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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In English Language (1EN2)
Paper 2: Contemporary Texts and
Imaginative Writing

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Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments, for Questions 1-8 from 1EN2/02. This was the second November examination of the specification in English Language 2.0, offering another opportunity for candidates to sit this revised approach to a GCSE English Language paper.

The English Language 2.0 qualification consists of the following three components:

- Unit 1: 19th century non-fiction and Transactional Writing – 50%
- Unit 2: Contemporary Texts and Imaginative Writing – 50% (this examination)
- Unit 3: Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment)

This report will focus on Unit 2: Contemporary Texts and Imaginative Writing

The paper is assessed through a 1 hour 55 minute examination. The total number of marks available is 80. The reading and writing sections of this paper are linked by theme.

The focus of this component is:

Section A – Reading

Study and analyse selections from a range of contemporary texts.

This paper features two unseen contemporary extracts, from 20th and 21st century sources. One text will be fiction, one text will be non-fiction. The word count across the two extracts is approximately 900 words with every effort made to provide balance across the two extracts. The texts will have a thematic link and will attempt to provide engaging and accessible content for candidates to work with during the examination.

The questions are on:

- Text 1 (Questions 1 and 2) and Text 2 (Questions 3 and 4)
- There are a mixture of short and extended response questions for both extracts
- Candidates' ability to synthesise across the two texts will be assessed in Question 5, which will focus on similarities in the texts. The final question of this section, Question 6, requires candidates to compare the writers' ideas and perspectives and how they are presented in the two texts.

Section B – Writing

This section allows candidates to explore and develop their imaginative writing skills. Candidates may choose to offer a complete narrative with beginning, middle and end or a part of a larger story.

There are two writing tasks, with a thematic link to the reading extracts. Candidates pick one question to respond to. For this new specification, candidates are offered an opening line for one of the question options, and pictures are provided to support with the second question, as will be familiar from GCSE English Language 9-1.

The Assessment Objectives for this paper are:

Section A: Reading

AO1:

- identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas (Q1, Q3)
- select and synthesise evidence from different texts (Q5)

AO2: Explain, comment and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views (Q2, Q4)

AO3: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts (Q6)

Section B: Writing

AO5:

- communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adopting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences (Q7 or Q8)
- organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts (Q7 or Q8)

AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation (Q7 or Q8)

General Overview

It was clear that candidates were, on the whole, able to respond well to the two unseen contemporary texts. They were able to read substantial extracts that made significant demands in terms of content, structure and quality of language. The texts selected would appear to have engaged and interested the majority of candidates as they were able to offer thoughtful comment and explanation of the writers' craft, alongside comparisons between the two texts. With this new specification, it was pleasing to see that candidates had been well prepared and had, at different levels, been able to demonstrate the key skills of understanding, interpretation and analysis.

It was also clear that candidates had learned different ways to write imaginatively to attempt to engage a reader. A variety of approaches were seen through this series in the writing section, from straightforward narratives to complex story arcs and imaginative use of tone and voice. It was clear from the responses that many candidates had been given opportunity to prepare well for the writing section, with varying levels of expertise in terms of using rhetorical and structural devices to create meaning and impact.

Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that most candidates had understood both texts
- candidates' confidence in places to explore the impact of language in both texts
- writing that showed some real creativity and flair
- writing that worked hard to sustain tone and style, considering audience and purpose

Less successful responses:

- showed an insecure grasp of language and structure, with a reliance in places on feature spotting
- were unable to use subject specific terminology effectively
- lacked focus on the question, especially with Questions 5 – 6
- didn't always develop and craft their written responses with audience and purpose in mind
- lacked accuracy around spelling and punctuation

Question 1

Candidates, in the main, achieved one mark for this question.

The questions are designed with ramping in mind and to encourage achievement for all candidates. This question generally showed the confidence of candidates in reading the given section of the extract and finding the relevant information.

This question requires understanding of AO1: 'identify and interpret.' This question has a focus on the ability to identify. The important advice for any candidate is to check the question carefully, make sure they understand what they are being asked to identify, and then check if their chosen reference from the text is answering the question asked.

The very few candidates who did not achieve a mark for this question either chose from the wrong lines, paraphrased the question, or selected only a word from the text that did not suggest they had identified enough to answer the question. Very few candidates scored zero for this question.

SECTION A
Reading

You should spend about 1 hour 10 minutes on this section.

Read Text 1 in the Source Booklet provided and answer Questions 1–2.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 From lines 21–26, identify **one** word or phrase that shows what the storm is doing to Pi and the lifeboat.

"I was now at the lower end of the life boat, and the water that had swamped it came my way."

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet points 8 and 9 from the mark scheme

SECTION A
Reading

You should spend about 1 hour 10 minutes on this section.

Read Text 1 in the Source Booklet provided and answer Questions 1–2.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 From lines 21–26, identify **one** word or phrase that shows what the storm is doing to Pi and the lifeboat.

"The lifeboat abruptly tilted forward and everything was reversed."

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet points 6 and 7

SECTION A
Reading

You should spend about 1 hour 10 minutes on this section.

Read Text 1 in the Source Booklet provided and answer Questions 1–2.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 From lines 21–26, identify **one** word or phrase that shows what the storm is doing to Pi and the lifeboat.

crashed.

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Brief but awardable – you don't need to copy out lots from the text!

SECTION A
Reading

You should spend about 1 hour 10 minutes on this section.

Read Text 1 in the Source Booklet provided and answer Questions 1–2.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 From lines 21–26, identify **one** word or phrase that shows what the storm is doing to Pi and the lifeboat.

'climbing ~~the~~ the giant smells, the boat clings like a mountain climber to a rope.'

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Outside the permitted lines so no score awarded

Examiner Tip

Put a box around the section in the source booklet you are being asked to look at!

SECTION A

Reading

You should spend about 1 hour 10 minutes on this section.

