

Dear student

In view of the prevailing lockdown, we are inviting you to keep in touch with your studies. In this regard we are posting you – on a weekly basis - specific tasks that you have to work out without fail. Worked solutions for Paper 2 and exercises on grammar will be made available one week after the tasks are set. Make the most of your precious time.

Thanks.

## **Grade 10**

### **Week 1**

#### **Task**

- 1 You recently enjoyed a performance given by your favourite singer or group. A newspaper published an article saying that the concert was very poor for several reasons. You decide to write a letter to the Editor of the newspaper to disagree with this view and to explain how much you enjoyed the performance.

Write your **letter**. You must include the following:

- the name of the singer or group **and** where and when the performance took place
- details of what the newspaper criticised
- why you thought the performance was so enjoyable.

Cover all three points above **in detail**. You should make sure your letter is polite but persuasive. Start your letter 'Dear Editor,' and remember to add an appropriate ending.

## Section 2: Composition

Begin your answer on a new page of your answer booklet.

Write on **one** of the following topics.

At the beginning of your composition put the number of the task you have chosen.

**You are advised to write between 350 and 500 words. You will be awarded marks for accurate use of language and relevant content: 30.**

### Tasks 2–6

#### Description

- 2 Describe the most helpful person **and** the most unhelpful person you know. (Remember you can describe their appearance as well as their character and behaviour.)

#### Argument

- 3 Would you prefer to live in the centre of a busy city or in a quiet neighbourhood? Give reasons and examples to support your view.
- 4 What are the arguments for and against space travel to other planets? Give reasons and examples to support your view.

#### Narrative

- 5 Write a story which includes the words: 'When they did not agree with her solution, she felt angry.'
- 6 Write a story in which two people unexpectedly agreed to help each other.

# Comprehension

## Passage 1

### *Elephants*

- 1 Elephants are magnificent creatures, the largest animals on earth, and are found in sub-Saharan Africa and in parts of Asia. Throughout history, they were used as a form of transport; for example, kings and emperors were carried on highly decorated elephants, seen as fitting vehicles for such powerful individuals. Because of their strength, elephants have commonly been used as working animals, for example in the logging industry, where they can haul wagons and carry trees with minimum damage to surrounding forest areas. They were invaluable in warfare in many ancient civilisations, such as those of India and China; male elephants were used to charge against the enemy while their female counterparts carried provisions such as food and weaponry. Roman soldiers were recorded as being terrified when they first saw these huge beasts advancing towards them in battle, led by the Carthaginian general, Hannibal. Nor were elephants confined to ancient warfare, as they had a part to play in modern wars; they could cope with mountainous terrain impassable by horses and, as late as 1945, they provided brute strength to build bridges during the Second World War. 5
- 2 Elephants have always featured in the religions of several cultures, with tribes in some places believing that their chiefs would be reincarnated as elephants; elsewhere, religious processions are led by elephants adorned with lavish garments, such as in the Buddhist Festival of Esala Perahera in Kandy, Sri Lanka. The Hindu god Ganesh, revered as the god of prosperity, wisdom and intelligence, is depicted as a human with an elephant's head. Elephants are said to bring good luck, and there is much debate among some people about the importance of the position of the elephant's trunk: for example, is the elephant's trunk more auspicious if it points upwards or downwards? 10
- 3 Because the ivory of which elephants' tusks are made is really beautiful, it has for centuries been a much sought-after commodity, used in ancient times to make valuable works of art and religious objects, and in modern times to make cutlery handles and piano keys. During drought, elephants dig for water and thus produce water for other animals; this, and other behaviours, mean that elephants are described as a keystone species, that is, one which has a huge impact for good on the environment. 25
- 4 Elephants have also been used as a form of entertainment. The first elephant imported to the USA arrived in the late 1790s and was promptly put on display; by the 1880s, elephants had become popular circus performers, trained to perform tricks to dazzle appreciative audiences. 30
- 5 But these are perilous days for elephants. Many are losing their habitats because of the clearing of land for development projects such as housing, resulting in the loss of many elephants, and their babies being abandoned. Sometimes they are killed by farmers who do not want to lose their agricultural or grazing ground to national parks. Because ivory continues to be prized in art and manufacturing, it is still in great demand in some countries and, although some ivory trade is legal, much of it is the result of large-scale elephant poaching. Indeed, poaching of elephants for ivory is now seriously on the increase. 35
- 6 Because of concern about the plight of elephants nowadays, they have been classified as a threatened and, in some parts of the world, an endangered species. As the ivory trade is often perceived as being cruel and barbaric, some countries have banned it. In June 2015, more than a ton of confiscated ivory was crushed in New York's Times Square by conservationists to send a message that illegal ivory trade should not be tolerated. Keeping elephants in captivity is obviously cruel, and therefore many zoos and circuses refuse to display them. For example, the only elephant now seen in Edinburgh Zoo is a fibreglass one with a sign explaining that the conditions for keeping elephants cannot be met there; other zoos are publicly criticised for their treatment of elephants by groups such as In Defense of Animals. Other organisations, for example the World Wild Fund for Nature, raise funds to equip anti-poaching patrols and ensure conservation laws are enforced. Such is the success of these awareness-raising tactics that in many countries elephant refuges and orphanages have been established, staffed often by volunteer labour. 40  
45  
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## Passage 2

