number of candidates omitting this task is diminishing and candidates' performance showed a noticeable improvement compared with previous sessions. A greater awareness of word length was obvious as were attempts to complete answers within the given space. The question related to the points in the first section of **Exercise 4**, more than the second, and successful answers developed these points by using a variety of connecting language. Less able candidates relied on copying out the notes from **Exercise 4**, without discriminating and selecting the relevant points, and with little attempt to link ideas together into a cohesive paragraph. Many candidates showed a lack of grammatical and sentence control when using their own words, and so felt more secure when copying from the text or from their notes in the previous exercise. Centres are reminded that limited marks can be awarded for such answers and the higher marks of 3 and 4 are available to those candidates who make an attempt at rephrasing. Continued classroom practice using synonyms of nouns and adjectives, and alternative phrases would be helpful.

Exercises 6 and 7

Overall, both extended writing exercises were well attempted and at an appropriate length. Few candidates had difficulty in completing the tasks, which showed evidence of improving time management throughout the paper as a whole. The majority of candidates' handwriting was clear and legible, and where the blank pages at the end of the booklet were required, clear notification was provided for the Examiner. The discriminator lay in the quality of detail and organisation, in addition to the syntactical control. The whole range of marks was awarded, from some naturally fluent and accurate work to less confident writing. Good classroom practice was evident in the structure and organisation of answers, with more able candidates using paragraphs effectively to provide the division between the three main ideas required in **Exercise 6**.

Many candidates successfully differentiated between the less formal, narrative style required in **Exercise 6** and the more discursive format of **Exercise 7**, where candidates had to present and develop opinions, with the aim of persuading the reader of their opinions.

Exercise 6

A very interesting item

There was a wide response to this topic. A great many candidates interpreted the idea of 'finding something' beyond the words of the question 'I was out walking'. Ideas ranged to include finding something in the park or street; discovering something long-forgotten in an attic; spotting something in a shop window while passing, or buying a much-wanted item. Most candidates engaged well with the topic and maintained a sense of audience throughout. Examiners reported that many letters were very enjoyable to read. The majority of candidates adhered to the given visual prompts and wrote about a diary, a necklace or a bag, or, occasionally, all three. These visual stimuli are intended to act merely as a guide, not as a requirement, and it is advised that, when candidates are in the planning stage, the more successful answers will develop ideas from one picture, rather than from all three. Examiners are looking for candidates who can develop one idea in depth, using their own imagination and creativity. An attempt to include all the visuals will necessarily become over-descriptive, and superficial. Many correctly adopted a familiar tone to their letter, using conversational devices such as 'You'll never guess what!', 'I wonder what you'd have done!' or 'As you can imagine...'. A number of candidates were successful at contextualising their answers, with appropriate opening and closing paragraphs to their letter.

One of the main areas of linguistic concern was the relationship between the narrative tenses, such as 'I was out walking / when I found / I had never seen one like this before'. More able candidates successfully used these, whereas weaker answers offered only one. A connected point is the lack of accuracy of tense throughout a paragraph, with candidates being unable to sustain the use of the past tense in narrative. Candidates should be reminded about the word order in indirect clauses, 'I did not know what's that' and 'I was anxious to see what was it'. A point to note for future sessions is that, while attempts at variety of vocabulary and idiom are creditable, the misplaced use of generic idiomatic phrases, such as 'I'm writing with flying colours' detracts from the relevance to the task and makes the answer obscure, causing candidates to lose marks.

Exercise 7

Fashionable clothes

The majority of candidates felt confident at adopting the more formal tone and register required for this task. The topic was relevant to their experience and many engaged enthusiastically with the debate about fashion. A frequent comment noted by Examiners was 'never judge a book by its cover' and 'it's who you are not what you wear that counts'. There were four written prompts given, two for and two against the proposal in the title. As in **Exercise 6**, it is the intention that these should be used as a springboard for candidates' own ideas. Most candidates gave a balanced view and used paragraphs to consider both sides of the argument. Many candidates wrote in an interesting way about fashion in general, including examples from their own experience of peer group pressure and the need to conform with the current trend in order to feel confident when out with friends. Other answers noted the insignificance of fashion in comparison with worldwide and social problems. Less able candidates tended to keep very close to the written prompts, with little attempt at development of individual ideas and often merely repeated them word for word, with perhaps a final comment of opinion.

It was encouraging to see that a good number of candidates achieved a level of sophistication not only of argument, but also of presentation through the continued improvement in paragraphing and the appropriate



use of cohesive linking devices. Linguistic areas to improve are the subject/verb agreement, as in 'this shoes' or 'fashionable clothes makes me feel good'. Further points to practise would be the formation of adjectives and nouns, as in 'confidence/confident' or 'Fashionable clothes gives you self-confident'. Although some candidates still continue to start sentences with a lower case letter, Examiners have reported an overall improvement in spelling and punctuation.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/12

Reading and Writing (Core)

General comments

The great majority of candidates were correctly entered at this level and were therefore able to respond well to the tasks set. Across the seven exercises candidates were expected to demonstrate a variety of practical skills including brief answers, form-filling, note-taking, summary writing, and descriptive and discursive writing. There were degrees of difficulty in each of the seven questions, so differentiation was achieved within each one and throughout the paper as a whole. As a result the whole range of marks was awarded.

Many candidates were able to complete all the exercises showing good time management. When an exercise was omitted, it was usually the two sentences from **Exercise 3**, **Exercise 5**, summary writing or the last exercise on the paper, **Exercise 7**. It was rare indeed for a candidate to omit both extended writing exercises. In general the rubric required in the different exercises was well understood and observed. Some candidates, however, need to apply greater care in their reading of certain questions, notably in this session in **Exercises 2, 3, 4** and **5**. Further explanation on this is given later in this report. Once again it should be emphasised to candidates that the reason for highlighting key words in the questions is to help them focus more closely on the relevant sections of the text. Again **Exercises 3(a)** and **3(b)**, form filling, were generally well done, although Centres are asked to remind candidates of the need for correct spelling and precision of detail in both parts of this question. The final section of **Exercise 3**, which required two sentences, was again challenging for many candidates with very few achieving full marks. Accurate sentence formation with correct spelling and punctuation is essential in this section. Centres are reminded that two full and complete sentences are required for the response. If a candidate writes three sentences, then credit will only be given for the first two. The first two parts of **Exercise 4** were well done, but the third section was less well understood. The Examiners were pleased to note that most candidates now understand the requirement for brief, factual notes rather than full sentences. Equally pleasing to report is the fact that the great majority of candidates manage to limit themselves in **Exercise 5** to 70 words or less. Of the two extended writing questions, **Exercise 6** was better attempted, even enjoyed, by very many candidates. There was a pleasing sense of audience and register in most of the responses, many of which were interesting and entertaining. **Exercise 7**, however, was much more demanding and many candidates stayed too close to the visual and written stimuli given on the question paper, adding merely their own personal comments or often that of a friend. Greater reward was given to those who used the stimuli and introduced some ideas of their own.

Presentation of answers and handwriting were acceptable in the majority of scripts, with candidates using blue or black ink. In some instances, where candidates have drafted an answer in pencil, re-written in ink over the draft and erased the pencil marks, legibility was severely compromised. Centres are reminded of the necessity for legibility in order for candidates to achieve credit. It is acceptable for candidates to use the blank pages at the end of the question booklet to continue or re-write an answer, but it must be emphasised that it should be clearly indicated to the Examiner that extra pages have been used. As a general rule, candidates are advised that the number of lines and amount of space provided on the page should give an indication of the length of response required. It is recommended that these are used as a guide.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This first exercise provided the candidates with a good introduction to the paper. Many scored full marks.

- (a) Most answers were correct. The most correct answer was 'museum', but the recent addition 'desert garden' was also accepted. Any wrong answers usually involved incorrect lifting from the first paragraph about Badr himself.

- (b) A differentiating question early in the paper. Careful reading of the questions was required because candidates were asked what could be done at Well Number Six. A number of candidates described the well itself 'gushing into the small concrete pool', instead of describing what they could do there.
- (c) This question was well answered. Since either the 'Ain Bishoi' spring or the grove of palm trees etc. was accepted, most candidates gave a correct response.
- (d) Matching up 'get permission' with 'seek permission' in the text enabled most candidates to identify the correct sentence and provide the required detail.
- (e) This question was well answered. Most candidates chose the simple 'sunrise and sunset' to respond. The mark was lost by those who lifted the colourful detail, without adding a second detail – either at sunset or under a full moon.
- (f) This was a more difficult question and was not too well answered as some candidates did not read the detail 'deep into the White Desert'. Consequently, a good number incorrectly lifted 'bus service' and 'own transport'.

Exercise 2

As can be expected, this exercise showed an increasing level of difficulty. Nevertheless careful lifting from the text could secure marks. The whole range of marks was awarded across this exercise.

- (a) The first paragraph offered a variety of answers to this question with most candidates finding one. Mistakes were made when they tried to use the general idea of 'exploiting nature' and in omitting 'more' in 'more than doubled', which was the required full response.
- (b) A well answered question in that most candidates managed both details for the mark.
- (c) This question presented few problems. Candidates were able to find the paragraph where the information could be found. Some confident candidates even used the correct chemical symbol (CO_2) in their answers. Mistakes were made when they extended their answer to include other species, rather than staying with trees and plants.
- (d) This proved a good differentiator. Having read 'cone snails' and 'cancer patients' in the question, many were moved to write about the benefits to treating cancer and pain relief, completely missing the word 'impossible' in the question.
- (e) Perhaps the best answered question. The chart was clearly understood by nearly all candidates.
- (f) This question was well answered. Just a few candidates generalised by stating that the experiment in the plantations had failed, without adding the required detail of 'only produce a good crop in the forest'. Just a few were more ambitious with the sentence, 'take them out of the forest and they will not produce nuts'.
- (g) Most managed to prefix 'less than', correctly relating 'unaffected' in the question to 'untouched' in the text. Where mistakes did occur, they were caused by incorrect lifting of '20%' or by doing incorrect maths with '95%'.
- (h) This was the hardest question in the exercise. It hinged on the candidates understanding of the word 'evidence' in the question. The correct answer included the key details of 2.5 billion in 1953 in contrast to 6 billion at present. A large number of wrong answers indicated that candidate had not read the question thoroughly enough at the end of the exercise and had merely lifted carelessly as a quick response before moving on to the next exercise.



Exercise 3

This exercise was well done by the large majority of candidates and there was evidence of good preparation. More careful attention was given to spelling and, for the most part, the convention of circling the correct alternative was observed.

Section A

Mistakes were sometimes made in spelling the name of the School with the omission of the final 's' being the most common. Most candidates did correctly transcribe the name of the person completing the form. Some careless copying of the address was noted with common mistakes being the lack of capital initial letters for the proper nouns and the use of the prepositions 'at' or 'in' before the address.

