

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2008 question paper

0500 FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

0500/31

Paper 31 (Directed Writing and Composition),
maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

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Section 1: Directed Writing

Question 1

This question tests writing objectives W1–W5:

- articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary
- use language and register appropriate to audience and context
- make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.

AND aspects of reading objectives R1–R3:

- understand and collate explicit meanings
- understand, explain and collate implicit meanings and attitudes
- select, analyse and evaluate what is relevant to specific purposes.

Many teenagers are young carers. As well as looking after themselves, they have to help parents and younger brothers and sisters to get through everyday life. Often their best friends and family members are the only people who know how difficult it can be for them. Organisations are trying to raise awareness of young carers through awards such as Young Citizen of the Year. A boy called Fizhan has been given a Young Citizen of the Year award for his tremendous efforts in looking after his disabled mother and his younger brother and sisters.

Read the transcript on the opposite page of an interview between Fizhan and a journalist called Keisha Jacobs. Imagine you are Keisha. Write an article for a newspaper sold in the area where Fizhan lives.

In your article you should:

- Explain Fizhan's situation, how he copes, and how it has affected his life.
- Persuade readers that they should be more aware of situations that people like Fizhan and his family are in.

Base what you write on the interview you have read.

You should write between 1 ½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to 15 marks for the quality of your writing.

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General notes on possible content

Candidates should select and order material from the interview. The best answers will attempt an overview of the problems that carers in general face, and may give some advice on what is a social problem.

More obvious points may include: his situation, how he copes, lessons learned

- Fizhan looks after his mum and four siblings as well as studying/attending school/having friends
- Some details about the different types of responsibilities Fizhan faces on a day to day basis: cooking/cleaning/getting some siblings dressed and dropped off at nursery/coping with physical and mental welfare of the younger children.
- Fizhan has to deal with crises e.g. siblings having accidents/mum needing the doctor/other suggestions.
- His school life (being behind with homework) friendships and social life have suffered in the past due to his not letting anyone know what his life was like – again many others could be going through this.
- It isn't all 'sacrifice' – he's learned to cook/'wants' to care for his family rather than feeling forced which suggests pride in what he does as well as a good relationship with mum/she too is aware of his needs e.g. 'me' time/suggesting his friends come around.
- Changes for the better once friends are aware of his situation/school understanding now/Sami the new helper.

Other ideas for consideration

- Young carers can be forced into this situation. Not all as lucky as Fizhan – loving/thoughtful mother who is not too ill to be entirely dependent.
- What can the community/schools do to recognise and support young carers?

Examples of extra ideas/points related to and developed from the text

- Perhaps main advice for other carers would be – let others know if coping is difficult since there is help out there: friends washing dishes/school more understanding/agencies/government help available.
- Young carers needn't be miserable or stuck on their own: Fizhan's sense of humour/his pride in what he has learned/relationship with his mum/his sister's concern – all these are positives.
- Young carers must have space for themselves ('me' time) otherwise isolation etc.
- With friends/good interaction with parents and family. There's no reason why a carer shouldn't have his/her own 'relationship' outside the home.

Basically two main areas – what Fizhan loses in his childhood and what he gains.

The question is marked out of 15 for Writing and 10 for Reading.

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Use the following table to give a mark out of 15 for Writing.

Band 1	13–15	Excellent, consistent sense of audience; persuasive/authoritative style; very fit for purpose. Fluent, varied sentences/wide range of vocabulary. Strong sense of structure, paragraphing and sequence. Virtually no error.
Band 2	10–12	Sense of audience mostly secure; quite stylish and fluent; sense of overall structure; arguments occasionally well developed. Writing is mainly accurate, sentences and language generally effective in places. Occasional error.
Band 3	8–9	Occasional sense of audience; mostly written in accurate, if fairly straightforward sentences; some argument, though not strong; mostly quite well structured; errors minor; language straightforward but effective.
Band 4	5–7	Appropriate if sometimes inconsistent style; sentences mainly accurate; fact rather than argument; basic structure: has beginning, middle and end; fairly frequent errors perhaps including sentence separation; sentences and/or vocabulary simple.
Band 5	3–4	Functional expression; largely factual with little/no argument; has a beginning, but main part of article not always well sequenced; some serious errors in grammar/or punctuation/or use of vocabulary. Errors slightly intrusive.
Band 6	1–2	Language and style not clear; some blurring and lack of order; despite some serious errors, can mainly be followed. Simple or muddled.
Band 7	0	Serious inaccuracies and problems with language and grammar are too intrusive to gain a mark in Band 6.