### Emma

- 1 Emma unlocked and pushed open the back door, staggering under the heavy bags of groceries she had just bought. She placed the bags on the kitchen counter and almost instinctively switched on the kettle to make herself a cup of tea. Her parents had gone on holiday, leaving her, as the elder, in charge of her brother. Their trust placed a huge responsibility on Emma, felt particularly because it was the first time they had left their children alone in the house together. Groping in a kitchen cupboard, she was irritated to find that the teabags had been shifted, no doubt by James, her brother. He had also left the cutlery drawer open slightly. Even worse, he had left muddy footprints all over the floor. Feeling justifiably aggrieved, Emma resolved to tell James off when he came home. 5
- 2 As Emma drank her tea, a cloud crossed her mind and gradually became a storm of doubt. Hadn't James, in accordance with their parents' instructions, left for high school before her to ensure that he was never at home alone? He had a key, but why would he have come back to the house after she had left for college? She thought again of the rearranged cupboard, the open drawer and the muddy footprints, and tried to push aside the thought of an intruder. As the full force of her suspicion hit her, she realised that she would have to look in all the other rooms to dispel it. 10 15
- 3 She could feel her heart pounding against her ribs as she opened the kitchen door and ventured into the hallway. The living room bore the signs of family life, and it was completely unremarkable – just the sagging sofa, a slightly dusty table and chairs, bookshelves, the television, some newspapers and magazines. Upstairs, she stopped briefly to peek into the bathroom. The closed door of her parents' bedroom creaked open ominously, but revealed the room to be as tidy as it always was, except for three pairs of her mother's shoes lying on the floor, no doubt considered ultimately to have been too much for her already bulging suitcase. She arrived at her own bedroom door, inundated with fear, but managing to ignore the fact that she was sweating. There was nothing odd there, and James's room was, presumably, as he had left it. Emma looked at its dismally familiar features – books strewn across the desk, the occasional sock languishing on the floor and a rugby ball sitting on, of all places, James's pillow. Relief flooded over her as she was now convinced that, apart from herself, the house was empty. 20 25
- 4 Soon the groceries had been put away, the kitchen floor was washed, and the evening meal was on the table. When Emma opened the door to her brother, he slung his school blazer on the hall dresser, caught the significance of his sister's scowl, and went upstairs with it. Surreptitiously, Emma glanced at his shoes to check for mud, hoping for further ammunition for the impending battle. The cleanliness of his shoes, however, jangled a little bell in her head as they sat down to eat. Oblivious to his sister's mood, James rattled on to her about the runs he had scored in the cricket match at school. 'James,' Emma interjected, 'why did you come home from school today, when you know Mum and Dad wouldn't have liked it? I understand that coping with some classes might not be easy, but all of us have to face up to our responsibilities. In any case, you should have known you'd be found out.' 30 35
- 5 James stared at his sister with a look of undisguised puzzlement, which made her realise that what he was about to say was true. 'But I didn't come home,' he protested. 'Why on earth would I want to do that?' Emma blurted out her story: the kitchen cupboard, the open drawer, the muddy footprints. James responded with derision. 'Why would anyone want to steal teabags and spoons?' he laughed, before realising that an intruder might want to look around for valuables in cupboards and drawers. Hadn't he heard of people keeping money and jewellery in the strangest of places? At that point a loud insistent knocking came from inside the cupboard in the hall, the one which could be opened only from the outside. 40 45

**Section 1: Reading for Ideas**

Read **Passage 1**, *Elephants*, in the Insert and answer **all** the questions below.