Read Text 1 in the Source Booklet provided and answer Questions 1–2.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

- 1 From lines 21–26, identify **one** word or phrase that shows what the storm is doing to Pi and the lifeboat.

"I felt as if ~~we~~ I were being pumelled by a great fist."

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet point 4

Question 2

This question offers a supportive way into the more challenging reading questions, by asking candidates to focus only on language at this point. Candidates are also supported with the extract from the text they will write about being placed directly above the answer box. This is a change to the approach to AO2 that will feel different to other specifications and was made to provide a chance for all learners to feel they can access the question, hopefully building confidence at the start of the paper. A more familiar approach to AO2 will appear in Question 4 of this paper, but it was pleasing to see so many candidates have a go at this accessible question. The vast majority of candidates attempted the question, with many working at Level 2.

The mark scheme for this question now asks for use of subject specific terminology. This is a change to 1EN0 but it is evident that candidates are now feeling more confident around this requirement. Many responses at the lower end would refer to the writer 'using language' without making use of specific terminology. There was also some evidence of incorrectly identified features – examiners are asked to mark as positively as possible but clearly wrongly identified features in the text can be detrimental to scores awarded.

Responses that were working at Level 1 or the lower end of Level 2 often indicated that language was used to 'show feelings' in the text. This generic phrase did not allow candidates to reach the higher levels by looking at **how** language was creating impact and developing meaning. Lower level responses often recognised the feelings in the text without unpacking the ideas in any detail.

Stronger responses offered more detail, often being able to weave together a clear understanding of the feelings in the extract, specific terminology and confident explanation or analysis of how meaning was being created by the writer. Some of the best responses were able to consider the purpose of the text and how the writer has created the extract with the reader in mind. An ability to consider all of the protagonists in the extract was evident at the higher levels too.

(6)

One way the writer uses language to describe the situation is with metaphors. For example the writer quotes, "The valleys we found ourselves in were so deep they were gloomy". In this quote the writer uses the metaphor "the valleys" to ~~mean~~ describe the waves being so big it felt like they were ~~like~~ surrounded by mountains. Also in this quote the writer uses the adjective "gloomy" to show that the waves towered over them and ~~like~~ blocked out

all the sunlight surrounding them.

The second way the writer uses language to describe the situation is with similes. This can be seen when the writer explains, "the boat clung like a mountain climber to a rope." This quote compares the boat clinging onto the waves to a mountain climber hanging onto a rope. This shows that the situation that they are in is dangerous and one wrong move could end their journey in an instant just like with mountain climbing. Also this quote could also be ~~used~~ linked back to my first point where the writer compares the waves to mountains.

~~My~~ The third way the writer uses language to describe the situation is with the rule of 3. This can be seen in the quote, "being pulled out of the water and dragged along bouncing every way." This quote uses three verbs back to back to ~~show~~ explain the movement of the boat so we have an idea of how rough the storm is. For example, the first two verbs "pulled" and "dragged" shows us that the storm is taking the boat and the narrator has no control over it, and the third verb "bouncing" tells us how rough the journey was showing us that they got thrown around in every direction.

(Total for Question 2 = 6 marks)

Examiner Comment

A solid response that meets all the criteria at L3. This moves into L3 for its closer examination of the text. It uses the quotes to clarify the points suitably. Whilst not always expressed fluently, it does more than 5 marks, hence the award of 6 marks. A personal response, which shows clear understanding of the text. Relevant subject terminology used.

In the extract, how does the writer use language to describe the situation?

Use examples from the extract and relevant subject terminology.

(6)

~~The language the writer used~~ The writer uses the language to describe the situation he was in and the experience of how he felt during it happening. "the ground beneath us would start sinking in a most sickening way." Shows us how Pi Patel was feeling when they were sinking away.

Examiner Comment

Meets all criteria at L1.

Examiner Tip

Offering some more detail about the textual references – maybe picking out a word and offering some alternative perspectives – will help lift the response into Level 2 and beyond.

In the extract, how does the writer use language to describe the situation?

Use examples from the extract and relevant subject terminology.

(6) _____

In this extract the writer uses language to describe their situation in the sea while the storm is happening as a life threatening situation. We are shown this in the quotation 'Boat clinging like a mountain climber to a rock rope.'

In this quotation the writer uses personification to show how even the boat had to hold on for dear life on this mountain which is

actually the waves towering ~~of~~ over them. This shows us as the reader the situation is life threatening something you couldn't imagine.

Another way the writer uses language to show the situation is in the quotation 'But the mountain would shift and the ground ~~would start~~ beneath us would start ~~to~~ sinking', the language used in here is metaphors and personification as we are told the 'floor is sinking' which we know a floor can not sink. So we know it's the sea, and the 'we are told there is mountains which represent to past for the previous one.

~~The language~~ ~~the~~ Another way we are shown use of language to show the situation is in the quotation 'in no time we would shift and ~~the~~ be sitting once again at the bottom of a dark valley, different from the last' in this we are shown juxtaposition which shows us change in the cycle.

(Total for Question 2 = 6 marks)

Examiner Comment

Meets all L2 criteria – while not always expressed eloquently, there is clear explanation in places, references that are clearly relevant to the point being made and terminology is generally used accurately.

The writer uses language like "hills of water" or "flimsy lightness" these are only just a few terms the writer has used. The reason why the writer does this is because they want to make that scene get stuck in your head and instead of using dull words the writer uses a different word class.

In the extract the writer uses the words dark valley to prove that you are at the bottom of the sea and not saying bottom

of the sea. The boat was going back and forward on the giant swell to make their stomach-sicken. In this part of the extract the good amount of added language to make the reader think about every moment.

Examiner Comment

Meets all L1 criteria and awarded for some limited attempt at explanation in places, albeit awkwardly expressed.

In the extract, how does the writer use language to describe the situation?

Use examples from the extract and relevant subject terminology.

(6)

~~The writer uses ^{positive} language adjectives to describe the situation.~~

The writer uses a range of different language features to talk about the situation. The language which is used is varied.