Use the following table to give a mark out of 10 for Reading.

Band 1	9–10	Makes a thorough, perceptive, convincing evaluation of ideas in the interview and creates a persuasive, mature article. Reads effectively between the lines. Develops the reading material and integrates it into the argument/response to the task.
Band 2	7–8	A good evaluation of the ideas in the interview, using reading material to support the argument. Occasionally effective development of some of the ideas in the material.
Band 3	5–6	A number of points are quoted to make a satisfactory article. Candidates cover the material satisfactorily, but may miss opportunities to develop it relevantly or at length.
Band 4	3–4	Selects points from the material rather literally AND/OR uses material thinly. Does not combine points into a good article.
Band 5	1–2	Parts of the answer are relevant, though material may be repeated injudiciously, or wrongly used.
Band 6	0	Answer does not relate to question and/or too much unselective copying directly from the material to gain a mark in Band 5.

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Section 2: Composition

Questions 2 (a), 2 (b), 3 (a) 3 (b), 4 (a) and 4 (b)

Give two marks:

- the first mark is out of 13 for content and structure: see Table A
- the second mark is out of 12 for style and accuracy: see Table B.

Remember that these marks will not necessarily match and one mark may well be (much) higher than the other.

The maximum overall mark for the Composition is 25. Write the total clearly at the end as follows: (e.g.) C7 + S10 = 17 (C standing for 'Content', S standing for 'Style').

It is important that marking is not 'bunched': do not be reticent about awarding marks in the top and bottom bands.

Composition questions

Argumentative/discursive writing

- 2 (a) Write the words of a speech entitled 'Basic rights for teenagers'. In your speech your aim should be to persuade both young people and adults to consider your views.
- (b) 'Travel broadens the mind.' Is this statement still true in the era of the Internet, which can tell us everything about any country and its people at the tap of a key?

Descriptive writing

- 3 (a) Describe a time when you were waiting for something unpleasant or fearful to happen. Describe the place where you were at the time and your feelings as you waited...and waited.
- (b) The sounds of laughter and loud voices attract your attention to a room in your house. The door is closed. Describe what you can hear, as well as what you can see, as you gently open the door.

Narrative writing

- 4 (a) 'The figure sprinted away from the angry crowd and headed towards a gap between the buildings.' Use this sentence to start a story.
- (b) As you shake your morning breakfast cereal from the box, out tumbles a small, red envelope with the words 'Open me now!' stamped on it. Inside, there is a list of instructions that you must carry out 'before night falls.' Write the story of your day.

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COMPOSITION TASKS: TABLE A – CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

	ARGUMENTATIVE /DISCURSIVE TASK	DESCRIPTIVE TASK	NARRATIVE TASK
Band 1 11–13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently well developed, logical stages in an overall, at times complex, argument. Each stage is linked to the preceding one, and sentences within paragraphs are soundly sequenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are many well-defined, well-developed ideas and images, describing complex atmospheres with a range of details. Overall structure is provided through devices such as the movements of the writer, the creation of a short time span, or the creation of atmosphere or tension. There is no confusion with writing a story. Repetition is avoided and the sequence of sentences makes the picture clear to the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative is complex and sophisticated and may contain devices such as sub-texts, flashbacks and time lapses. Cogent details are provided where necessary or appropriate. Different parts of the story are balanced and the climax carefully managed. Sentence sequences are sometimes arranged to produce effects such as the building up of tension or providing a sudden turn of events.
Band 2 9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each stage of the argument is defined and developed, although the explanation may not be consistent. The stages follow in a generally cohesive progression. Paragraphs are mostly well sequenced, although some may finish less strongly than they begin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a good selection of interesting ideas and images, with a range of details. These are formed into an overall picture of some clarity and effectiveness. There may be occasional repetition, and opportunities for development or the provision of detail may be missed. Sentences are often well sequenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing develops some interesting features, but not consistently so. Expect the use of detail and some attention to character or setting. Writing is orderly and the beginning and ending (where required) are satisfactorily managed. The reader is well aware of the climax even if it is not fully effective. Sequencing of sentences provides clarity and engages the reader in events or atmosphere.
Band 3 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a competent series of relevant points and a clear attempt is made to develop some of them. These points are relevant, straightforward and logical/coherent. Repetition is avoided, but the order of the stages in the overall argument can be changed without adverse effect. The sequence of the sentences within paragraphs is satisfactory, but the linking of ideas may be insecure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a competent selection of relevant ideas, images, and details, which satisfactorily address the task. An attempt is made to create atmosphere. The description provides a series of points rather than a sense of their being combined to make an overall picture, but some ideas are developed successfully, albeit straightforwardly. Some sentences are well sequenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A straightforward story (or part of story) with identification of features such as character, setting, tension, climax. While opportunities for appropriate development of ideas are sometimes missed, overall structure is competent, and some features of a developed narrative are evident. Sentences are usually sequenced to narrate events clearly.