**1 (a) Notes**

**Identify and write down** the information in the passage which describes the importance of elephants throughout history, and the reasons for the decline in the elephant population today and what is being done to stop this decline.

**USE MATERIAL FROM THE WHOLE PASSAGE.**

At this stage, you do **not** need to use your own words. Use note form. To help you get started, the first point in each section of notes is done for you. You may find it helpful to use bullet points when listing the content points.

You will be awarded up to **12** marks for **content** points.

**Content Points**

**Importance of elephants throughout history**

- *(Form of) transport*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
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.....  
.....

**Reasons for the decline in the elephant population today and what is being done to stop this decline**

- *Losing their habitats (because of the clearing of land for development projects)*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
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.....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

[12]



2 Re-read paragraphs 1, 3 and 6, and identify and write down **one** opinion from each of these paragraphs.

- Paragraph 1 .....  
.....[1]
- Paragraph 3 .....  
.....[1]
- Paragraph 6 .....  
.....[1]

Total marks for Section 1: [25]

**Section 2: Reading for Meaning**

Read **Passage 2**, *Emma*, in the Insert and answer **all** the questions below.

From paragraph 1

- 3 (a) Why was Emma 'staggering'?  
.....[1]
- (b) What was Emma's 'huge responsibility'?  
.....[1]
- (c) What was the most unpleasant change Emma found in the house when she came home?  
.....[1]
- (d) 'Feeling justifiably aggrieved, Emma resolved to tell James off when he came home.' Explain **in your own words** how Emma is feeling at this point.  
.....  
.....  
.....[2]

From paragraph 2

- 4 (a) A 'cloud crossed her mind and gradually became a storm of doubt.'  
What does this tell you about Emma's feelings at this point?  
.....  
.....[1]
- (b) Why did their parents want James to leave the house in the morning before Emma did?  
.....  
.....[1]
- (c) What decision did Emma make when the 'full force of her suspicion hit her'?  
.....[1]



From paragraph 3

5 (a) What are the **two** physical signs of fear shown by Emma?

(i) .....  
.....

(ii) .....  
.....[2]

(b) Why do you think Emma's mother had left three pairs of shoes lying in the bedroom?

.....[1]

(c) Emma was 'inundated' with fear. Pick out and write down **one** word used in the paragraph which continues this idea of 'inundated'.

.....[1]

From paragraph 5

6 (a) 'James stared at his sister with a look of undisguised puzzlement, which made her realise that what he was about to say was true.' Explain **in your own words** how Emma knew that James was about to tell the truth.

.....  
.....  
.....[2]

(b) Explain fully (i) who you think was knocking on the cupboard door and (ii) why.

(i) .....  
.....

(ii) .....  
.....[2]

## 7 From the whole passage

For each of the words below, circle the letter (A, B, C or D) which has the same meaning that the word has in the passage.

(a) **irritated** (line 6)

A sad                      B sore                      C worried                      D annoyed                      [1]

(b) **unremarkable** (line 19)

A noticeable              B normal                      C visible                      D perfect                      [1]

(c) **peek** (line 20)

A look quickly              B look closely              C look eagerly              D look curiously              [1]

(d) **surreptitiously** (line 33)

A quietly                      B seriously                      C secretly                      D thoughtfully              [1]

(e) **derision** (line 43)

A doubt                      B scorn                      C surprise                      D determination              [1]

8 Re-read paragraphs 3 and 4, which contain phrases about (a) Emma’s entry into her parents’ bedroom and (b) James’s behaviour when they sat down to eat.