Examiner Comment

Limited comment on text only. The 1st sentence is a repackaging of the question. It is the 2nd sentence, and the use of the word 'varied' which just gets the mark.

Examiner Tip

Decide on a paragraphing approach to support providing enough explanation in your responses

Question 3

This question, on the second extract in the examination, again tests AO1: 'identify and interpret'. However, this question has a greater focus on the second part of the AO, asking candidates to make the connection between the question being asked and how the text infers this. The wording of the question is designed to encourage candidates to make that extra step in their minds: 'I understand the conditions are bad, but how is that indicated in the text?'

The vast majority of learners were able to answer this question successfully. As with Question 1, this was written with ramping in mind, to give as many candidates as possible the opportunity to achieve. Candidates who didn't get the mark for this question either misunderstood the question, or selected parts of the extract that did not clearly indicate they had understood how the writer is suggesting the situation is bad.

From the extract, identify **one** way the writer suggests that the conditions are bad.

the writer says 'full gale' this means
there is bad wind

(Total for Question 3 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet Point 1 from the mark scheme

From the extract, identify **one** way the writer suggests that the conditions are bad.

the sea takes on a grey, marbled
look, like bad meat,

(Total for Question 3 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet Point 4

From the extract, identify **one** way the writer suggests that the conditions are bad.

Seas rise up in huge dark mountains

(Total for Question 3 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet Point 6

From the extract, identify **one** way the writer suggests that the conditions are bad.

Conditions was like bad fever.

(Total for Question 3 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet Point 5

From the extract, identify **one** way the writer suggests that the conditions are bad.

The sea building to twenty feet

(Total for Question 3 = 1 mark)

Examiner Comment

Bullet Point 2

Question 4

This question returns to AO2, this time asking candidates to focus on both language and structure at this point. This question asks candidates to select from the whole text but it is important to note that the mark scheme has 10 marks covering the 5 Levels. This is a change to the 15 marks available in 1EN0 for language and structure questions about the whole text. As with previous specifications, candidates who do not cover both language and structure will find themselves unable to progress beyond Level 2 of the mark scheme.

On the whole, candidates fared well on this question as it echoes question styles they may be familiar with from alternative specifications. For some candidates, lack of structure was an issue and would suggest they may need reminding of the difference between this question and Question 2.

The candidates' ability to write confidently about structure was a good discriminator within the responses. While able candidates were able to explore obvious structural features such as sentence lengths and lists, it was apparent in more nuanced responses that candidates could also explore the overall structure and development of the text as the extract unfolded. Indeed, being able to discuss contrast of emotions across the text, or the development of the narrative, often led to more confident structural exploration compared to attempting to explain the impact of lists or short sentences. It is evident that centres are now working hard with candidates to support this move away from talking about, for example short sentences, towards considering the tone and progress of feelings within the texts.

The mark scheme for this question now asks for use of subject specific terminology. This is a change that some candidates struggled with but this will likely improve in future exam series. As with Question 2, many responses at the lower end would refer to the writer 'using language' or 'using structure' without making use of specific terminology. There was also some evidence of incorrectly identified features – examiners are asked to mark as positively as possible but clearly incorrectly identified features in the text can be detrimental to scores awarded.

Again, as with Question 2, responses that were working at Level 1 or the lower end of Level 2 often indicated that language was used to 'interest and engage the reader' in the text. This phrase is taken directly from the question and therefore did not allow candidates to reach the higher levels by looking at **how** language and structure were creating impact and developing meaning. Lower level responses often recognised the excitement and danger in the text without exploring the ideas in any detail. A common approach to this question from candidates was a reliance on the word 'shows'. This indicates some attempt to understand what the text is trying to achieve, but repetitive responses that used a similar stock sentence approach in this manner were evident at the lower end.

Stronger responses offered more detail, often being able to weave together a clear understanding of the feelings in the extract, specific terminology and confident explanation or analysis of how meaning was being created by the writer. Some of the best responses were able to consider the purpose of the text and how the writer has created the extract with the reader in mind. Stronger responses often demonstrated an ability to select from across the text, linking points together, rather than just comments on any features spotted in the text.

The writer tries to engage the reader by explaining that Billy doesn't have control of the helm, the weather does. This captivates readers by giving them a sense of suspense and enticement. The weather isn't controlled by anyone, vividly showing its unpredictability, or ~~where~~ what situation it brings the story to. The quote "All he can do is react" shows the complete mercy

and control of Billy from the weather, leaving the readers puzzled and unexpected of what happens next.

Another way the writer tries to interest the reader is how the sea is portrayed and looked at throughout the text. The ^A word used to describe the sea is being a night mare, this entails the darkness and the sense of danger that the ocean brings. This builds the image of a treacherous moving surface that can bring any unsuspected risk or dangers to the characters. The sea is also referred

to 'as a 'big wet fist'. This ^{metaphor} ~~provides the~~ ~~reader~~ ~~metaphore~~ vividly shows the violence that the waves bring, as well as the impact feeling like your helmet punched in the face.

Examiner Comment

An example of a response that would be locked for lack of any point on structure. While this response offers explanation of how language is used by the writer, indicative of a L3 response, the lack of any relevant points on structure means the response must be locked at L2.

Examiner Tip

You must talk about both language and structure to access any mark above 4!

Use examples from the whole text and relevant subject terminology.

(10)
One way the writer uses language to ~~engage~~ ~~interest~~ and engage the audience is by using the metaphor "and the seas rise up in huge dark mountains behind the boat." This ~~quote~~ ~~quote~~ shows the audience the severity of the situation and that they can't turn back. The key word in this quote is "mountains". This is because it tells the reader how big these waves ~~actually~~ ~~actually~~ are, and are not your normal everyday ones. This ^{may make} ~~may make~~ the reader feel worried

for Billy and his crew as they are in a very dangerous situation.