Section B

The name of the pupil involved was often confused with that of her friend. Carelessness was also noted in the spelling of the pupils name e.g. Delfine/Magemba.

The date, time and place presented few problems.

Candidates made a good attempt at the description of the accident, with very few spelling errors, although for some the need for conciseness meant that one of the key elements was left out and what emerged was that 'her head hit the lamp and fell to the floor'.

The name of the witness was poorly addressed, sometimes the right person wrongly spelled and sometimes the wrong person altogether.

Section C

The number of people referred to in the text served to confuse many of the candidates. As a result there were many answers which could not be credited with a mark, despite a serious effort on the candidates' part to fulfil the requirement of the question. In addition the first of the two sentences required candidates to describe how the pupil felt after the accident (quite a number failed to notice that the question centred around one pupil – 'the pupil's condition' – and responded incorrectly as a result). The second sentence required a first person response, since it asked the candidate to write down what action was taken by the teacher after the accident.

Exercise 4

Overall the first two sections were well done with mistakes occurring in the third section through incorrect lifting.

There were very few mistakes in the first section where the candidates successfully linked 'improve' in the question to 'do better' in the text.

The second section was also well answered – just occasionally the age groups were omitted, thereby losing marks.

In the third section many candidates misunderstood the title which sought a response that listed activities you could do with your children to expose them to music. Many responses were lifted from the text and failed to answer the question, for example the provision of stereos, musical alarm clocks or a clock radio and did not quote activities like cooking and cleaning while listening to music.

Exercise 5

On the whole there was a pleasing response from candidates, with most scoring 2 marks. Very few were able to use their own words with most copying selectively from paragraphs three and four of the text, relating to School subjects and the preference for different types of music from different age groups.

What was required was an interpretation of the notes made in **Exercise 4** in sections 1 and 3, rather than section 2. Most candidates went no further than mentioning School subjects and musical tastes at different ages. A few made no attempt at this exercise. For those who, in words of their own, coherently listed the benefits to children of experiencing music, more than 2 marks could be awarded.

Exercise 6

Letter to a relative

This was well done by the great majority of candidates, who seemed to enjoy writing about the topic. There was a good sense of purpose and audience from the best candidates but most managed to write relevantly. The task required them to write in the past, present and future tenses, but in trying to speculate about how they were going to use the money there were a number of common language inaccuracies. Regular errors were mistakes of past participles – ‘I thought you have forgot’; inaccurate use of adjectives – ‘I was surprise to get your present’; singular/plural agreement – ‘my parents is happy’ and the common use of present simple instead of present perfect – ‘I meet a new friend’.

Exercise 7

Headteacher’s proposal for an internet link

The four supplied prompts, two in favour of and two against the Headteacher’s proposal, are intended to serve as a springboard for the candidates’ own ideas and opinions.

As always, a great number of candidates felt unable to offer some ideas of their own, merely repeating, sometimes directly copying, the given written prompts and Centres should be aware that such candidates cannot score high marks for content. It was refreshing to see others attempting to be more ambitious and developing their own ideas using the prompts.

Most candidates attempted to address the topic and wrote at appropriate length but some merely wrote about the internet in general and the advantages/disadvantages that come from access to it. These candidates scored lower marks than those who had tried to include the idea of their School linking with another abroad adding a discussion of some possible benefits or even drawbacks. Some others also thought that this was a question about the value of friendship and made no mention of the internet link at all.

As in the previous question linguistic errors were most obvious in the confusion of tenses. This tends to occur when candidates are writing at speed and are constrained by time; Centres might consider short timed writing exercises to improve this. Examiners noted again the increasing use of connecting words and discourse markers to give a sense of cohesion, which clearly shows good classroom practice. There was some evidence that a number of candidates did not really understand their function in a sentence, leading to confusion, for example, between ‘furthermore’ and ‘nevertheless’. It is, however, important that candidates should be encouraged to attempt this level of sophistication of language in a discursive piece of writing. There was a general improvement in punctuation and spelling.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/21

Reading and Writing (Extended)

General comments

Overall, the vast majority of candidates were correctly entered at this level, but a small number could arguably have benefited from being entered at Core level, where the tasks would have been more suited to their linguistic ability.

The paper offered a range of tasks within the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to demonstrate a variety of practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in individual questions and across the paper as a whole.

There were very few misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the rubric for each exercise. However, there was some evidence that candidates needed to apply greater precision in their reading of individual questions, particularly in **Exercise 2**, and the rubric of **Exercise 5**. It should be emphasised to candidates that precise reading of the wording of each question and the instructions to each exercise are vital as the first requirements to a successful answer. There was continued improvement in the completion of the order form in **Exercise 3**, particularly in **Section C**, where candidates were required to write a full sentence. More candidates are achieving the accuracy of transcription demanded in this exercise, combined with brief factual detail. **Exercise 4** was generally attempted successfully and it was pleasing to note that more candidates are displaying the results of good classroom preparation and answering with brief notes rather than in sentences. Teachers should continue to use the brevity of the Mark Scheme as a guide to what would constitute minimal but successful answers in this exercise. In **Exercise 5**, it was encouraging to see that word lengths were generally well observed, although, disappointingly, there were many instances where candidates were careless in their reading of the precise requirements of the question. The extended writing tasks of **Exercises 6** and **7** were well attempted generally and the topics seemed to have appealed to this group of candidates.

Handwriting and general presentation were acceptable in the majority of cases and 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. Candidates generally avoided the 'For Examiner's Use' column to the right of each answer page. It is permissible for candidates to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet as a continuation of their answers, especially in **Exercises 6** and **7**, but they need to indicate clearly to the Examiners where extra work has been added. Generally candidates should be advised that 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. Time management did not appear to be a problem and there were very few candidates who failed to complete all the exercises in the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This exercise was very well attempted by the majority of candidates and provided a suitable introduction to the reading comprehension tasks.

- (a) This was well answered by most candidates.
- (b) Occasionally the word 'how' was missing from the answer 'how people lived', and could not be credited.
- (c) Candidates were generally successful in identifying the two correct details. However, some were careless with their reading of the question and gave answers which referred to the restaurants and cafes on Ann Siang Road, which was not Chinatown.



- (d) This was well answered, although there was some careless spelling – ‘suberb’.
- (e) This question proved more challenging and required candidates to distinguish between two different islands – Pulau Ubin and Bintan. There were frequent incorrect references to ‘famous beaches and gentle waves’ which could not be credited.
- (f) This was well attempted, although some candidates did not include the second detail about ‘comfortable shoes’.
- (g) This was very well answered.

Exercise 2

More able candidates provided brief answers here and were able to select the detail from the text and transcribe it with precision. Less able candidates often added incorrect detail to the required information, which nullified the answer. The general interpretation of the graphical material was very good. Some answers in this exercise demonstrated that candidates were careless with their reading of certain questions. A full range of marks was achieved on the exercise as a whole.

- (a) Many candidates selected the correct idea from the text but lacked the key detail of delivering to ‘offices/workplaces’.
- (b) This was generally well answered, but the important detail of ‘to homes’ was not always included.
- (c) This was generally well answered, although there was some evidence of careless reading of the question. Some candidates answered ‘handcarts and bullocks’ whilst others felt that ‘bicycles and bikes’ were two separate means of transport.
- (d) This was well answered overall, with candidates using all three options in equal measure.
- (e) The graphical element was well interpreted.
- (f) This proved to be a more discriminating question. Candidates had to make a connection between different religions and dietary rules. Many omitted one of these key elements, usually mentioning only the dietary aspect without linking it to the religious context.
- (g) More able candidates provided succinct answers here, focusing only on the ‘efficient business’ idea. Others were less precise and included the irrelevant reference to the ‘impressive statistic’.
- (h) Careless reading of the question meant that many candidates supplied only one detail when two were required. Many wrote at length and with little precision about the delivery service being cheaper and added a good deal of irrelevant information. There were fewer candidates who recognised the ‘traditional, home-made food’ idea.
- (i) This was pleasingly attempted and most candidates conveyed the exact nature of the *dabbawallah*’s next task. There were some, however, who considered that his work consisted of ‘sitting exhausted on his delivery bicycle’ and could not be credited.
- (j) A full range of marks was awarded here. There were several candidates who scored full marks. Some, however, were wide of the mark and included details which often repeated the answers to previous questions. Candidates should always check to confirm that they have not duplicated answers. Other candidates wrote at length solely about the improvement in delivery methods and could not be credited with more than one mark.

Centres are reminded that this final question in **Exercise 2** is more challenging and is designed to differentiate between the most able candidates. Candidates should be prepared to review the stimulus article as a whole because key information may appear at any point in the text.



Exercise 3

Candidates continue to be better prepared for the specific demands of this exercise which requires application of the conventions of form-filling and total accuracy in spelling. **Sections A** and **B** of the order form were designed to be completed with brief answers. Candidates answered these sections well and attempted **Section C** better than in past papers. Overall, there were fewer spelling errors than in previous sessions and transcription from the stimulus text was largely accurate.

Application Form

Section A

Almost all candidates were successful with the name, contact details and customer account number. Occasionally, there was carelessness with the name, changing 'Antonia' to 'Antonio'. As a general comment, there were many instances of badly formed letters, notably 'a', 'o' and 'u', and it was often impossible to distinguish between them. Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of good, clear handwriting throughout the paper, but especially in this exercise where correct spelling is crucial. Some candidates placed an X in the box when it should have been left blank, but generally candidates interpreted the wording of the form well. There was occasional confusion as to the person receiving the delivery and 'Antonia Bartolomeo' was repeated on occasion. Candidates are advised to check that they are not writing the same answer twice. The address was less successful. Centres are reminded that the use of prepositions such as 'at' and expressions such as 'in the suburbs of' are not part of the convention of address writing and cannot be credited. The correct order of the address is also essential.

Section B

This was a more challenging section but overall it was well attempted. The majority of candidates wrote correct details for the first answer, although both 'brown' and 'white' were offered as the colour and there was some misspelling of 'ceramic'. There was also occasional confusion about whether the vase was ceramic or glass and more precise reading of the text was required here. The catalogue number and the circling were well answered, and 'customer account card' was well recognised. There was some misunderstanding of the prices, with '74' offered instead of '65' for the price per item. Some candidates also lost marks because of carelessness with the spelling of 'Australian' which often appeared as 'Austrian'.

Section C

There was overall a very pleasing improvement in the answers to this section compared to previous sessions. However, this task remains very challenging for all candidates. Firstly, it must be stressed that if candidates are outside the prescribed word limits for the sentence then they automatically score zero, as per the Mark Scheme. In this session, this requirement was much better observed than in the past, but there were still too many candidates who wrote in excess of 20 words. Other less frequent errors included the writing of two sentences instead of one and the use of the third person, as in 'her mother'. Those who observed the rubric requirements composed a sentence which was generally well punctuated and accurately spelled, with the possible exception of 'surprise' where the first 'r' was occasionally omitted.