Explain:

- the **meaning** of the phrases as they are used in the passage
- the **effect** of the phrases as they are used in the passage.

(a) ‘The closed door of her parents’ bedroom creaked open ominously’. (line 21)

Meaning .....

Effect ..... [2]

(b) ‘Oblivious to his sister’s mood, James rattled on to her about the runs he had scored in the cricket match at school.’ (lines 35–36)

Meaning .....

Effect ..... [2]

Total marks for Section 2: [25]

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# Oral

2

## PART A – READING ALOUD

*Read the following story to the Examiner. Please attempt to read with fluency – using emphasis and varying your tone where appropriate.*

### A new hobby

Patrick was excited. He and his friends were going on a fishing trip. He had taken up this new hobby on his retirement. His wife had helped him choose a fishing rod and some basic equipment. She had welcomed his friends and had listened patiently to the stories of the enormous fish they had caught on previous expeditions. Now she was rather bored with it and was looking forward to a few days without the constant talk about fishing.

The fishermen left early on Sunday morning. The car was piled high with fishing tackle – rods and spare rods, reels and spare reels, and of course, a huge amount of food and drink. The men needed to keep their strength up!

“Have a wonderful time. I’m looking forward to some nice big fish to cook,” said his wife as Patrick squeezed into the car.

She had a very pleasant few days, but she was looking forward to being reunited with her husband on Wednesday.

“Have you had a good time?” she called as the car pulled on to the drive.

“Wonderful, dear,” replied a rather sheepish Patrick, handing his wife his large fishing basket.

As she looked inside she couldn’t help smiling.

“Well, thank goodness we aren’t relying on your catch for supper,” she laughed, looking at the two tiny fish in the basket.

## PART B – CONVERSATION

### Hobbies

In the above story, a man enjoys his new hobby. Discuss this topic of **hobbies** with your Examiner. Your aim is to develop the conversation using the prompts below.

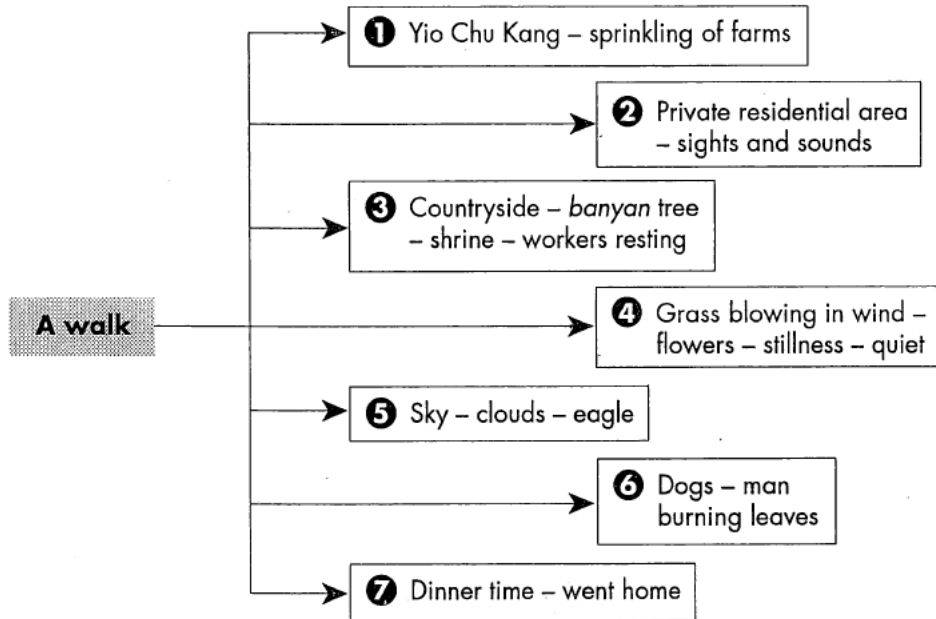
In your conversation, consider each of the **three** discussion points. However, you are also free to raise **related** points of your own.