In this extract the writer has used structure to engage the reader by using a short one line paragraph. "Billy has a tremendous respect for the big wet fist." These one line paragraphs are used to ~~create tension~~ build up suspense for what is about to happen next. This one line paragraph builds suspense because the writer has made it sound like Billy is scared of the waves ahead, which could mean they are foreshadowing something, which could excite the reader.

A final way the writer has engaged the reader is by using an example of what has happened in the past to other sailors and how in the end "The last thing the camera sees is white water coming at it like a big wet fist." This ~~a~~ quote is used to scare the reader and show them what the reality of being a sailor is, and how it can in some cases, be fatal. Even though the reader may be scared this quote will make them want to read on and find out if Billy and his crew will meet the same fate.

Examiner Comment

Meets all L3 criteria with clear explanation throughout, generally appropriate references selected and some use of relevant subject terminology. Both language and structure points are covered.

Examiner Tip

Think about how you can revisit your evidence to offer more explanation and detail

The writer uses the quote "the wind shearing ominously through the ~~air~~ rigging." This shows the reader how bad the conditions are already getting. The use of the ~~verb~~ ^{verb} ~~adjective~~ shearing shows us the ~~that~~ reader that the wind is almost cutting through the boat

Like shears would cut through hair.
Also the use of the adverb
"ominously" is foreshadowing the
danger that is to come. It gives
the reader a sense that it is
lurking around ready to strike.

The writer also uses the quote
"during a really bad storm, it shows
the boat rising and falling, rising and
falling over mammoth, white-streaked seas."
The use of the repetition of "rising
and falling" near the beginning of the
text shows the reader what's ~~to~~
to come later on and makes the
reader want to continue reading to
find out what happens to ~~the~~ the
boat and the crew. This use of
~~the~~ repetition also shows how repetitive
the waves will be, crashing ~~in~~ into
the boat one after another for hours
on end.

The writer ~~write~~ then goes on to say "in a sense Billys no longer at the helm, the conditions are" this shows the reader that the conditions are getting that bad that they are 'coming alive' and making the reader think its their going to make it out or not.

Examiner Comment

This response ebbs and flows, but there is some clear exploration in places, in particular of how the writer uses repetition to create meaning both through word choice and the rhythm created by this technique. References fully support points being made and relevant subject terminology is used appropriately, part from the last paragraph where there is none.

The writer engages and interests the reader by actually describing and explaining what the boat is reacting to the situations and also how the staff react.

For example, "Everytime time a large sea rises, Billy must fight

the wheel to keep from broaching."

The ~~at~~ author then ~~go~~ goes on to describe * what broaching is. This engages the reader as they aren't just reading and not knowing what it is, but they have now learnt something new.

Examiner Comment

Limited comment, with limited references to support the points made. No evidence of terminology. Meets all L1 criteria.

The writer immediately describes the conditions he is in ~~the~~ "monday dawns a full gale, the seas building to ^{twenty} ~~20~~ feet..." this gives the reader a sudden jolt of conditions and gives the reader the effect of being in the extract and being able to visualise the extreme conditions the writer is experiencing. The writer uses imagery such as "Dawns" to

portray the feeling of hearing/seeing the weather as the word dawns describes a dropped stomach or ~~what~~ ghostface type expression which helps captivate the readers attention early on which leads them to read on about what is so daunting no face.

The writer continues his description of the water by using metaphors "the seas rise up in huge dark mountains" this gives the sea power over the writer as he describes the sea rising up for which often gives power to the tallest ~~g~~ or towering thing

Examiner Comment

Offers mainly general comment on language, with valid but undeveloped references to support. Some terminology is used to support the comments being made. There is no comment on structure, but this is not locked at Level 2 for this reason – the response is working at the L2 standard

Question 5

This question will, on the surface, look familiar to centres as it approaches the 2nd bullet point of AO1, select and synthesise, in a similar way to a question in 1EN0/02. However, there are some changes to the mark scheme that it is important candidates are made aware of.

In this specification, candidates are now asked to provide a specific number of similarities to achieve all the bullet points at Level 2 or 3. If we look at the mark scheme, we can see reference to 'insufficient (less than 3)' similarities at Level 1, and 'sufficient (three)' similarities at Level 2 and 3. Another key determinant in this question has been the quality of synthesis being offered – at Level 3, 'precise synthesis' would usually have been evident in terms of a candidate's ability to make precise links to the question asked and the similarities being provided. As with 1EN0/02, there is an expectation that every similarity is supported by evidence from the text.

While it is hoped that candidates will become more familiar with the changes to the expectations in this AO1 question, examiners will always attempt to award the 'best fit' for a response. This series suggested that centres now feel more confident about the expectation to provide three similarities.

Some candidates approached the question from a broader point of similarities between the texts. The best responses focused on the question asked, providing clear similarities that focused on the experiences of the people in the extracts.

In both texts, the protagonists face heavy winds of the storm. In text 1 "The clouds looked as if they were stumbling before the wind, frightened", in text 2 "wind sheering ominously through the rigging". Both indicating the strength of the wind and ability to change weather.

In both texts, the protagonists experience extreme waves. In text 1 "These swells were truly mountains", in text 2 "the seas rise up in huge dark mountains". Exhibiting the inhuman size of the waves.

In both texts, the protagonists experience the severe effects of a wave. In text 1 "This time the bow vanished underwater", in text 2 "It engulfs the bow... blows all the windows windows" portraying the destructive power of the sea and how deadly it can be.

Examiner Comment

An example of a full mark response – 3 clearly distinct similarities, precise synthesis of relevant textual evidence – meets all the criteria at L3. It is concise. There are distinct differences between points 2 and 3, as although both are describing waves, one point describes the extremity of the waves whereas the other describes their severe effects.

In both texts the writers describe the waves they are facing as mountains to emphasise the size of the waves. In text 1 the writer says 'These swells are truly mountains', whereas in text 2 the writer says 'the seas rise up in huge dark mountains behind the boat'. These quotes are used by the writers to describe the size of the waves.