Finally, it must be emphasised that the information for writing this sentence will always be found in the stimulus text. Occasionally, candidates supply their own personal details or create fictitious answers. This section is not intended to be a creative writing task.

Exercise 4

Most candidates were able to show enough understanding of the text and extract the relevant information to score very well here. Overall, the exercise was very successfully attempted. The number of candidates who continue to write full sentences is diminishing and most answers are becoming briefer and in note form. At the same time, however, the notes should not be so short that key words are omitted. The bullet points and the length of line should be a guide to candidates as to how to present their answers here. If candidates' answers extend beyond the space provided then they have arguably written too much.

Physical changes to astronauts caused by lack of gravity

Key points were well recognised. All of the four possible content points were used and candidates showed a good understanding of the relevant sections in the text. Less able candidates had difficulties in identifying key items of information and separating different ideas. For example, candidates often included both 'weightlessness' and 'liquids moving up inside the body' as the same idea on the same line. Candidates need to be more precise in treating these ideas as discrete, individual points even when they are close together in the text.

Special requirements for food in space

This section proved a little more challenging. It was particularly pleasing that candidates selected all four possible answers in equal measure. The main problem here was the repetition of the same idea on separate lines. This was particularly the case where candidates wrote, 'prepare food which does not break' and 'moist food that sticks together' on separate lines and could only be credited once.

Challenges for the voyage to Mars

There was general recognition of all answers, although fewer candidates offered the final point about the bacterial growth. The section was well answered although the same two problems arose here as in the previous sections. Firstly, there was repetition of the same idea – 'the timeline is long' and 'great distances'. Secondly, two separate ideas were often included on the same line – 'unpredictable weather' and 'mechanical problems'.

Exercise 5

The summary proved to be a very good discriminating exercise and there was a wide range of marks awarded here. Candidates needed to write a summary of the main criticisms of social networking sites such as Facebook. It was a topic which was familiar to the candidature as a whole. It was encouraging to see that many candidates completed the summary within the prescribed word limit. More able candidates focused on the third and final paragraphs in order to find the key details of the main criticisms. Less able candidates wrote in excess of 120 words, often as a result of careless reading of the rubric. They concentrated on the first two paragraphs of the passage which covered the phenomenon of social networking sites in general terms and then detailed their advantages. Consequently key content points regarding criticisms of the sites were not addressed until after the 120 word limit and could not be credited. Other candidates were less successful because they spent too much time concentrating on their own general views and experiences of social networking sites. Although these were often well written, they did not address the rubric requirements and could not be credited with content points.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range, with the majority scoring 2. It was encouraging to note that more candidates attempted to use their own words and that Centres have been practising the use of alternative words and expressions. Centres are reminded that higher marks of 3 and 4 for language are available for those candidates who make an attempt to use their own words, so practice with verb and adjective synonyms would help here.

Exercise 6

In general, this exercise was well attempted. It appeared that the candidates found the topic relevant and it gave them scope to develop their ideas. The word limit was well observed and there was little evidence of short work.

The main area of concern was in the ability to sustain a whole piece in the correct tense. The main tense for the story was the simple past but there were many instances of mixing present and past tenses within paragraphs and even within sentences. These are areas that need to be improved in order to raise the language mark above the 'satisfactory' band. Basic punctuation was sound, although there are still many candidates that substitute commas for full stops throughout the whole piece. This is accompanied by a lack of capital letters, thus making one uninterrupted sentence on occasion. More able candidates used paragraphs to good purpose and they provided an effective division between the three different ideas that the candidates needed to address in the bullet points. There was often a good attempt to supply a suitable introduction and brief concluding statement, in an informal register. Overall there was a good sense of form and shape to these letters. Less able candidates wrote one continuous paragraph, with no attempt to set the scene and provide an audience for the letter.

Examiners welcome the use of more ambitious and unusual language, but candidates need to be aware that pre-learnt phrases and idioms do not always work in certain contexts. 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.

A very interesting item

In Exercise 6, in addition to the bullet prompts, there is usually a visual guide to help candidates when selecting a theme for their writing. It must be emphasised that candidates are always free to choose their own material 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. In addition, candidates should convey a good sense of purpose and engage the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward those candidates who can demonstrate a more vital style and provide some innovative detail.

In this exercise, overall, candidates made satisfactory attempts to cover all the three bullet points and work was of a satisfactory length. Examiners were looking to credit candidates who used their imagination and developed a story line which was enjoyable to read. More able candidates wrote with enthusiasm and a sense of incredulity about their discoveries. They gave full descriptions of the item, often with interesting adjectives, and explained the outcome of the episode in considerable detail. Some provided a surprise ending, whilst others pondered the moral dilemma of whether to keep the item or try and find the rightful owner. Many handed in their discovery to the police and were rewarded for their honesty. Less successful candidates made little attempt to describe the item in any detail and the story line was often very predictable. Whilst it was acceptable to write about a visit to a shopping mall and the discovery of an item of clothing or a gadget on sale in a shop, those candidates who chose this path often produced bland accounts and had problems providing an explanation of what they did next.

Exercise 7

Most candidates were able to adopt a more formal tone and register for the final discursive exercise. 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. More able candidates expanded on the prompts and showed some independence of thought. They also achieved some variety of style by, for example, the use of rhetorical questions. 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. Most candidates gave a balanced view and considered both sides of the argument with good use of paragraphs and linking words to support this. Word limits were well observed and it appears as though time constraints at this stage of the paper were not a problem for the vast majority of candidates.

Fashionable clothes

Candidates were able to respond with assurance and experience on the topic of fashion and there was a good balance of argument, both for and against. There were many commendable attempts to introduce the piece with some rhetorical questions and to provide a concluding opinion. This gave a sense of cohesion to many of the pieces. Although there was a good deal of reliance on the prompts, more able candidates managed to expand convincingly on these ideas and produced pieces that were persuasive. They provided good examples of independent thought and introduced some original ideas into the argument. These thoughts were often broadened to include topics such as globalisation, the moral argument against expensive fashion in times of economic difficulties, and the larger question of whether money could be better spent on other humanitarian areas. Less able candidates tended to blur the impact of their argument by including lengthy descriptions of specific items of clothing, such as jeans and T-shirts, with which they were familiar. These pieces tended to drift into irrelevance with no conclusions being drawn.



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/22

Reading and Writing (Extended)

General comments

Most candidates were correctly entered at this level, although the Core paper would have been more appropriate to the linguistic ability of a small number of candidates.

The paper offered a range of tasks within the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to demonstrate a variety of practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in individual questions and across the paper as a whole.

There were few misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the rubric for each exercise. However, a small number of candidates needed to apply greater precision in their reading of individual questions, particularly in **Exercises 2** and **4**, and the rubric and prompts of **Exercises 6** and **7**. Candidates should be fully aware that precise reading of the wording of each question and the instructions to each exercise are vital as the first requirements to a successful answer. There was continued improvement in the completion of the application form in **Exercise 3**, particularly in **Section C**, where most candidates were within the word range and many fulfilled the requirements of relevance and sentence construction. In **Exercise 4**, candidates generally provided answers of sufficient brevity, although sometimes necessary detail was omitted and a repeat answer given for the second bullet point. This is something candidates should consider when giving their responses. In **Exercise 5**, it was encouraging to see that the word length was generally observed. In this exercise, more candidates are attempting to use their own words and give a more coherent, cohesive summary-style piece of writing, whilst adhering closely enough to the key ideas in the original text. The extended writing tasks of **Exercises 6** and **7** were well attempted generally and the topics seemed to appeal to the candidates.

Handwriting and general presentation were acceptable in the majority of cases and an increasing number of candidates used black ink. This is the preferred colour for Cambridge International Examinations and teachers should encourage all candidates to use this in future sessions. Candidates generally avoided the *For Examiner's Use* column to the right of each answer page. It is permissible for candidates to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet as a continuation of their answers, especially in **Exercises 6** and **7**, but it is important that they indicate clearly to the Examiners where extra work has been added. Generally candidates should be advised that 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. Time management did not appear to be a problem and there were very few candidates who failed to complete all the exercises in the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This exercise was very well attempted by the majority of candidates and provided a suitable introduction to the reading comprehension tasks.

- (a) This was well answered by most candidates. Occasionally, 'paints and sculpts' was incorrectly lifted.
- (b) Candidates were generally successful in identifying both required details, but a few gave 'swim' rather than 'soak', which changed the meaning and therefore could not be credited.
- (c) This was well answered although a few candidates failed to convey a future idea or that the hotel was not yet built.
- (d) Most candidates answered correctly. Those that merely listed the types of tree, omitting 'grove', failed to provide the necessary detail.

- (e) Most candidates responded correctly. Those who replaced the idea of families 'looking after' crops with 'living there' could not be credited.
- (f) This was usually well answered and candidates offered two details. All three options were used. On occasion candidates gave one detail as the change of colour, which was a possible response for (g) and incorrect.
- (g) A number of candidates were unable to provide two distinct details, giving examples of animal forms and unusual shapes, which only constituted one detail of the possible three options.
- (h) This question was very well answered with the exception of a few candidates who only gave 'four-wheel vehicle'.

Exercise 2

This exercise proved challenging but answers were generally of appropriate brevity. The interpretation of the graphical material was good. A full range of marks was achieved on the exercise as a whole and taken overall, it was good for differentiation. Candidates need to be precise in their answers and to ensure that responses follow on from the question. When the relevant section of the text has been located, it is important that candidates read enough to satisfy themselves that they have indeed found the correct answer and understand reference words, such as pronouns, correctly.

- (a) Many candidates selected one of the three possible ways of expressing the correct idea from the text. Of those who gave the idea which referred to the number of humans, there were some who omitted 'more than', which rendered the answer, 'Humans have doubled in number', to be factually inaccurate.
- (b) This was well answered with the majority of candidates correctly supplying two details.
- (c) Most candidates gave at least one of the two correct factual details regarding plants and trees, but some gave information about what other species do (e.g. purify water etc.), thus gaining only 1 of the 2 possible marks. It was pleasing that the necessary verb ideas 'produce' and 'absorb' were included.
- (d) The majority of candidates answered this well, although a few failed to convey the idea of habitats being 'under threat' or focused on information about toxins, which could not be credited.
- (e) This was very well answered and candidates clearly understood the graph. A very small number of candidates did not respond to the singular 'country' and interpreted the answer as requiring countries with 400 or more endangered species, and gave the US, Australia and Indonesia as their answer.
- (f) Many candidates gave a full correct answer. However, some used the pronoun 'they' instead of 'trees', which changed the meaning by picking up from 'brazil nuts'. Also, candidates omitted 'only', which was crucial to what constituted a correct answer.
- (g) This was generally well attempted but some candidates could not be credited for imprecision when they failed to include 'less than' since '5%' was incorrect.
- (h) Most candidates referred to population growth. However, some only gave the statistic of the present population level (6 million), which did not communicate the idea of growth. Others incorrectly lifted the sentence either before or after the statistical information, which did not answer the question.



