

Delta Module One

Understanding language, methodology and
resources for teaching

Examination Report

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Teaching Awards

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1 Comments on Overall Performance

The Delta Module One examination was taken by over 500 candidates from 70 centres in a wide range of countries. There was considerable variation in pass rates at different centres but, at a large majority of centres, candidate mean scores were above half the marks available for the exam, as they were for the candidature as a whole.

Over a third of passing candidates gained Merit or above. However, approximately a quarter of candidates did not obtain a Pass grade, their answers showing that they did not have the depth or range of knowledge required at DELTA level.

There was some difference in candidate performance on the two papers with the mean scores for Paper 1 being significantly higher than for Paper 2. This could be due to several factors. Firstly, those candidates who allocated their time well in Paper 1 and spent an appropriate amount of time on Tasks Four and Five scored well because these tasks carry a possible 67 marks out of 100. Furthermore, candidates did well on Task Five as the text contained easily recognisable strengths and weaknesses. However, they struggled in Paper 2, Task Two b because they could not rely on pre-learned generic assumptions as these were not major features of the sequence of published material. This meant that they scored lower on this task than candidates had in previous sessions. The wide spread of marks obtained across the two papers indicated that the exam discriminated well.

Examiners commented that there was evidence of improved examination training and that, when candidates had not received training, this was clear. Both centres and candidates alike had clearly taken on board the advice given in the June 2009 exam report. The examiners also commented that the standard of the December 2009 and June 2010 exams was similar, which was borne out in the scores achieved. In general, candidates managed to complete the exam in time although there was a higher proportion of rushed or incomplete answers on Paper 1 in this session. Layout of answers shows improvement although weaker candidates continue to lay their answers out in a disorderly fashion and provide information not required in the rubrics. Sample answers are presented in this report to reflect the layout in candidates' Answer Booklets.

Please see each task for examiner comments on individual task performance.

General advice

Candidates are advised to make use of the suggested times given on the question papers to complete each question. The times relate to the number of marks available for the questions. They are also advised to read question rubrics very carefully, perhaps underlining or highlighting key points they contain. It is essential that candidates provide the information asked for and do not provide unrequested information. While no marks are deducted for wrong or irrelevant answers, candidate time is wasted and no marks are gained by providing unrequested information.

Candidates are also advised to take note of the layout and formats of the guideline answers in this report and to give careful thought to layout during examination training. A significant number of answers were marred by illegible handwriting and cramped layout, with candidates writing answers in the margins of the answer booklet – this makes it very difficult for the examiners to decode their answers. From the guideline answers, candidates will see that the use of bullet points and grids is quite acceptable. Using these can save time and add to the clarity of answers.

Finally, candidates should start each task on a separate page and clearly label their answers to show what task or part of a task they are answering.

2 Delta Module One Markscheme

2.1 Distribution of marks

In Delta Module One, candidates accumulate marks across questions and it is the total numbers of marks obtained across the two papers that decides which grade a candidate is awarded. Candidates do not therefore gain a grade for each task.

Answers are marked against a detailed markscheme containing guideline answers, with candidates being awarded marks for each correct answer given. The number of marks available for each task is as follows:

Paper 1

Task 1	6
Task 2	12
Task 3	15
Task 4	40
Task 5	27
Total	100

Paper 2

Task 1	20
Task 2	30
Task 3	10
Task 4	40
Total	100

Grand Total **200**

Points made twice within an answer are not credited twice and no marks are deducted for wrong answers.

Please note that relevant alternative wordings and examples are accepted.

2.2 Markscheme for each task

Paper 1 Task One

One mark is awarded for each correct answer.

Paper 1 Task Two

A total of three marks are available per answer:

- one mark for the basic definition
- one mark for a further point made
- one mark for a correct example

Note: The further point is only awarded if the basic definition is correct; only one further point is allowed per question; the example can be awarded a point, even if the definition is not correct.

Paper 1 Task Three

- One mark is awarded for each language feature correctly identified.
- A further two marks are awarded for each correct example / illustration.

Paper 1 Task Four

One mark is awarded for each point correctly made up to a maximum of 40 points.

Note: in a, a mark is only awarded if a correct example is given.

Paper 1 Task Five

a

- One mark is awarded for each strength correctly identified, up to a maximum of three marks.
- One mark is awarded for each example from the text illustrating the strength identified, up to a maximum of three marks.
- One mark is awarded for each weakness correctly identified, up to a maximum of three marks.
- One mark is awarded for each example from the text illustrating the weakness identified, up to a maximum of three marks.