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<p>Band 4</p> <p>5–6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly relevant points are made and they are developed partially with some brief effectiveness. The overall argument shows signs of structure but may be sounder at the beginning than at the end, or may drift away from the topic. There may be some repetition. The sequence of sentences may be occasionally insecure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some relevant ideas are provided and occasionally developed a little, perhaps as a narrative. There are some descriptive/atmospheric episodes, but the use of event may overshadow them. There is some overall structure, but the writing may lack direction and intent. There may be interruptions in the sequence of sentences and/or some lack of clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds relevantly to the topic, but is largely a series of events with only occasional details of character and setting. Overall structure is sound, but there are examples where particular parts are too long or short. The climax is not effectively described or prepared. Sentence sequences narrate events and occasionally contain irrelevancies.
<p>Band 5</p> <p>3–4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few relevant points are made and may be expanded into paragraphs, but development is very simple and not always logical. There is weakness of sequencing overall and within paragraphs. Paragraphing is inconsistent. Repetition and a failure to sustain relevant argument are obvious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is relevant but lacking in scope or variety. Opportunities to provide development and detail are frequently missed. The overall structure, though readily discernible, lacks form and dimension. Paragraphing is inconsistent. The reliance on identifying events, objects and/or people sometimes leads to a sequence of sentences without progression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple narrative with a beginning, middle and end (where appropriate); it may consist of everyday happenings or fantastic, non-engaging events. Content may seem immature. Unequal or inappropriate importance is given to parts of the story. Paragraphing is inconsistent. Dialogue may be used ineffectively. There is no real climax. Sentence sequences are used only to link simple series of events.
<p>Band 6</p> <p>1–2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few points are discernible but any attempt to develop them is very limited. Overall argument only progresses here and there and the sequence of sentences is poor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some relevant facts are identified, but the overall picture is unclear and lacks development. There are examples of sequenced sentences, but there is also repetition and muddled ordering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories are very simple and narrate events indiscriminately. Endings are simple and lack effect. The shape of the narrative is unclear; some of the content has no relevance to the plot. Sequences of sentences are sometimes poor, leading to a lack of clarity.
<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.

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COMPOSITION TASKS: TABLE B – STYLE AND ACCURACY

Band 1	11–12	<p>Writing is consistent, stylistically fluent, linguistically strong and accurate; has sense of audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for appropriately used ambitious words • Complex sentence structures where appropriate
Band 2	9–10	<p>Writing is mostly fluent, sometimes linguistically effective and largely accurate; may have some sense of audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for signs of a developing style • Some ability to express shades of meaning
Band 3	7–8	<p>Writing is clear, competent (if plain) in vocabulary and grammar; errors perhaps frequent, but minor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for mostly correct sentence separation • Occasional precision and/or interest in choice of words
Band 4	5–6	<p>Writing is clear and accurate in places, and expresses general meaning in vocabulary and grammar; errors occasionally serious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for simple sentences • Errors of sentence separation
Band 5	3–4	<p>Writing is generally simple in vocabulary and grammar; errors are distracting and sometimes serious, but general meaning can always be followed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for definite weaknesses in sentence structures • Grammatical errors such as incorrect use of prepositions and tense
Band 6	1–2	<p>Writing is very limited in correct vocabulary and grammar; error is persistent; meaning is sometimes blurred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for faulty and/or rambling sentences • Language insufficient to carry intended meaning
Band 7	0	<p>Writing is difficult to follow because of inadequate language proficiency and error.</p>