- (i) Most candidates had difficulty in finding four distinct examples out of the six possible options of what humans could do to stop exploiting other species. A number of candidates suggested measures that were connected with protecting the environment but were not in the text, making references to pollution or planting trees. They also suggested protecting animals generally but needed to be more specific and mention 'endangered' or 'small' species. Sometimes the wording did not express the example accurately e.g. 'keep their living space'. These responses could not be credited.

Centres are reminded that this final question in **Exercise 2** is global and is designed to differentiate between the most able candidates. Candidates should be prepared to review the stimulus article as a whole because the answers may appear at any point in the text.

Exercise 3

Candidates had been generally well prepared for the particular demands of this exercise, which requires the application of the conventions of form-filling and total accuracy in spelling, the use of capital letters and punctuation where appropriate. **Sections A** and **B** of the application form were designed to be completed with brief answers, with instructions to tick, circle or delete as necessary. Candidates answered these sections well, although very occasionally they failed to do as directed by underlining, deleting or circling counter to the instructions.

Application Form

Section A

Almost all candidates were successful with the pupil's name, age and telephone details. The address was less successful and Centres are reminded that the use of prepositions such as 'at' and 'in' cannot be credited. Capital letters as in the stimulus text are required and a number of candidates did not use these. The correct order of the address is also important. Where candidates were asked to give the number of brothers/sisters, a few gave only the name. This lack of attention to detail meant candidates' responses were not credited.

Section B

This section was well attempted and only the deletion question seemed to cause difficulty. A significant number of candidates missed or misunderstood the 'apart from cycling' reference and thus deleted 'No'.

If one answer has been deleted, it is not necessary to circle the alternative, though marks are not lost for this. Many candidates used ticks and circles as specified. In previous sessions this has not always been the case and crosses have been used. However, a few candidates were careless with their 'ticks', which were in fact diagonal lines and therefore could not be credited.

Section C

The majority of candidates fulfilled the requirements of this section well and a significant number were awarded the full 2 marks. They were generally within the prescribed word limit, used proper sentence construction with no errors of punctuation, grammar or spelling and gave relevant details according to information in the stimulus text. However, there are some types of response which cannot be credited with any marks and a small number of candidates gave such answers. These candidates ignored the word limit, wrote incomplete sentences with such beginnings as 'Talking to my friends ...', or gave wrong information (reading/doing homework). Some 'sentences' either did not begin with a capital letter or did not end with a full-stop. Candidates should also be aware that the information for writing this sentence will always be found in the stimulus text. A number of candidates supplied their own personal details or created fictitious answers which were not relevant to the task.

Exercise 4

This exercise proved quite challenging and it was here in particular that candidates generally either did not always respond to the requirements of the heading or gave a repeat point for the second bullet point. Few candidates obtained full marks mainly due to their misunderstanding of 'activities' in the third heading, so this exercise achieved the desired differentiation. Responses tended to be of appropriate length for this note-taking exercise. However, although brief notes are required, it is important that essential details such as verbs or adjectives that add to or clarify meaning are included.

School subjects that improve if children are involved in music

Most candidates selected school subjects and scored well in this section but a few focused on reasoning skills and cognitive development, which are not school subjects and could not be credited.

Preferences in music at different ages

The majority of candidates gave points 5 and 6 correctly. In point 4, some gave 'classical and pop' which failed to convey the idea of 'any type of music' suggested by 'classical to pop'.

Activities you can do with your child to expose him/her to music

Some candidates scored well in this section, but a number of them misinterpreted the idea of 'activities' and chose 'put a CD player...' and 'give a musical alarm clock'. These responses did not fulfil the requirements of the heading.

Advice on giving music lessons to 5-7 year olds

There were three possible points for this section, which referred to how to begin music lessons, how not to begin them, or not force children to have them. However, the idea of starting with the piano/string instruments was seen as two distinct points by a number of candidates, which meant that their second bullet point was a repeat idea. Some candidates also omitted a verb, writing only 'piano lessons'. This did not convey the idea clearly enough and could not be credited.

Exercise 5

Candidates generally performed well on this exercise and had been well prepared in the summary skills required. It was clear that many had read the rubric and the requirements of the exercise carefully. Candidates needed to write a summary about the skills a waiter must have. Most candidates were able to provide the key content points in equal measure, with the exception of point 8 which proved more challenging to identify. It was also encouraging that more candidates than ever completed the summary within the prescribed word limit.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range. However, the majority of candidates attempted to use their own words, which suggested that Centres have been practising the use of alternative words and expressions. Centres are reminded that higher marks of 3 and 4 for language are available for those candidates who make an attempt to use their own words, so further practice with verb and adjective synonyms would be useful.

Extended writing: general comments

In general, candidates produced letters and articles which were satisfactory or better in terms of both language and content in **Exercises 6** and **7**. Length was within the prescribed word limits and rarely fell short of this. There seemed to be good time management across the pieces as a whole. Most candidates had a general understanding of how to structure and organise their work. Paragraphing, an appropriate introduction and ending were usually in evidence. It should be emphasised that good organisation is crucial to the quality of what is produced. The degree of cohesion and coherence affects the extent to which ideas are well developed and the reader's interest is engaged. There were a number of candidates who wrote with a good sense of purpose and audience, using turn of phrase and precise vocabulary, where meaning was clear despite making some fairly basic grammatical errors. Such candidates are credited for the positive aspects of their writing but their work would be enhanced by improved accuracy with regard to subject/verb agreement and the ability to sustain a piece of writing using correct tenses throughout. There were instances of inaccurately mixing present and past tenses within paragraphs and even within sentences. These are areas that need to be improved in order to raise the language mark above the 'satisfactory' band. Basic punctuation was generally sound, although there are still some candidates who substitute commas for full stops, accompanied by a lack of capital letters, sometimes making meaning unclear and difficult to decipher.

Exercise 6

In this exercise, candidates must address and develop the bullet point prompts and the extent to which this is done will determine which band is achieved in the criteria for content. For a mark in a higher band, candidates should convey a good sense of purpose and engage the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward those candidates who can demonstrate a more vital style and provide some innovative detail.

Letter to a relative

On the whole this was well attempted and candidates responded using appropriate register and tone. The task seemed to be one with which they could identify. There were very few candidates who produced short work. Generally, coverage of all three bullet prompts was achieved, although some candidates focused mainly on how they planned to spend the money and gave only a brief account of their news, or none at all. Most were effusive in their thanks.

Exercise 7

Most candidates were able to adopt an appropriate tone and register in an attempt to interest their peers in the topic. There was a selection of four guiding prompts – two for and two against the consideration in the title. Less able candidates were inclined to stay very close to these cues, sometimes copying them directly with little or no development or personal contribution. More able candidates expanded on the prompts and showed some independence of thought. They also achieved some variety of style through, for example, the use of rhetorical questions. There needs to be evidence that candidates can develop arguments and persuade the reader of their convictions in order to obtain marks in the higher bands. Generally candidates gave a balanced view and considered both sides of the argument with good use of paragraphs and linking words to support this. Word limits were well observed and it appears as though time constraints at this stage of the paper were not a problem for the vast majority of candidates.

Headteacher's proposal for an internet link

The majority of candidates gave a balanced discussion of the Headteacher's proposal, making their own views and position clear. Some candidates, however, presented both sides of the argument with equal vigour and failed to use appropriate linking words to signal the development of their argument, which could be confusing for the reader. A number of candidates were able to introduce their own ideas or expand upon the prompts, adding more interest to their writing. A few merely focused on the benefits and pitfalls of using the internet with little reference to its value with regard to linking schools, while others discussed making a link with a school abroad but made little mention of the internet. It is important for candidates to address all aspects of the task with regard to content.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/23

Reading and Writing (Extended) 23

General comments

Most candidates were correctly entered at this level, although the Core paper would have been more appropriate to the linguistic ability of a small number of candidates.

The paper offered a range of tasks within the seven exercises, requiring the candidates to demonstrate a variety of practical skills. There were degrees of difficulty within each exercise and differentiation was achieved in individual questions and across the paper as a whole.

There were few misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the rubric for each exercise. However, a small number of candidates needed to apply greater precision in their reading of individual questions, particularly in **Exercises 2** and **4**, and the rubric and prompts of **Exercises 6** and **7**. Candidates should be fully aware that precise reading of the wording of each question and the instructions to each exercise are vital as the first requirements to a successful answer. There was continued improvement in the completion of the application form in **Exercise 3**, particularly in **Section C**, where most candidates were within the word range and many fulfilled the requirements of relevance and sentence construction. In **Exercise 4**, candidates generally provided answers of sufficient brevity, although sometimes necessary detail was omitted and a repeat answer given for the second bullet point. This is something candidates should consider when giving their responses. In **Exercise 5**, it was encouraging to see that the word length was generally observed. In this exercise, more candidates are attempting to use their own words and give a more coherent, cohesive summary-style piece of writing, whilst adhering closely enough to the key ideas in the original text. The extended writing tasks of **Exercises 6** and **7** were well attempted generally and the topics seemed to appeal to the candidates.

Handwriting and general presentation were acceptable in the majority of cases and an increasing number of candidates used black ink. This is the preferred colour for Cambridge International Examinations and teachers should encourage all candidates to use this in future sessions. Candidates generally avoided the *For Examiner's Use* column to the right of each answer page. It is permissible for candidates to use the blank pages at the end of the booklet as a continuation of their answers, especially in **Exercises 6** and **7**, but it is important that they indicate clearly to the Examiners where extra work has been added. Generally candidates should be advised that 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. Time management did not appear to be a problem and there were very few candidates who failed to complete all the exercises in the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This exercise was very well attempted by the majority of candidates and provided a suitable introduction to the reading comprehension tasks.

- (a) This was well answered by most candidates. Occasionally, 'paints and sculpts' was incorrectly lifted.
- (b) Candidates were generally successful in identifying both required details, but a few gave 'swim' rather than 'soak', which changed the meaning and therefore could not be credited.
- (c) This was well answered although a few candidates failed to convey a future idea or that the hotel was not yet built.



- (d) Most candidates answered correctly. Those that merely listed the types of tree, omitting 'grove', failed to provide the necessary detail.
- (e) Most candidates responded correctly. Those who replaced the idea of families 'looking after' crops with 'living there' could not be credited.
- (f) This was usually well answered and candidates offered two details. All three options were used. On occasion candidates gave one detail as the change of colour, which was a possible response for (g) and incorrect.
- (g) A number of candidates were unable to provide two distinct details, giving examples of animal forms and unusual shapes, which only constituted one detail of the possible three options.
- (h) This question was very well answered with the exception of a few candidates who only gave 'four-wheel vehicle'.