Another similarity between the two texts is the suspense made by the writer to frighten the reader. This can be seen at 17-19 of text 1. Where the writer uses short sentences to create suspense using his emotions.

Examiner Comment

This response does not offer 3 similarities so is unable to move out of L1.

It is suggested that in both texts the storm is very bad because in ~~Text~~ text 1 "water crashed down on us" implying that the water is relentless and would do anything to get rid of the boat and drown them. However in text 2 it talks as the "seas rise up in huge dark mountains" this demonstrates a similar point of view to text 1 but in text 2 the water is dangerous, makes you feel terrified. This implies that the water has a mind of its own.

Although, in text 2 Billy can survive everything "nothing can sink him" suggesting that Billy is very optimistic. That is he is a lot better than everybody else and

that nothing can defeat him. Unlike, text 1 where Pi is going through so much, they don't know what to do they just hope they survive. This is suggested "I was half drowned" implying that this is Pi's first time on a boat. Also that he is young as he wants to live but doesn't know how to stop the water from getting onto his boat.

lastly, in text 1 it is just pi on the boat by the writer using "the first person" or "I was brushed and out" suggesting that pi was on the lifeboat by himself with no one to help him. On the other hand, in text 2 Billy is not on his as there is a captain on the boat. "Captain says," suggesting Billy had help navigating the boat from one of the worst storms in the US. That if Billy got tired there was someone to take over the steering wheel.

Examiner Comment

As a comparison to the first example of how to achieve full marks, this candidate provides strong synthesis of evidence and similarities, meeting all the criteria of L3

One similarity between text 1 and text 2 is that they both take place in the ocean. ~~the weather is stormy~~ *

Another similarity between text 1 and text 2 is that they both take place during a storm. In text 1 it was the waves that caused the most trouble, whilst in text 2 it was one of the worst storms in US history.

* In text 1 the people were lost at sea whilst in text 2 ~~they were~~ they were fishing.

A final similarity between text 1 and text 2 is that both writers are terrified about what will happen. In ~~text~~ text 1 the writer says "I felt death was upon us" whilst in text 2 the writer says "In a sense Billy's no longer at the helm"

Examiner Comment

A response that is largely working at L2 – offering 3 similarities, with an attempt to make them distinct. The lack of textual references to support all similarities, and the somewhat basic synthesis of similarities, means a mark at the lower end of L2 is appropriate.

Examiner Tip

Provide evidence from both texts to support your similarities

In section A the writer ~~describes~~ says "these swells were truly mountains" and in section B the writer says the "seas rise up in huge dark mountains" the similarity is that both of the waves are big.

In section A and B the waves both have foam where the waves are so big and powerful. In section A "it's no bigger than the rest of the waves but it's solid and foaming" and in section B "snow white crest in a burst of light and foam"

In section A and B they both have less control in section A "a complete giving up" and in section B "Billy's choices have ~~just~~ just ratcheted down a notch.

Examiner Comment

An example of the straightforward way that 4 marks can be achieved – 3 similarities offered, straightforward synthesis of the similarities with valid texts to support. More detailed synthesis of the similarities prevents this moving into L3.

Question 6

This question covers AO3 in the specification, with candidates being asked to compare the writers' ideas and perspectives. This is a very similar to Question 7b in 1EN0/02, although there is a change to the mark scheme – total marks available are 16 (compared to 14 in the alternative specification), with Level 3 now having a spread of 4 marks.

This question, when attempted, showed candidates were able to compare both texts, even at a basic level. However, we did see a number of blank responses here. Given that nearly all candidates offered responses in section B (the writing section of the paper), we might surmise that some candidates are being advised to complete their imaginative writing first, before attempting the reading section. Given the weighting of marks this is generally sound advice, especially for candidates who may traditionally struggle with the reading section. However, as there is a degree of time pressure in the paper, candidates will need to consider how they can attempt this question too, in future series. With this being the question carrying the second highest weighting of marks in the paper, not attempting it will have some impact on overall scores.

At the lower level, responses considered one or more obvious comparisons between the texts, with some comment on writers' ideas. At this level, references were often limited. In this series we saw a limited number of responses at Level 4 or above.

Mid-level responses were able to focus more on perspectives, and to explore how the people in the texts felt about their competitive experiences. As with some other questions in this paper, some candidates struggled to focus on the question, instead making general comparisons about ideas and perspectives, rather than the experience of competitive combat sport.

In both extracts it tells us that the ocean can be a very dangerous place.

Examiner Comment

Basic but awarded a mark for the simple comparison offered.

Both of the texts show ways of surviving¹⁶ in storms, they just have different ways of showing how to survive one.

Firstly in text 1 at the end of ~~the~~ the writer says "I was soaked and chilled and I was ~~tattered~~ and bruised and cut" and in text 2 the writer says "all he can do is react".

Examiner Comment

Meets all the criteria at L1

Both Text 1 and Text 2 talking about surviving at sea. In Text 1 - the boy was about to drown. This can be seen through the quote "I was half-drowned". This shows that his life ^{was} on risk and he probably couldn't even swim. On the other hand, Text 2 ~~the~~ Billy was about to lose his life. This can be seen ~~the~~ through the quote "Billy has fished his whole life". This shows that Billy would never ever wanted to do it ever again ~~and~~ because he can lose his life from it.

Examiner Comment

A brief, underdeveloped response that meets all the criteria for Level 1. However, while there is only 1 comparison made, there is an attempt to move beyond simple description towards some comment, so is awarded a mark just into the bottom of L2.

In text one, ~~at~~ at the very beginning, the writer shows how the man knew he should be afraid as soon as he saw the way the sea moved. For example, the ^{use of} metaphor, 'that made my heart sink'. This shows the risk the feeling of dread the ~~the~~ man was feeling when he could sense a horrific storm coming. This makes the reader worry about the man as a lifeboat is not as safe as a ship.