- any hobbies that you enjoy
  - the benefits of having a hobby
  - the dangers of becoming too obsessed with a hobby.
-

## Model Essays

### Question 7 A Walk in the Countryside

#### Suggested Approach



### MODEL ESSAY

I decided to walk around my private housing estate one sleepy Sunday afternoon.

Situated in the north of Singapore, Yio Chu Kang comprises mainly private residences.

However, there remains a sprinkling of farms in the area as well.

Taking leisurely strides, I passed rows of terraced houses and bungalows. All of them were of the same architectural design with red tiled roofs. The lawns of some had been paved over to create an extra car space.

It was nice and quiet walking through the estate. In some houses, I heard the soft tinkling of piano music as played by a child, with numerous pauses and a few off-key notes. If there was noise coming from some houses at this drowsy time of 2 p.m., it was mainly the sounds coming from television sets. A *kung fu* film was in progress in one house, while I heard excited cheers and shouts of a soccer match in another. Luscious-looking mangoes hung from trees in some gardens, their light-green colour contrasting with the dark green of the abundant leaves.

The route through the estate was quite an easy one, except that the parts going uphill caused me to perspire a little. I did not mind it though, as it was good exercise.

Crossing a plank placed over a big monsoon drain brought me to the countryside proper. I spied a huge *banyan* tree with long, wispy vines hanging down from its branches. On the shady ground below, I saw a small shrine at the foot of the tree trunk. There was a statuette of a fierce-looking, bearded Chinese god in it. Beside the shrine were some joss sticks stuck in the ground, with smoke trailing upwards. Nearby were two small oranges as offerings.

A group of Bangladeshi labourers were lying sprawled under the shady tree. Plastic packets of bright-pink drinks hung on branches over their heads. The workers must have been very tired, for none of them stirred in their rest when I walked past them.

I was now walking in the countryside. The tall grass grew in scattered clumps on the red muddy ground. When a slight breeze blew, the white fluff on the *lallang* stems waved with the motion of the wind.

The tranquil area did not seem to have many insects around. A pair of yellow butterflies flitted from flower to flower – delicate pink-petalled ones with bright-yellow centres.

As I strolled along, I reflected on the stillness of the area. Once in a while, I heard the chugging of a tractor in the distance. It was so quiet that I could even hear soft but constant sounds of piling from a construction site somewhere far-off.

I looked up and observed that the sky was a deep blue, with fluffy white clouds floating silently along in gigantic patches. I perspired freely as I continued walking. A slight breeze dried my perspiration-soaked tee shirt somewhat, and I began to feel slightly chilly. Then I saw a dark, moving shape in the sky. It was a local eagle, flying leisurely with its majestic wings spread wide. Master of all that it surveyed, the few birds in its path quickly took off.

The sound of barking caught my attention. A pair of dogs, one brown and the other black, were about two metres away from me. Then my nose detected the characteristic smell of leaves being burnt. I rounded the corner of the path and saw a man raking some dry twigs and leaves onto a pile of burning leaves. He was a thin, wiry man. Tanned a dark brown by the sun, his weather-beaten face spoke of a life spent working outdoors.

Glancing at my watch, I then realised that it was nearing dinner time. Suppressing a small tummy-growl, I then made my way home.

(515 words)

**49. The purpose of wearing a school uniform is to give pupils a sense of identity. At the same time, it encourages good discipline. Do you agree?**

On the surface of it, one tends to agree. Many schools, except those in the tertiary level, require uniforms from the students. Students are identified by their uniforms and most would give a second thought if they want to break a school rule, for example, smoking while being seen in their school uniforms. They would lower the dignity of the uniform they were wearing. Hence, in this sense, students wearing school uniform, identify with their school and the wearing of it fosters discipline.

Tertiary students, whether in polytechnics or universities, do not wear school uniforms. They are regarded as young adults and it is thought that they would chafe at the lack of freedom of requiring them to wear a uniform of their institution. They are supposed to be more mature than the secondary or primary school children. Hence, it is assumed that there is no serious ill-discipline among them. For the younger ones, a school uniform would be a good check on ill behaviour and an identifying symbol for the public to report to the school authorities if the students are seen engaged in behaviour that is not wholesome, eg. swearing, vandalising etc.