Exercise 2

This exercise proved challenging but answers were generally of appropriate brevity. The interpretation of the graphical material was good. A full range of marks was achieved on the exercise as a whole and taken overall, it was good for differentiation. Candidates need to be precise in their answers and to ensure that responses follow on from the question. When the relevant section of the text has been located, it is important that candidates read enough to satisfy themselves that they have indeed found the correct answer and understand reference words, such as pronouns, correctly.

- (a) Many candidates selected one of the three possible ways of expressing the correct idea from the text. Of those who gave the idea which referred to the number of humans, there were some who omitted 'more than', which rendered the answer, 'Humans have doubled in number', to be factually inaccurate.
- (b) This was well answered with the majority of candidates correctly supplying two details.
- (c) Most candidates gave at least one of the two correct factual details regarding plants and trees, but some gave information about what other species do (e.g. purify water etc.), thus gaining only 1 of the 2 possible marks. It was pleasing that the necessary verb ideas 'produce' and 'absorb' were included.
- (d) The majority of candidates answered this well, although a few failed to convey the idea of habitats being 'under threat' or focused on information about toxins, which could not be credited.
- (e) This was very well answered and candidates clearly understood the graph. A very small number of candidates did not respond to the singular 'country' and interpreted the answer as requiring countries with 400 or more endangered species, and gave the US, Australia and Indonesia as their answer.
- (f) Many candidates gave a full correct answer. However, some used the pronoun 'they' instead of 'trees', which changed the meaning by picking up from 'brazil nuts'. Also, candidates omitted 'only', which was crucial to what constituted a correct answer.
- (g) This was generally well attempted but some candidates could not be credited for imprecision when they failed to include 'less than' since '5%' was incorrect.
- (h) Most candidates referred to population growth. However, some only gave the statistic of the present population level (6 million), which did not communicate the idea of growth. Others incorrectly lifted the sentence either before or after the statistical information, which did not answer the question.



- (i) Most candidates had difficulty in finding four distinct examples out of the six possible options of what humans could do to stop exploiting other species. A number of candidates suggested measures that were connected with protecting the environment but were not in the text, making references to pollution or planting trees. They also suggested protecting animals generally but needed to be more specific and mention 'endangered' or 'small' species. Sometimes the wording did not express the example accurately e.g. 'keep their living space'. These responses could not be credited.

Centres are reminded that this final question in **Exercise 2** is global and is designed to differentiate between the most able candidates. Candidates should be prepared to review the stimulus article as a whole because the answers may appear at any point in the text.

Exercise 3

Candidates had been generally well prepared for the particular demands of this exercise, which requires the application of the conventions of form-filling and total accuracy in spelling, the use of capital letters and punctuation where appropriate. **Sections A** and **B** of the application form were designed to be completed with brief answers, with instructions to tick, circle or delete as necessary. Candidates answered these sections well, although very occasionally they failed to do as directed by underlining, deleting or circling counter to the instructions.

Application Form

Section A

Almost all candidates were successful with the pupil's name, age and telephone details. The address was less successful and Centres are reminded that the use of prepositions such as 'at' and 'in' cannot be credited. Capital letters as in the stimulus text are required and a number of candidates did not use these. The correct order of the address is also important. Where candidates were asked to give the number of brothers/sisters, a few gave only the name. This lack of attention to detail meant candidates' responses were not credited.

Section B

This section was well attempted and only the deletion question seemed to cause difficulty. A significant number of candidates missed or misunderstood the 'apart from cycling' reference and thus deleted 'No'.

If one answer has been deleted, it is not necessary to circle the alternative, though marks are not lost for this. Many candidates used ticks and circles as specified. In previous sessions this has not always been the case and crosses have been used. However, a few candidates were careless with their 'ticks', which were in fact diagonal lines and therefore could not be credited.

Section C

The majority of candidates fulfilled the requirements of this section well and a significant number were awarded the full 2 marks. They were generally within the prescribed word limit, used proper sentence construction with no errors of punctuation, grammar or spelling and gave relevant details according to information in the stimulus text. However, there are some types of response which cannot be credited with any marks and a small number of candidates gave such answers. These candidates ignored the word limit, wrote incomplete sentences with such beginnings as 'Talking to my friends ...', or gave wrong information (reading/doing homework). Some 'sentences' either did not begin with a capital letter or did not end with a full-stop. Candidates should also be aware that the information for writing this sentence will always be found in the stimulus text. A number of candidates supplied their own personal details or created fictitious answers which were not relevant to the task.

Exercise 4

This exercise proved quite challenging and it was here in particular that candidates generally either did not always respond to the requirements of the heading or gave a repeat point for the second bullet point. Few candidates obtained full marks mainly due to their misunderstanding of 'activities' in the third heading, so this exercise achieved the desired differentiation. Responses tended to be of appropriate length for this note-taking exercise. However, although brief notes are required, it is important that essential details such as verbs or adjectives that add to or clarify meaning are included.

School subjects that improve if children are involved in music

Most candidates selected school subjects and scored well in this section but a few focused on reasoning skills and cognitive development, which are not school subjects and could not be credited.

Preferences in music at different ages

The majority of candidates gave points 5 and 6 correctly. In point 4, some gave 'classical and pop' which failed to convey the idea of 'any type of music' suggested by 'classical to pop'.

Activities you can do with your child to expose him/her to music

Some candidates scored well in this section, but a number of them misinterpreted the idea of 'activities' and chose 'put a CD player...' and 'give a musical alarm clock'. These responses did not fulfil the requirements of the heading.

Advice on giving music lessons to 5-7 year olds

There were three possible points for this section, which referred to how to begin music lessons, how not to begin them, or not force children to have them. However, the idea of starting with the piano/string instruments was seen as two distinct points by a number of candidates, which meant that their second bullet point was a repeat idea. Some candidates also omitted a verb, writing only 'piano lessons'. This did not convey the idea clearly enough and could not be credited.

Exercise 5

Candidates generally performed well on this exercise and had been well prepared in the summary skills required. It was clear that many had read the rubric and the requirements of the exercise carefully. Candidates needed to write a summary about the skills a waiter must have. Most candidates were able to provide the key content points in equal measure, with the exception of point 8 which proved more challenging to identify. It was also encouraging that more candidates than ever completed the summary within the prescribed word limit.

Language marks were awarded across the whole range. However, the majority of candidates attempted to use their own words, which suggested that Centres have been practising the use of alternative words and expressions. Centres are reminded that higher marks of 3 and 4 for language are available for those candidates who make an attempt to use their own words, so further practice with verb and adjective synonyms would be useful.

Extended writing: general comments

In general, candidates produced letters and articles which were satisfactory or better in terms of both language and content in **Exercises 6** and **7**. Length was within the prescribed word limits and rarely fell short of this. There seemed to be good time management across the pieces as a whole. Most candidates had a general understanding of how to structure and organise their work. Paragraphing, an appropriate introduction and ending were usually in evidence. It should be emphasised that good organisation is crucial to the quality of what is produced. The degree of cohesion and coherence affects the extent to which ideas are well developed and the reader's interest is engaged. There were a number of candidates who wrote with a good sense of purpose and audience, using turn of phrase and precise vocabulary, where meaning was clear despite making some fairly basic grammatical errors. Such candidates are credited for the positive aspects of their writing but their work would be enhanced by improved accuracy with regard to subject/verb agreement and the ability to sustain a piece of writing using correct tenses throughout. There were instances of inaccurately mixing present and past tenses within paragraphs and even within sentences. These are areas that need to be improved in order to raise the language mark above the 'satisfactory' band. Basic punctuation was generally sound, although there are still some candidates who substitute commas for full stops, accompanied by a lack of capital letters, sometimes making meaning unclear and difficult to decipher.

Exercise 6

In this exercise, candidates must address and develop the bullet point prompts and the extent to which this is done will determine which band is achieved in the criteria for content. For a mark in a higher band, candidates should convey a good sense of purpose and engage the reader's interest. Examiners are looking to reward those candidates who can demonstrate a more vital style and provide some innovative detail.

Letter to a relative

On the whole this was well attempted and candidates responded using appropriate register and tone. The task seemed to be one with which they could identify. There were very few candidates who produced short work. Generally, coverage of all three bullet prompts was achieved, although some candidates focused mainly on how they planned to spend the money and gave only a brief account of their news, or none at all. Most were effusive in their thanks.

Exercise 7

Most candidates were able to adopt an appropriate tone and register in an attempt to interest their peers in the topic. There was a selection of four guiding prompts – two for and two against the consideration in the title. Less able candidates were inclined to stay very close to these cues, sometimes copying them directly with little or no development or personal contribution. More able candidates expanded on the prompts and showed some independence of thought. They also achieved some variety of style through, for example, the use of rhetorical questions. There needs to be evidence that candidates can develop arguments and persuade the reader of their convictions in order to obtain marks in the higher bands. Generally candidates gave a balanced view and considered both sides of the argument with good use of paragraphs and linking words to support this. Word limits were well observed and it appears as though time constraints at this stage of the paper were not a problem for the vast majority of candidates.

Headteacher's proposal for an internet link

The majority of candidates gave a balanced discussion of the Headteacher's proposal, making their own views and position clear. Some candidates, however, presented both sides of the argument with equal vigour and failed to use appropriate linking words to signal the development of their argument, which could be confusing for the reader. A number of candidates were able to introduce their own ideas or expand upon the prompts, adding more interest to their writing. A few merely focused on the benefits and pitfalls of using the internet with little reference to its value with regard to linking schools, while others discussed making a link with a school abroad but made little mention of the internet. It is important for candidates to address all aspects of the task with regard to content.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/31
Listening (Core)

General comments

There was a good deal of consistency in the performance of candidates this session. The range of marks was closer than in the previous session, implying that candidates were more comfortable with the examination paper and had perhaps been better prepared, or that the paper itself presented fewer challenges.

As in previous sessions, spelling was not taken into account in accordance with the 'listening for understanding' ethos of the component. Phonetic attempts at the answer can therefore be rewarded unless these resulted in a difference of meaning.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Generally candidates responded well to this section of the Paper.

Question 1 was generally answered well. However, some candidates lost the mark in misspelling aunt as 'ant', thereby creating another regular word and effecting a different meaning to that required. 'Ante' was also seen, presumably as an attempt at the more colloquial 'auntie' – this was also disallowed.

Question 2 required the candidates to convey that the report could be found online. If candidates chose to convey this by writing 'Internet' or 'a website', this was acceptable. Candidates who failed to score the mark appeared to misunderstand the question and provided answers which attempted to describe *what* the weather report would be like.

Question 3 was very well answered, though some candidates chose to write the page numbers in words which was unnecessary.