In comparison, in text two the writer, ~~use~~ shows the characters to be a lot more organised and braver. For example, the writer says, 'Weather radio reports that conditions will ease off briefly and then deteriorate again.' This shows the character what to prepared for. This

makes the reader think the character will be a lot safer due to them being prepared and on a stronger boat.

Furthermore, in text one the writer shows how the characters are lost at sea. For example when he says, 'the view ~~was~~ would be clear for ~~hours~~ ^{miles} around.' The writer uses the language feature exaggeration to show the reader that their could be almost promised. This makes the reader have a lot of fear for the character as they are lost

In comparison, in text two, the writer shows how they are able to ~~know~~ ^{control} where ~~to~~ they go. For example, the use of ~~metaphor~~ ^{personification}, Billy must fight the wheel to keep from broaching. This shows the reader that it is hard for them to steer. This makes the reader worry about the characters because they have a ^{high} chance of ~~going~~ sinking.

Examiner Comment

A response that is working at Level 3 without being consistently secure, hence the mark in the middle of the level. A number of comparisons are considered, with some moments of explanation coupled with some comment in places. References are largely appropriate although not always as relevant as they could be for the points being made.

In text 1, the writer presents the situation about surviving at sea as a cruel experience. Whereas in text 2, the writer presents the situation as a ~~surviving~~ ^{surviving} experience for the reader. ~~Because he thought he was confident about the weather.~~ ^{Because he thought he was confident about the weather.} The narrator experience in text 1 was a very negative impression. The writer uses words like "frightened", "deep", "death", "dark valley", "hills of water" to describe how much struggle they faced trying to survive. But in text 2, the the narrator knew how to swim and handle the boat unlike in text 1, where they ~~were~~ ^{were} clueless. In text 2, the narrator tell us how "Billy has fished his whole life" and that she thinks nothing can sink her."

But surprisingly he wished he did not go. This is seen in the text "A day ago he could have run north".

In text 1, the writer uses short sentences to describe how they survive. "I felt death was upon us". At this point, the text narrator thought

he was going to die after "the boat was swamped". However, in text 2, the narrator tells us how "Billy" fought hard to keep the boat from rolling over. This is clearly seen in the text "He fought the wheel to keep from broaching". This ~~starts showing how~~ shows how confident he thought he was. The narrator lost confidence when he was "no longer at the helm". He thought he had control over it but the "waves" did not do him good that day, but rather came faster than expected.

In text 1, how the narrator was at the point of giving up all hope. "a complete giving-up". It also uses adjective to describe their journey of survival. Words such as: "shocked, chilled and scared witless". This indicates that there was no form of shelter for the narrator and they could "barely managed to hold on". At the end of the text 1, the narrator tells us how he survived but he survived with "bruises and cuts" and also "soaked and chilled". This implies that the journey was not a smooth one and all through the journey they didn't have a smooth day not even one because it never ended "the roller coaster would start again".

Whereas in text 2, the narrator was left with regrets "he could have radioed to see if there were any

other vessels around". This implies that he wished he did not go by himself but he wished he could have send someone else to go. He regretted so much because he did not know he will have to go through all of this.

Examiner Comment

This candidate shows a confidence in their approach to exploring the text, examining how the writer creates meaning with a thoughtful and balanced approach to evidencing the points made.

Perhaps held back by the range of comparisons being slightly more limited than we might expect at L4, hence a mark in the middle of the level.

Question 7

Section B

The writing question is the final section of the paper. Candidates are advised to spend around 45 minutes on their writing and there are 40 marks available across both papers. When considering the overall weighting of this section in the paper, this is a significant number of marks available. It was really pleasing to see that nearly all candidates attempted this section, with some very imaginative and creative responses offered. While the focus on this section for many candidates has had some impact on their ability to finish the reading section, it is understandable that candidates choose to focus on this section to such a degree.

Question 7 was a popular choice for candidates. The new addition in this specification, of a starter sentence for candidates to make use of, was obviously appealing and allowed all candidates to have a go at this section of the paper. While the starter sentence did lead to some generic responses, many candidates showed real creativity and a sense of style with their writing in this section. Examiners are always impressed by what candidates can create in the time available, praising the level of thought and creativity.

The first bullet point of the mark scheme is every examiner's starting point when judging a response in this section. How successfully has the candidate shown an ability to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively? Candidates should be asking themselves: what do I want to achieve here? Do I want to shock and surprise my reader? Am I attempting a certain style or genre of writing? How much will I cover in my narrative?

All of these questions will hopefully guide the candidate towards a clear purpose so they can focus on a sustained response. Indeed, the last question, how much to cover, is an important one in this section – candidates can feel they have to cover a whole 'story' which, given the time constraints, can lead to somewhat pedestrian responses that feel rushed as the candidate gets to the 'finish'. Some of the most creative responses in this section had a clear start, middle and end, without necessarily providing a traditional conclusion, or ending, to the narrative. While examiners are always somewhat wary of cliffhanger endings (or the 'it was all a dream' responses), there is no requirement to achieve a 'once upon a time' through to a 'they all lived happily ever after' style of narrative! In fact, leaving some questions for the reader can be an indicator of confidence and control on the part of the writer.

The main discriminators in the writing responses were:

the ability to communicate clearly and effectively – lower level responses tended to show some limitations in this area, offering more basic narratives that often simply relayed an event or occasion. Higher level responses often offered sophisticated responses that worked hard to engage the reader (AO5)

the effectiveness of tone, style and register (AO5)

spelling of basic vocabulary, especially double consonants (AO6)

general quality of punctuation (AO6) – missing commas and random capital letters the range of sentences used (AO6)

vocabulary choices (AO6) – at the higher level, it was clear that candidates were making explicit choices about choice of words in terms of impact on the reader

It was noted that candidates were confident employing a range of sentences (one word sentences and single sentence paragraphs) that examiners will recognise as crafting on the part of the candidate. Clearly this is something centres have been supporting candidates with

to good effect. Vocabulary usage is an interesting conundrum for many candidates – some attempt to offer a range of sophisticated vocabulary, while others seem to shy away from using unfamiliar words perhaps for fear of making spelling mistakes. It is worth noting that attempting to craft a specific style of response will be awarded where possible.