Most schools in Singapore have distinctive school uniforms. This encourages a sense of identity, healthy rivalry and competition among the primary and secondary schools in their inter-school games, competitions or academic pursuits. They encourage competition for the sake of improvement towards excellence, unlike that which just emphasises the end product of winning.

Singapore has some top schools of which their pupils are proud to belong to and which many parents aspire to send their children to. However, this reputation was not achieved overnight. Raffles Institution, the leading boys' school for example, has a proud tradition of academic scholarship and sporting prowess. The motivated pupils and teachers work together to realise their achievements year after year. There is a tradition of excellence which the school is well-known for and a name and reputation to uphold. The discipline comes from within the pupils' hearts. Therefore, the reputable image which their school uniform represents is a reflection of their achievements derived from discipline and hard work and not vice versa.

Contrast this with some low achieving schools. Pupils are wary of putting on the school uniforms. This may represent an institution where students have been known to engage in gangsterism, vandalism or done acts which vex the public, like openly smoking in public. An atmosphere of low morale is associated with the school and students do not identify with the uniform. In fact, many in the school would be ashamed to wear the school uniform. Therefore, a vicious cycle sets in when the school can only attract low quality pupils into its school admission exercise.

An efficient and enlightened principal and hardworking, motivated teachers could improve a school's lot. As the school starts improving in the academic and non-academic spheres, parents and pupils begin to recognise it as adding value to a student's education and more able students will be attracted to the school and identify with it.

Conversely, a good school's standards may slide if its students and staff become less disciplined and focussed on achieving good results. If a weak principal is appointed, standards may drop further. Then the school uniform would not be a source of pride or identity. It would also not encourage discipline as only the uniform of a good school can inspire.



Write a story which includes the sentence : 'No one could understand why she failed to turn up.'

Example candidate response – grade A

Section 2

It was the day of the party – the day everyone at school had been waiting for all through senior year. The graduating class of 2012 of Rockland City High had been planning and preparing, opted to host a casual-style party this year instead of the more traditional prom the school usually held, and they had been planning and preparing for it since February. Now it was the day after graduation and they the students had all received their diplomas, and were now very excited about the party that evening.

Cindy thought she had never seen anything more fabulous. Not only was the weather cool and breezy, yet not rainy, but ~~the~~ also, the decorations ~~committee~~ had done a fine job with the school hall, where the party was to be. Thick, fluffy cloth ~~she~~ drapes had been hung at strategic points along the walls, interspersed with sprigs of plastic flowers. Coloured cellophane ~~had~~ was wrapped around the lights to create a plethora of vibrant hues when they were switched on. A pale green meadow ~~made up~~ was painted on the backdrop behind the stage, splashed generously with blue and pink flowers; above it hung a gigantic, plain white banner bearing the words 'CLASS OF 2012' in ~~vivid~~ vibrant robin's egg blue.

Cindy knew, however, that the main attraction ~~was~~ would be the long buffet table at the end of the room, already graced with heaping plates of mouth-watering food from Connie's caterers.

And yet, as more and more people started arriving for the party, Cindy frowned. Everything was perfect, yes – except for one thing.

Alison wasn't there.

Alison's absence was conspicuous – as class valedictorian and chairperson of the organisation committee, she should have been the first to arrive. But the party was now in full swing, and she was nowhere to be found. Everyone noticed she wasn't there, but no-one could understand why she failed to turn up.

At last, ~~finally~~ when 8:00 pm struck and Alison didn't come, Cindy decided to make the 5-minute drive to Alison's home. When she got there, she found Alison, dressed in a pretty white ~~dress~~ <sup>look</sup>, standing in the garden with a tall young man who looked a lot like her. It was clear from her face that Alison was surprised – yet her eyes also sparkled with joy as she threw herself into the young man's arms.

Cindy smiled as she drove away without disturbing them. Alison's twin brother was rarely able to make it home from ~~the~~ Australia, where he lived with their father; if Alison decided to come to the party, it would be much later.

After all, nothing was more important than family.