Question 4 was also very well answered with many candidates realising that the school was the venue for the first part of the visit. Many candidates offered additional information, however, which the Examiners regarded as superfluous unless the overall meaning of the response was changed.

Question 5 was answered correctly by most candidates. Those who lost the mark did so because they offered a long list of possible items or they offered ice-cream for cream. A wide range of phonetic attempts at chocolate were seen, but most of these were allowed.

Question 6 comprised two separate but related pieces of information for two marks in total. The question was explicit in requiring exact details about the accommodation and stronger candidates were able to provide these as given on the Mark Scheme. Candidates in the mid-range lost marks by not being precise, even though it was clear they had understood the question. Weaker candidates probably did not understand what accommodation meant and responded with an attempt at a destination. Carriage was found to be a difficult word, but phonetic attempts were generally correct.

Part 2

This part of the Paper comprised two note-taking exercises.

Question 7 with five available marks was about a mobile banking service for rural communities. This question was answered very well, with many candidates scoring 4 or 5 marks. Item 1, however was misunderstood by some candidates who failed to see '9 until 5 o'clock' on the page and provided this as

working hours. Candidates in regions where the weekend is not Saturday or Sunday were awarded the mark for providing alternative weekend days.

Item 2 was very well answered, as was Item 3. Item 4 saw some interesting spellings of tourist – most of which were allowed, but not, for example, ‘two rest’ as this was regarded as not close enough, and of course conveys a different meaning.

Item 5 posed a challenge for those candidates who are not familiar with weather which causes ice on roads. However, it was clear that ‘ice’ had been heard and was usually conveyed accurately. Synonyms for ice were allowed on this Paper.

Question 8 was in response to an interview about a prize-winning toy and most candidates performed quite well, achieving 4, 5 or 6 marks with apparent ease. Very few candidates achieved full marks, but hardly any scored low marks.

In Item 1, Examiners noted that brick was often unknown to candidates. However, most were able to spell this accurately and ‘break’ was the only attempt that was disallowed. A surprising number of candidates offered humble and were rewarded accordingly. Items 2, 3 and 4 required numerical details and were generally well answered. Some candidates appeared confused by the two key dates 1960 (Item 2) and 1934 (Item 3) and occasional transposed these, thereby losing both marks. The 20 million required in Item 4 was correctly given – in various formats – by the majority of candidates.

In Item 5 a number of candidates assumed that newspapers was acceptable for newsletters – but this was not allowed as these two entities are different. Item 6 saw a common response as ‘plastic’. Superhero was required, however, as the specific detail here. Stronger candidates were able to recognise this and were duly rewarded.

Item 7 required the exact transcription of ‘play well’ as the logo. Most candidates provided this and those who didn’t clearly did not understand what a logo is and offered a wide range of unrelated attempts.

Part 3

Question 9 focused on the benefits of singing. Candidates performed well on this exercise.

Question 10 was a talk about space tourism. Candidates performed even better than **Question 9**, with many receiving the full 6 marks.

Candidates were clearer than in previous sessions about their responses to the true or false questions – Examiners reported fewer gaps and less confusion as to whether true or false was being indicated.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/32
Listening (Core) 32

General comments

There was a good deal of consistency in the performance of candidates this session. The range of marks was closer than in the previous session, implying that candidates were more comfortable with the examination paper and had perhaps been better prepared, or that the paper itself presented fewer challenges.

As in previous sessions, spelling was not taken into account in accordance with the 'listening for understanding' ethos of the component. Phonetic attempts at the answer can therefore be rewarded unless these resulted in a difference of meaning.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Generally candidates responded well to this section of the Paper.

Question 1 was generally answered well. However, some candidates lost the mark in misspelling aunt as 'ant', thereby creating another regular word and effecting a different meaning to that required. 'Ante' was also seen, presumably as an attempt at the more colloquial 'auntie' – this was also disallowed.

Question 2 required the candidates to convey that the report could be found online. If candidates chose to convey this by writing 'Internet' or 'a website', this was acceptable. Candidates who failed to score the mark appeared to misunderstand the question and provided answers which attempted to describe *what* the weather report would be like.

Question 3 was very well answered, though some candidates chose to write the page numbers in words which was unnecessary.

Question 4 was also very well answered with many candidates realising that the school was the venue for the first part of the visit. Many candidates offered additional information, however, which the Examiners regarded as superfluous unless the overall meaning of the response was changed.

Question 5 was answered correctly by most candidates. Those who lost the mark did so because they offered a long list of possible items or they offered ice-cream for cream. A wide range of phonetic attempts at chocolate were seen, but most of these were allowed.

Question 6 comprised two separate but related pieces of information for two marks in total. The question was explicit in requiring exact details about the accommodation and stronger candidates were able to provide these as given on the Mark Scheme. Candidates in the mid-range lost marks by not being precise, even though it was clear they had understood the question. Weaker candidates probably did not understand what accommodation meant and responded with an attempt at a destination. Carriage was found to be a difficult word, but phonetic attempts were generally correct.

Part 2

This part of the Paper comprised two note-taking exercises.

Question 7 with five available marks was about a mobile banking service for rural communities. This question was answered very well, with many candidates scoring 4 or 5 marks. Item 1, however was misunderstood by some candidates who failed to see '9 until 5 o'clock' on the page and provided this as working hours. Candidates in regions where the weekend is not Saturday or Sunday were awarded the mark for providing alternative weekend days.

Item 2 was very well answered, as was Item 3. Item 4 saw some interesting spellings of tourist – most of which were allowed, but not, for example, 'two rest' as this was regarded as not close enough, and of course conveys a different meaning.

Item 5 posed a challenge for those candidates who are not familiar with weather which causes ice on roads. However, it was clear that 'ice' had been heard and was usually conveyed accurately. Synonyms for ice were allowed on this Paper.

Question 8 was in response to an interview about a prize-winning toy and most candidates performed quite well, achieving 4, 5 or 6 marks with apparent ease. Very few candidates achieved full marks, but hardly any scored low marks.

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In Item 5 a number of candidates assumed that newspapers was acceptable for newsletters – but this was not allowed as these two entities are different. Item 6 saw a common response as 'plastic'. Superhero was required, however, as the specific detail here. Stronger candidates were able to recognise this and were duly rewarded.

Item 7 required the exact transcription of 'play well' as the logo. Most candidates provided this and those who did not clearly did not understand what a logo is and offered a wide range of unrelated attempts.

Part 3

Question 9 focused on the benefits of singing. Candidates performed well on this exercise.

Question 10 was a talk about space tourism. Candidates performed even better than **Question 9**, with many receiving the full 6 marks.

Candidates were clearer than in previous sessions about their responses to the true or false questions – Examiners reported fewer gaps and less confusion as to whether true or false was being indicated.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/41
Listening (Extended)

General comments

Candidates generally performed well in response to this paper, coping with the format of the paper and making good use of the allotted time for the examination. There were few omissions this session; generally candidates submitted fully completed papers. There was evidence throughout the component responses of engagement with task and recorded text and of much thought and effort in providing answers. Many candidates underline parts of the question in order to help focus on the required answer. A recommended strategy of approach is to underline the questioning word used, for example, 'how', 'why', 'where', and to make sure that this is attended to in the course of the answer. Many common errors arise out of misunderstanding of the question word; for example answering 'what?' when the question asks 'where?'

The ethos of this component is always to test listening for understanding. In accordance with this concept, Examiners accept all relevant phonetic attempts at an answer, except where the candidate attempt makes another word and thus changes the sense of the response, for example, 'band' for 'bend' in Question 6.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Part 1 of the paper was the short question and answer section comprising six short scenarios demanding concise answers. This section provides a gentle introduction to the component which then becomes more challenging as the exercises progress.

Candidates usually fare quite well in response to this first section and demonstrate a good level of aural comprehension and good engagement with the subject matter of each scenario.

Question 1 asked where the visitors will go during the first part of the visit. This was generally found to be very accessible and was very well done by candidates, except where the question word had been misunderstood or where the candidates transcribed several lines of information including the idea of trips – which were to take place during the second part of the visit. This scattergun approach is not usually credited – although the answer may be embedded in the information, it is usually negated by the superfluous transcription.

Question 2, needing 'chocolate or cream', was well done by all showing obvious understanding. Some candidates transcribed what was heard but this did not address the question fully which again resulted in a list which was not credited.

Question 3 carried two marks and asked, 'where exactly?', requiring two details – 'carriage 4/bed 48X'. Both answers were often fully provided and showed good understanding at all ability levels; in each case the noun was necessary to make sense in the answer, numbers alone were not credited.

Question 4 needed the answer 'one-third of/two-thirds off the original price' and Examiners also allowed the given example '£6 to £2'. 'Prize' was not credited.

Question 5 asked 'where and when?'; the required answers were 'channel 20/10.30' although many candidates wrote '9 o'clock', which was the distractor.

Question 6 asked for two directions 'after the steps'; many candidates included the steps as the first part of the answer (just reiterating the question) and then wrote about walking beside the river and failed to address the second point, which was walking 'around the bend'.

Overall candidates engaged very well with questions 1-6 this session; 8 marks were available here and many candidates scored well over half of these, some scoring full marks.

Part 2

Question 7 was a form-filling exercise in response to an interview about a mobile bank. This exercise was well tried at all ability levels while also providing for some differentiation. The weekdays credited for the first answer were, 'Monday-Friday/Sunday-Thursday/Saturday-Wednesday'. The second response '3 years' was very well done by all, although there were some 13s and 30s in the wrong place here. The routes were mainly 'coastal' and a variety of spelling attempts were credited here. There were 13 stops and customers could obtain 'cash' and 'currencies'; all synonyms such as 'money for other countries' were credited. The car parks were for 'tourists' and the driving conditions included 'ice' on roads and strong 'winds'. Some candidates heard this last item as 'eyes...wings' but this made no contextual sense; candidates should always check that answers make sense. Overall there were some very good full mark responses here and most candidates demonstrated obvious understanding of subject matter and vocabulary throughout the exercise.

Question 8 was also a form-filling exercise in response to an interview about the 'Top Toy Award'. Again candidates engaged well here. The first answers needed 'plastic brick', then '1960/50 years ago'. The third answer required 'wooden...1934' and some candidates reversed the order of the materials and dates, negating the answers. '20 million' was the current production figure and often candidates fared better if they wrote the number out as a word, otherwise numbers such as 20 thousand or 200 thousand were supplied as figures. 'Great' and 'son' were needed next to list the generations involved in the industry, 'grate' and 'sun' were not credited. The next answer, 'newsletters...magazines' was well done by all as was the translation of the logo: 'play well'. The final answer 'two bricks...together' was also well done. Overall candidates answered this question well, showing good understanding of both situation and vocabulary presented; again there were many full mark answers.