Write your answer to Section B here:

It was all around us. It was closing in. It smelt like our death was about to occur! I couldn't escape this feeling as if I was sinking. I called out for my friend "Emily", Emily, Emily" no response! "Emily, Emily, Emily" A distinguish smell ticked my nose hairs trickling to my brain, reminding me of an event that I hated recalling. My friend slowly walked towards me she looked like a zombie that had rised from the dead. I asked her ~~what~~ what could she recall and she said "I remember

getting dragged like a sack of potatoes and hearing this ring sound that I think triggered me to fall asleep in the middle of this forest." We both didn't know what to do. I could feel eyes glazing at me from a far but ~~none~~ all I could ~~feel~~ feel is nausar. I slowly drop down to the ground like a birds feather praying that I will eventually wake up.

Examiner Comment

This is a brief and undeveloped response, with some moments of effective and imaginative writing.

A05: The response is broadly at level 2, showing an awareness of purpose and a straightforward use of tone, with some use of rhetorical features. The brevity of the response and lack of paragraphing resulted in a mark of 8.

A06: a mark in the middle of level 2 has been awarded, with some evidence of a range of vocabulary and some control of punctuation and sentence structures. However, some loss control of control and spelling errors prevent it from achieving the top of level 2.

Examiner Tip

Developing the response for slightly longer would really help the score for this example!

Write your answer to Section B here:

It was all around us... These Germans
won't stop... They will risk their lives
till everyone is dead. Bullets after bullets
after bullets, swarming us around the
horizon. This pitch black cruel world
is too much for us. This is too much
too much bloodshed... we have families
waiting for us... I wanted ^{this to stop} ~~to stop~~,
I never wanted this sort of nightmare.
^{Comrades} Brothers are getting shot and killed
around me, my sanity is at the blink

to shatter. I was running, trenches
after trenches after trenches... I never
wanted to die for this country, I
wanted to escape. My brother
was also in the war and kept
worrying. Bodies laying down like broken
statues. ^{It was easy to spot my} ~~My brother was~~ ^{is easy to}
brother, pale skin, golden blonde hair
and clear blue eyes. But the ^{few} ~~view~~ sights
of this madness was covering the
horizon. I was running... running...
... running. Three Germans saw
me and did not hesitate, their face
had no thoughts, their eyes were lifeless.

no hesitation. ^U The Loaded up ^{their} ~~there~~ bayonet then started to shoot me. I could manage to escape their gaze through the fog, these lifeless devils had no sort of sympathy. They shot my left leg and my left shoulder and I ~~proceed~~ to fall down to one of them trenches but I couldn't run anymore. I lifted up my head, ~~and~~ ^{my} ~~i~~ ^{leg} ~~saw~~ ^{and} ~~a~~ ^{shoulder} ~~miss~~ was painful like parasites trying to eat me alive. Then I saw a bright dot soaring through the battlefield I really thought it will save me against these Germans, however. It wasn't a comrade missile but theirs. "Boom" it exploded next me and I ~~was~~ ^{was} unconscious. I woke up ~~with~~ with a bad headache like my head couldn't ~~expand~~ expand at that moment the ~~sky~~ sky stopped feeling hot, it was bright like it felt like we won... I manage to climb but the war had ended... no more bloodshed, no more bullets piercing through the sky's however the ground was black as like it never had any colour

Then suddenly I saw a man with pale skin, golden blonde hair and clear blue eyes, on the ground lifeless... dead... already left to the gates of hell. I already knew it was my brother. He looked exactly like him... I manage to escape the jaws of death and reunite my family. Since then my life changed. The fear and sorrow was still in my heart. I would never my family experience this kind of hell.

Examiner Comment

An example of a candidate who has some good control of rhetorical features and creates an interesting narrative, but who struggles to sustain their written expression throughout, after a strong opening.

AO5: The candidate has a clear ability to communicate clearly and imaginatively. There is clear selection of rhetorical devices to suit the purpose of describing a scene of war, with the tone appropriate but not always sustained enough for L4. There is a development of narrative although it does become more laboured as it progresses. There is little use of paragraphing. Best fit is top of L3.

AO6: Meets most of the criteria at L3. There is a varied, occasionally wide range of vocabulary used but there is some loss of control of grammar, tense and punctuation on occasion, so a mark in the middle of L3 is appropriate.

Question 8

Section B

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Question 8 was a less popular choice in this series, perhaps as the starter sentence offered with Question 7 was an accessible way in for many candidates. However, those that did attempt this question offered responses with a similar range – some somewhat simple responses, alongside a handful of sophisticated responses.

The first bullet point of the mark scheme is every examiner's starting point when judging a response in this section. How successfully has the candidate shown an ability to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively? Candidates should be asking themselves: what do I want to achieve here? Do I want to shock and surprise my reader? Am I attempting a certain style or genre of writing? How much will I cover in my narrative?

All of these questions will hopefully guide the candidate towards a clear purpose so they can focus on a sustained response. Indeed, the last question, how much to cover, is an important one in this section – candidates can feel they have to cover a whole 'story' which, given the time constraints, can lead to somewhat pedestrian responses that feel rushed as the candidate gets to the 'finish'. Some of the most creative responses in this section had a clear start, middle and end, without necessarily providing a traditional conclusion, or ending to the narrative. While examiners are always somewhat wary of cliffhanger endings (or the 'it was all a dream' responses), there is no requirement to achieve a 'once upon a time' through to a 'they all lived happily ever after' style of narrative. In fact, leaving some questions for the reader can be an indicator of confidence and control on the part of the writer.