Word count: 415



Total mark awarded = 27 out of 30

### Examiner comment – grade A

The essay is a response to Question 3 and concerns a young woman called Alison not turning up for a prom party. The essay correctly interprets 'failed to turn up' as being absent, whereas many candidates saw it as meaning 'failed to do well', as in an exam or sporting event. The achievement places this essay in Band 1 because it is highly accurate in its language while the content creates great interest. However, it is in the lower half of Band 1 because it contains lapses in the language and the content is a bit of an anti-climax in the final sentence.

Overall the **language** is highly accurate. The *sentence structure* is complex, containing a variety of sentence lengths and types and even employing dramatic short sentences for effect – "Alison wasn't there.". *Verb forms and tenses* are very good indeed and the candidate can handle sophisticated forms as in "Cindy thought she had never seen". However, the tenses are not perfect, with "Alison didn't come" being a fault – it is an indication that scripts do not have to be perfect to get into Band 1 but must have real merit to offset any lapses. Here, there is some excellent, precise observation and detail as in "vivid robin's egg blue". *Vocabulary* is certainly a very strong point ("opted", "conspicuous", "host", "vaedictorian", "vibrant", "strategic") although there is a sense that the candidate overstretchs occasionally with "plethora" and "heaping" not being quite right. *Punctuation* is very good with sophistication again demonstrated in the use of the semi-colon. *Paragraphing* is also good although some might debate the use of "And" to start one paragraph. *Spelling*, especially of such a mature vocabulary, is excellent. This is a complex, sophisticated, occasionally tense, narrative with a real 'feel' for the occasion. Linguistically, it is far better than the 'accurate' descriptor of Band 2 and yet is not so accurate as to be at the top of Band 1.



## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1: Directed Writing**

In **Section 1** candidates were asked to write a letter to the Editor of a local newspaper about an incident where a motorist almost knocks a cyclist off a bicycle and to suggest improvements to reduce the chances of further incidents.

#### **Bullet point 1:** *'when and where the incident took place'*

Most responses addressed both aspects of this bullet point, with varying degrees of success. Almost all stated when the incident took place with many referencing an exact date/time. The location of the incident was sometimes missed with a surprisingly large minority quoting directly from the question (*'walking along a busy road'*) rather than stating an exact location. Stronger responses set the scene by describing the general context in which the incident occurred, e.g. *during rush hour, at a notorious junction.*

#### **Bullet point 2:** *'what exactly happened, including how the car driver was to blame'*

Most responses included a description of the incident as well as how the driver was to blame. Descriptions ranged from a simple lift from the question (*'almost knocked the cyclist off the bicycle'*) to convoluted narratives and back story about the cyclist and/or driver. The driver was often to blame due to inappropriate mobile phone use or alcohol/drug abuse. A sizeable minority included extraneous detail about the car.

#### **Bullet point 3:** *'what you think should happen to improve the situation'*

This point was generally answered well with almost all candidates offering at least one simple suggestion, often based around cycle lanes or surveillance cameras. In responses that referenced alcohol/drug abuse or mobile phone use, suggestions to improve the situation often focused on solving these wider issues, with varying degrees of success. Many responses offered several sensible solutions such as creating greater separation between motorists and cyclists, more traffic police and educational campaigns to raise awareness. A number of candidates mentioned the environmental benefits of encouraging cycling, effectively weaving global climate concerns into their response. A very few slightly misunderstood the task and asked the Editor to improve the situation rather than offering their own suggestions.

Most responses were organised into paragraphs, included an appropriate opening and a short overview of the content of the letter; conveying a clear sense of **purpose** and **format**. Most also ended with an appropriate salutation and a concluding sentence (*'I hope you take my ideas into consideration', 'Looking forward to your response'*). The majority of responses were also written in a suitable **register**. A small minority of responses, in which register and format conventions were not adhered to, included irrelevant dialogue/details which in turn, affected the overall **tone**. Stronger responses maintained control of **tone** and **purpose** throughout.

A very small minority of responses lost focus on the task and strayed into a narrative of an accident. These included lengthy dialogue and rather gory details.

On occasion, meaning was impeded where candidates used unusual vocabulary incorrectly. Equally, the use of clichéd idioms and memorised sections was rarely successful as it tended to interrupt the flow of candidates' writing.