Question 9, about the benefits of singing, was more challenging. Candidates generally engaged well as this exercise demanded close listening skills for some of the detail needed in the answers. **9(a)** asked for two examples and needed the idea of 'babies singing/children singing while playing'. The two functions for **9(b)** were 'circulation' and 'digestion'. **9(c)** was well answered, governments are 'giving money' or setting up 'singing projects'. **9(d)** asked for 'more oxygen'/'breathing benefits'/'less bacteria' or 'improved alertness'. The two occasions marked by song for **9(e)** were simply 'celebration' or 'sorrow' and other examples such as 'birthdays', 'singing to babies/as a family round piano' were also credited here. Candidates again engaged well with the aural subject matter in this question and most fared quite well; again there were some full mark answers.

Question 10, about the lifestyle of nomads, was the most challenging exercise, in accordance with the progression of difficulty of the component. **10(a)** simply needed 'travelling' and this was universally well done. **10(b)** required the idea of 'drought'/'climate change'/'security restrictions' or 'building development' (not 'world development'). The answer to **10(c)** was about the reduced number of green areas for grazing. **10(d)** was well done – the nomads had to buy 'processed feed' and are being required to 'settle in towns'. **10(e)** asked for personal qualities so the 'heavy cloth tents' and 'camels' provided by some candidates could not be credited. Required answers were two of 'hospitality/courage/perseverance/vibrancy'. **10(f)** needed 'disappear' or 'no access to water and grazing' and was also quite well done by candidates.

Advice

Advice for future teaching would be to focus on the demands of the question; often candidates list many answers hoping that the actual answer is within it. More work on numbers is always beneficial. Teach candidates to write the numbers in words rather than figures to avoid problems – number and measure is always tested in the paper. Practise fulfilling question requirements: if two details are asked for check that two are provided in the answer or if 'where and when' are both required, check that both are answered.

Listening practice and listening for detail using as many past papers as possible is always the best revision and preparation approach. Use timed conditions and then ask the candidate to check work using the published mark scheme. Each paper could be split into sections for close practice. Centres could use several practice sessions of just questions 1-6 to ascertain the type of scenario used and the sort of answers needed, followed by some practices using the form-filling questions 7 and 8 from various sessions and then many examples of questions 9 and 10, which are the most challenging and discriminating in the component.

Candidates should be encouraged to write as clearly as possible. The component is marked online and it is helpful to Examiners if candidates write in black pen.



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/42

Listening (Extended) 42

General comments

Candidates generally performed well in response to this paper, coping with the format of the paper and making good use of the allotted time for the examination. There were few omissions this session; generally candidates submitted fully completed papers. There was evidence throughout the component responses of engagement with task and recorded text and of much thought and effort in providing answers. Many candidates underline parts of the question in order to help focus on the required answer. A recommended strategy of approach is to underline the questioning word used, for example, 'how', 'why', 'where', and to make sure that this is attended to in the course of the answer. Many common errors arise out of misunderstanding of the question word; for example answering 'what?' when the question asks 'where?'.

The ethos of this component is always to test listening for understanding. In accordance with this concept, Examiners accept all relevant phonetic attempts at an answer, except where the candidate attempt makes another word and thus changes the sense of the response, for example, 'band' for 'bend' in **Question 6**.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Part 1 of the paper was the short question and answer section comprising six short scenarios demanding concise answers. This section provides a gentle introduction to the component which then becomes more challenging as the exercises progress.

Candidates usually fare quite well in response to this first section and demonstrate a good level of aural comprehension and good engagement with the subject matter of each scenario.

Question 1 asked where the visitors will go during the first part of the visit. This was generally found to be very accessible and was very well done by candidates, except where the question word had been misunderstood or where the candidates transcribed several lines of information including the idea of trips – which were to take place during the second part of the visit. This scattergun approach is not usually credited – although the answer may be embedded in the information, it is usually negated by the superfluous transcription.

Question 2, needing 'chocolate or cream', was well done by all showing obvious understanding. Some candidates transcribed what was heard but this did not address the question fully which again resulted in a list which was not credited.

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Question 9, about the benefits of singing, was more challenging. Candidates generally engaged well as this exercise demanded close listening skills for some of the detail needed in the answers. **9(a)** asked for two examples and needed the idea of 'babies singing/children singing while playing'. The two functions for **9(b)** were 'circulation' and 'digestion'. **9(c)** was well answered, governments are 'giving money' or setting up 'singing projects'. **9(d)** asked for 'more oxygen'/breathing benefits/'less bacteria' or 'improved alertness'. The two occasions marked by song for **9(e)** were simply 'celebration' or 'sorrow' and other examples such as 'birthdays', 'singing to babies/as a family round piano' were also credited here. Candidates again engaged well with the aural subject matter in this question and most fared quite well; again there were some full mark answers.

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Advice

Advice for future teaching would be to focus on the demands of the question; often candidates list many answers hoping that the actual answer is within it. More work on numbers is always beneficial. Teach candidates to write the numbers in words rather than figures to avoid problems – number and measure is always tested in the paper. Practise fulfilling question requirements: if two details are asked for check that two are provided in the answer or if 'where and when' are both required, check that both are answered.

Listening practice and listening for detail using as many past papers as possible is always the best revision and preparation approach. Use timed conditions and then ask the candidate to check work using the published mark scheme. Each paper could be split into sections for close practice. Centres could use several practice sessions of just **Questions 1-6** to ascertain the type of scenario used and the sort of answers needed, followed by some practices using the form-filling **Questions 7 and 8** from various sessions and then many examples of **Questions 9 and 10**, which are the most challenging and discriminating in the component.

Candidates should be encouraged to write as clearly as possible. The component is marked online and it is helpful to Examiners if candidates write in black pen.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/43

Listening (Extended) 43

General comments

Candidates generally performed well in response to this paper, coping with the format of the paper and making good use of the allotted time for the examination. There were few omissions this session; generally candidates submitted fully completed papers. There was evidence throughout the component responses of engagement with task and recorded text and of much thought and effort in providing answers. Many candidates underline parts of the question in order to help focus on the required answer. A recommended strategy of approach is to underline the questioning word used, for example, 'how', 'why', 'where', and to make sure that this is attended to in the course of the answer. Many common errors arise out of misunderstanding of the question word; for example answering 'what?' when the question asks 'where?'

The ethos of this component is always to test listening for understanding. In accordance with this concept, Examiners accept all relevant phonetic attempts at an answer, except where the candidate attempt makes another word and thus changes the sense of the response, for example, 'band' for 'bend' in **Question 6**.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Part 1 of the paper was the short question and answer section comprising six short scenarios demanding concise answers. This section provides a gentle introduction to the component which then becomes more challenging as the exercises progress.

Candidates usually fare quite well in response to this first section and demonstrate a good level of aural comprehension and good engagement with the subject matter of each scenario.

Question 1 asked where the visitors will go during the first part of the visit. This was generally found to be very accessible and was very well done by candidates, except where the question word had been misunderstood or where the candidates transcribed several lines of information including the idea of trips – which were to take place during the second part of the visit. This scattergun approach is not usually credited – although the answer may be embedded in the information, it is usually negated by the superfluous transcription.

Question 2, needing 'chocolate or cream', was well done by all showing obvious understanding. Some candidates transcribed what was heard but this did not address the question fully which again resulted in a list which was not credited.

Question 3 carried two marks and asked, 'where exactly?', requiring two details – 'carriage 4/bed 48X'. Both answers were often fully provided and showed good understanding at all ability levels; in each case the noun was necessary to make sense in the answer, numbers alone were not credited.

Question 4 needed the answer 'one-third of/two-thirds off the original price' and Examiners also allowed the given example '£6 to £2'. 'Prize' was not credited.

Question 5 asked 'where and when?', the required answers were 'channel 20/10.30' although many candidates wrote '9 o'clock', which was the distractor.

Question 6 asked for two directions 'after the steps'; many candidates included the steps as the first part of the answer (just reiterating the question) and then wrote about walking beside the river and failed to address the second point, which was walking 'around the bend'.

Overall candidates engaged very well with **Questions 1-6** this session; 8 marks were available here and many candidates scored well over half of these, some scoring full marks.

Part 2

Question 7 was a form-filling exercise in response to an interview about a mobile bank. This exercise was well tried at all ability levels while also providing for some differentiation. The weekdays credited for the first answer were, 'Monday-Friday/Sunday-Thursday/Saturday-Wednesday'. The second response '3 years' was very well done by all, although there were some 13s and 30s in the wrong place here. The routes were mainly 'coastal' and a variety of spelling attempts were credited here. There were 13 stops and customers could obtain 'cash' and 'currencies'; all synonyms such as 'money for other countries' were credited. The car parks were for 'tourists' and the driving conditions included 'ice' on roads and strong 'winds'. Some candidates heard this last item as 'eyes...wings' but this made no contextual sense; candidates should always check that answers make sense. Overall there were some very good full mark responses here and most candidates demonstrated obvious understanding of subject matter and vocabulary throughout the exercise.

Question 8 was also a form-filling exercise in response to an interview about the 'Top Toy Award'. Again candidates engaged well here. The first answers needed 'plastic brick', then '1960/50 years ago'. The third answer required 'wooden...1934' and some candidates reversed the order of the materials and dates, negating the answers. '20 million' was the current production figure and often candidates fared better if they wrote the number out as a word, otherwise numbers such as 20 thousand or 200 thousand were supplied as figures. 'Great' and 'son' were needed next to list the generations involved in the industry, 'grate' and 'sun' were not credited. The next answer, 'newsletters...magazines' was well done by all as was the translation of the logo: 'play well'. The final answer 'two bricks...together' was also well done. Overall candidates answered this question well, showing good understanding of both situation and vocabulary presented; again there were many full mark answers.

Question 9, about the benefits of singing, was more challenging. Candidates generally engaged well as this exercise demanded close listening skills for some of the detail needed in the answers. **9(a)** asked for two examples and needed the idea of 'babies singing/children singing while playing'. The two functions for **9(b)** were 'circulation' and 'digestion'. **9(c)** was well answered, governments are 'giving money' or setting up 'singing projects'. **9(d)** asked for 'more oxygen'/'breathing benefits'/'less bacteria' or 'improved alertness'. The two occasions marked by song for **9(e)** were simply 'celebration' or 'sorrow' and other examples such as 'birthdays', 'singing to babies/as a family round piano' were also credited here. Candidates again engaged well with the aural subject matter in this question and most fared quite well; again there were some full mark answers.