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It was noted that candidates were confident employing a range of sentences (one word sentences and single sentence paragraphs) that examiners will recognise as crafting on the part of the candidate. Clearly this is something centres have been supporting candidates with to good effect. Vocabulary usage is an interesting conundrum for many candidates – some attempt to offer a range of sophisticated vocabulary, while others seem to shy away from

using unfamiliar words perhaps for fear of making spelling mistakes. It is worth noting that attempting to craft a specific style of response will be awarded where possible.

Write your answer to Section B here:

I ~~it~~ was a typical Wednesday ~~evening~~^{MORNING}, the rain was pouring down, hammering the window as the rain drops collided with the glass. I went outside to get to school, facing the storm ~~last~~ in front of me.

Examiner Comment

It appears that this candidate ran out of time.

A05: a very brief response, which meets all the criteria at level 1 but just nudges into level 2 for some ability to communicate clearly.

A06: again, despite its brevity, it meets all the level 1 criteria and is awarded a mark at the bottom of level 2 for its use of correctly spelt vocabulary, punctuation and sentence structure.

Write your answer to Section B here:

The wind lashed her face and froze her to the core. The sky was a violent, cruel shade of grey: charcoal, concrete, stone. There was no escape, she was at the mercy of the gods. With the devil on each side of her, attacking her with volleys of ^{cruel} wind and rain. All she could see was one lonely tree on the horizon of the desolate moorland.

Where had she come from? Where was she going? What was she escaping?

No one knew... She was dressed in a thick black coat but it was no match for the wicked storm ^{that} she was battling. The only thing keeping her company was a the lonely, abandoned, deserted tree. The tree was crooked and barbed. It looked battle-hardened like it had fought off the storms for centuries, but it was a small oasis of shelter ~~it~~, surrounded by hell on all sides. The tree became her shield, absorbing

the beatings that the storm was throwing at her. Helpless, rain pined down upon her like a thousand bullets and the trees, her guardian, could not catch them all. The sky became darker and the winds became stronger. All hope of escaping this hell was fading by the minute.

She was trapped 10 miles from the nearest town ^{and} with the weather building an impenetrable wall around her. Her cloak was soaked and her ~~boots~~ ^{ragged old boots} started to slowly sink into the muddy abyss below her feet. When all hope was lost, she looked up ~~and~~ to say her final prayers of help and suddenly she saw a figure walking towards her.

An old man, no younger than 60, was making his way across the ocean which had ~~formed on the moon in the last hours~~. ^{*} Stumbling over ditches and rivers, she used her dying strength to run towards him. Was this her saviour? Had her prayers been answered? ~~The rain~~ The rain continued to beat down on her, crushing her spine but not her hope. Finally, she reached him. He was old, frail but he had a warm heart. Dressed in a warm crimson coat and dark blue trousers. His hair was drenched by the never ending waterfall from the charcoal clouds and his ~~boots~~ boots were plastered in a thick layer of dense mud.

Amorally stretched he pointed to the frail girl and then to a set of jam buildings on the horizon. In a kind and gentle voice he told the girl his wife was cooking a feast for dinner: beef stew, mashed potatoes and his favourite apple crumble for desert. The girl's face lit up like a child seeing a sweet shop. There was a place to go, escape the hell of the moorland and wait for the vile storm to

The two of them started to hobble towards the cottage. The old man turned to her ^{and gave} ~~her~~ ^{her} a look ^{to} ~~to~~ where she had come from. ~~from~~ She looked blankly at him and kept walking...

* which was separating the ^{only} two people on the moor.

Examiner Comment

This sophisticated response is working at level 5 for both A0s 5 & 6. It is a good example of a response which is much longer than it seems due the size of the handwriting.

A05: the response securely achieves all bullet points at level 4 and is awarded at level 5 for its sophisticated ability to communicate effectively and imaginatively and for how its subtlety shapes audience response with its sustained use of style and register.

A06: despite some minor errors in places, this response works well at level 5, especially around its extensive use of vocabulary and its sophisticated ability to write for effect. A mark in the middle of level 5 is justified.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice when approaching paper 2 of 1EN2:

- when approaching the reading questions, make sure you check carefully which text you are being asked to talk about – different questions are about different texts! We still see a number of responses that discuss the incorrect text!
- for the short answer questions (Questions 1 and 3), ensure your answer is brief and you avoid writing out a large section of the text.
- make sure that for Question 3, the question is understood and that the evidence provided (either a direct quote or in a candidate's own words) directly answers the question asked – the focus for this question is on 'interpret', rather than simply 'identify'.
- for Question 2, with a focus on language, remember that using subject specific terminology is important but the focus is also on explaining how the feature(s) help to create meaning for the reader
- similarly, for Question 4, use subject specific terminology while also trying to explain how the language and structure is helping to create meaning.
- to repeat – don't just feature spot!
- when discussing structure, don't be afraid of discussing the changing feelings across the whole extract, or how the narrative is developed from start to end – these are all good areas to write about for structure.
- for Question 5, offer three similarities. It is also important that your similarities focus on the question asked, not just generally similar things about the texts.
- for the comparison question (Question 6), make sure you focus on the question asked and find several comparisons to discuss – it will really help you shape your answer.
- for the imaginative writing questions, think about your reader, what you want them to understand and what impact you want to create.
- when you start writing, think about the words you will use, features you can make use of and how your punctuation can add meaning.
- it is always worth thinking about how you may be able to make your writing stand out – lots of candidates write about very similar topics (we get lots of football responses!), so try to do something engaging and interesting with the topic you want to write about.
- plan your writing. We know it can feel like the last thing you want to spend time on during a pressurised exam but planning can really help – your response will probably engage the reader better and show that you have thought about how you want to start and end your writing.
- take care throughout the writing section in terms of your accuracy: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- watch the time! Focus on giving a response for every question – every mark will help, so missing out questions will never be a good idea if you can avoid it.