Question 10, about the lifestyle of nomads, was the most challenging exercise, in accordance with the progression of difficulty of the component. **10(a)** simply needed 'travelling' and this was universally well done. **10(b)** required the idea of 'drought'/'climate change'/'security restrictions' or 'building development' (not 'world development'). The answer to **10(c)** was about the reduced number of green areas for grazing. **10(d)** was well done – the nomads had to buy 'processed feed' and are being required to 'settle in towns'. **10(e)** asked for personal qualities so the 'heavy cloth tents' and 'camels' provided by some candidates could not be credited. Required answers were two of 'hospitality/courage/perseverance/vibrancy'. **10(f)** needed 'disappear' or 'no access to water and grazing' and was also quite well done by candidates.

Advice

Advice for future teaching would be to focus on the demands of the question; often candidates list many answers hoping that the actual answer is within it. More work on numbers is always beneficial. Teach candidates to write the numbers in words rather than figures to avoid problems – number and measure is always tested in the paper. Practise fulfilling question requirements: if two details are asked for check that two are provided in the answer or if 'where and when' are both required, check that both are answered.

Listening practice and listening for detail using as many past papers as possible is always the best revision and preparation approach. Use timed conditions and then ask the candidate to check work using the published mark scheme. Each paper could be split into sections for close practice. Centres could use several practice sessions of just **Questions 1-6** to ascertain the type of scenario used and the sort of answers needed, followed by some practices using the form-filling **Questions 7** and **8** from various sessions and then many examples of **Questions 9** and **10**, which are the most challenging and discriminating in the component.

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Candidates should be encouraged to write as clearly as possible. The component is marked online and it is helpful to Examiners if candidates write in black pen.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/05

Oral Test

Comments on specific aspects of the Oral Test

Part A – Welcome and brief explanation of the test format

Moderators report again that some Examiners fail to include a brief summary (or reminder, in the case of teachers who are familiar with their candidates) of the format of the test. Ideally, this should occur at the outset, but it might feature a little later as the topic card is handed out. However, there should be evidence on the recording that candidates are aware of the test format.

Part B – The warm-up

The warm-up should be used to try to select an appropriate topic card for a candidate to discuss further. Examiners must not miss an opportunity to present a suitable topic for discussion, particularly when a candidate has expressed an interest in an area in which one of the topic cards could have generated a productive conversation.

Please therefore aim to draw out candidates' hobbies and interests and avoid talking about school matters, or anything which might make candidates uneasy (such as detail of other examinations being taken) or not be helpful in informing Part D.

A sensible approach is to stay within the 2-3 minutes allowed and to have in mind a topic which you think will work well. However, please also use the warm-up to relax the candidate, to get to know a little about him or her, and to prepare him or her for Part D and formal assessment.

Part C – Handing out the topic card, and preparation time

Please note that the Examiner chooses the topic card; under no circumstances should a choice be offered to the candidate.

The recording should be paused immediately after the Examiner has announced which topic card he/she has chosen for the candidate. Candidates are allowed to ask questions during the next 2-3 minutes while they study the card and this need not be recorded.

The selection of topic cards should not be random or prepared beforehand. It is not fair to candidates to choose cards in this manner. Topics should be selected to try to match each candidate's interests and ability and Moderators are listening to see how, and how well, this is done by Examiners.

Part D – The conversation

The best discussions are relaxed and allow a natural conversation to flow, with Examiners picking up on points made by candidates, but returning to the topic card at appropriate times to ensure focus. Examiners should certainly work through the five bullet points/prompts in the given order but should remember to extend the discussions beyond those prompts to ensure a full (6-9 minutes) and rounded discussion takes place.

Examiners are reminded that development of the conversation is now an integral part of the assessment criteria. What is expected is that Examiners will help guide candidates through the levels of the discussion. The supplied prompts on the topic cards increase in sophistication and move from the personal through the general, to the more abstract and challenging; thereby allowing stronger candidates to illustrate higher level speaking skills.

A few Examiners are reminded, however, that it is their responsibility to ensure that candidates do not offer speeches or monologues. This is still happening at a number of Centres. In such cases, the Examiner should intervene quickly and begin a conversation.

Moderators would therefore like to hear discussion/conversation from the outset. There is no need for an introductory speech by the candidate about the topic.

Moderators noted significant improvement in the conduct of Part D. Examiners and candidates were aware that a developed conversation is expected and that the five prompts must be utilised as a means to achieving this. The new guidelines and examination topic card format were applied successfully in many cases and focused discussions were indeed the norm.

The Topics

Card A – globalisation – was found to be accessible to most candidates who drew upon their use of ICT for the personal dimension. Candidates who quickly grasped the theme provided deeper, more analytical responses to the last two prompts.

Card B – ambition – was also accessible to most candidates. However, some preferred to stay within the comfort zone of personal ambition. Examiners are reminded in these cases that development is necessary and that general themes and more challenging aspects (provided in prompts 3, 4 and 5) must also feature so that candidates can display higher-level skills and therefore receive higher reward. A discussion must not remain a general chat. The most reliable way of avoiding this is to use all five prompts.

Card C – advertising – was very successful in combining knowledge of a topic with the presentation of strongly held views. Candidates appeared to thoroughly enjoy this topic – perhaps because it is an issue which faces them directly – and most candidates were able to talk at length about it.

Card D – contact sports – Moderators were pleased to report that when used wisely by Examiners, candidates engaged well with the topic of contact sports and the associated issues. Girls often enjoyed discussing the more abstract elements, and prompts 1 and 2 provided ample content for discussion.

Card E – money matters – was less widely used than the other four topics. Nonetheless, where financial matters were clearly more pertinent and relevant, it was a topic which provided very interesting discussions. Moderators noted that this was a good example of how to use information given in the warm up. A few candidates were given this topic who clearly had little interest or engagement with financial matters.

Assessment criteria

Moderators observed similar patterns in Examiners awarding marks inappropriately in Band 1; this is perhaps because Examiners are still becoming familiar with the updated *Development and Fluency* criterion. Fewer adjustments were made, however, to reflect this, but where adjustment was made, it was usually to lower 'secure' Band 1 marks into more appropriate Band 2 marks, and to lower Band 2 marks into Band 3.

Examiners need to be sure that a candidate has contributed considerably and successfully to the development of the conversation before being awarded a 9 or a 10 in *Development and Fluency*.

Centres who allow candidates to offer speeches or monologues are not allowing those candidates to engage in a genuine and spontaneous discussion. In such cases, it is unlikely that a mark above the Band 3 criteria would be acceptable.



Administrative procedures

Many Centres are clearly aware of the tasks and duties that need to be carried out by the external Moderators and the moderating team are very grateful to the Examiners at these Centres.

However, there are several procedural matters that still require attention:

- Please conduct a final check of the total mark you award each candidate as recorded on the Summary Form(s). Moderators are always surprised, and disappointed, at how many Amendment Forms have to be completed each session to correct Centres' inaccurate addition of the three criteria marks.
- Please remember to include your copy of the MS1 mark sheet. If your Centre uses CAMEO to input candidate marks, then please provide the Moderator with a printed hard copy of the Internal Mark Sheet, generated by CAMEO.
- Please ensure that the Summary Forms are included in the package. This is the most important document for the external Moderator, as it records the criteria marks in addition to the total mark. The Examiner who conducts the tests is responsible for filling out the Summary Form. He or she should sign the form and date it. The form also records the topic cards given to each candidate – in effect; this is the form which is our working record of the examining undertaken.
- The use of more than one Examiner should be seen only at large Centres – i.e. those with a large number of candidates. The syllabus defines a large Centre as having more than 30 candidates. It is assumed, therefore, that a single Examiner should be in a position to conduct up to 30 oral tests over a period of one week.
- Where internal moderation is required (in Centres with large entries) please include a letter with the sample materials explaining how the process of internal moderation was conducted.

Closing remarks

CIE is very grateful to have received a greater number of samples on Compact Disc (CD). Moderators welcome this as it makes the task of external moderation quicker and more efficient. CIE encourages Centres to send in samples on CDs. The use of modern, digital recording equipment is strongly recommended as this tends to produce higher quality recordings, but also allows the easy transfer of an appropriately collated sample, using separate tracks, to be burned onto a single CD.

However, please remember to use appropriate (strong) packaging when sending in CDs – a handful of broken CDs were received by Moderators and, in these cases, it was felt that stronger packaging would have prevented this.

The main advice to Centres is:

- (1) Please ensure that a two-way, spontaneous and developed conversation occurs in Part D, and utilise the last two prompts to explore the depth of the topic so that more able candidates can illustrate their higher-level speaking skill.
- (2) Note that the warm-up is an essential part of the examination, and that candidates should be given the full 2-3 minutes to settle themselves. An Examiner should use the warm-up phase to try to determine a candidate's area of interest and select an appropriate topic for discussion.
- (3) Send in samples on CDs, collating the recordings using separate tracks in a recognised audio file format that can be played on common computer software (e.g. mp3, wav). There is no need to use the blue cassette inserts in these cases – a list of candidates and their numbers on the CD itself is fine. It would be even better if the individual tracks on the CD could be re-named to those of the candidates themselves (instead of track 1, track 2, etc.).
- (4) Moderators found an increased number of errors made this session in the addition of criteria marks and the transcription of these to the final mark sheet. On several occasions, the Centre's errors would have led to candidates receiving incorrect grades if the Moderators had not spotted the mistakes or discrepancies. Some Centres need to take much more care, and carry out thorough clerical checks to ensure that such mistakes are not made.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Paper 0510/06

Oral Communication (Coursework)

General comments

In the ideal portfolio of coursework a candidate would complete three **different** tasks over a period of several months. It is suggested that candidates take part in a group discussion, some pair-work, and also make an individual presentation. Evidence of these should be presented on the Individual Candidate Record Cards, which should contain full descriptions of the tasks undertaken.

Centres are reminded of the ethos of coursework, which is to provide the candidates with a broad range of activities and a variety of ways for their second language speaking skills to be demonstrated, and assessed.

Please note that it is important for IGCSE English as a Second Language that the activities are designed to accommodate and illustrate second language English competency – remember that the assessment criteria test language skills and not presentational or performance skill.

If a teacher is not completely confident, therefore, in designing and implementing three different and productive tasks then it is advisable to opt for **Component 05, the Oral Test**.

Assessment

This session saw general accuracy in applying the mark scheme, though in some cases leniency was observed in the higher ranges. Please remember that before a Band 1 mark is issued, the candidate must demonstrate secure structures, wide vocabulary and the ability to develop discussions.

Advice to Centres

A Moderator is seeking to fulfil two main duties while listening again to a Centre's coursework: initially to confirm the Centre's interpretation and application of the assessment criteria, but also to confirm that a variety of appropriate tasks and activities has been completed.

For the moderation process to be completed efficiently, Centres need submit **only** a recording of candidates engaged in a discussion or a conversation. This might be with a Teacher/Examiner or it might be with another candidate. It is very difficult to moderate candidates involved in group activities.

CIE encourages sample work to be sent in using CDs. It is preferable for all of the candidate recordings in the sample to be collated onto a single CD. The use of modern, digital recording equipment is strongly recommended.