The 12 marks available for identifying and exemplifying strengths and weaknesses are weighted to 17 marks. In addition, up to 4 additional marks are awarded for knowledge and insight into why and how the strengths and weaknesses aid or negate the effectiveness of the text.

b

- One mark is awarded for each justification given for the weakness prioritised, up to three marks. One additional mark is awarded for each justification that is *fully* developed.

Paper 2 Task One

- One mark is awarded for each positive / negative identified. An additional mark is awarded for each positive / negative identified if the application to the learner is also identified
- Up to two additional marks are awarded for accurate use of testing terminology throughout the answer.

The 14 marks available are weighted to a total of 20 marks.

Paper 2 Task Two

- Two marks are awarded for each purpose correctly identified.
- One mark is awarded for each assumption listed.
- Up to two additional marks are awarded for each explanation of an assumption.

Paper 2 Task Three

- One mark is awarded for each correct point made, up to a maximum of 10.

Paper 2 Task Four

- Two marks are awarded for each correct point made, up to a maximum of 40.

2.3 Grading

The purpose of grading is to determine candidates' overall grades, based on the total score gained across the two papers. Results are recorded as three passing grades (Pass with Distinction, Pass with Merit, Pass) and one failing grade (Fail).

At the end of the marking process, there is a grading meeting to determine precisely how many marks are required to obtain each of the passing grades. The grade boundaries are set in a way that ensures that the level of knowledge required to obtain the three passing grades:

- is consistent with the band descriptors on page 7 of the Delta Modules Handbook
- is the same from one session to the next
- does not vary as a result of slight variations in the difficulty of the papers.

The following information is used in the grading process:

- statistics on the candidature
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature
- recommendations of examiners, based on the performance of candidates.

The marks required to obtain each grade are:

Pass	approximately 50%
Pass with Merit	approximately 65%
Pass with Distinction	approximately 75%

3 Paper 1 Task One

Provide the term for each definition. Provide only **one** answer per question.

- a the use of grammatical and lexical means to achieve connected text, either spoken or written. These include: reference words e.g. *this, the, it*; linkers, e.g. *However* and topic-related lexis.
- b a grammatical category which is used to indicate the time at which an action happens by changing the form of the finite verb. English has two: past and present, e.g. *he walked* and *he walks*
- c a test employing tasks which replicate real-life activities, e.g. role-playing a job interview, writing a letter of complaint, or reading and completing an application form
- d two words which differ from each other in pronunciation by only one phoneme e.g. *met, mat; pin, bin*
- e a term for an 'umbrella' item of lexis which subsumes a range of more specific items, e.g. *fruit* in relation to *apple, orange, pear*
- f an approach to developing learners' writing skills that is informed by the belief that creating a written text is purely a matter of imitating elements that are provided in a model

3.1 Guideline answer

- a cohesion
- b tense / tenses
- c direct (testing) / (a) direct (test)
- d minimal pair / pairs
- e superordinate / super-ordinate / hypernym
- f Product (writing / approach) / model (text approach)

3.2 Candidate performance

This question was reasonably well answered, with over half the cohort obtaining four marks or more but fewer than 10% achieving full marks. All terms were identified, with no terms being identified more or less than others although some candidates did not read the definitions and examples for (a) and (c) carefully enough and gave the answers *linkers / cohesive devices* and *integrative testing*. The poor overall performance by candidates from some centres suggests that either terminology is not integrated into their courses on a regular basis or that these candidates make a strategic decision not to study terminology. This is not a productive approach to examination preparation as knowledge of terminology is tested in Tasks One and Two and candidates can gain a maximum of 18 marks over the two tasks.

- Stronger answers gave the required term while weaker candidates sometimes provided various alternative answers and / or an example. Candidates should note that this wastes their time and gains no extra marks. In addition, if they provide one correct and one incorrect answer, they will not be awarded a mark.

Candidates are recommended to:

- only write one answer, which is the required term
- not to give an example or any extra information
- spell terms correctly. No mark will be awarded if the term is spelt incorrectly.
- lay out their answers clearly as indicated in the guideline answers.

3.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained full marks

- a cohesion
- b tense
- c direct test
- d minimal pair
- e superordinate
- f product writing

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The answers are accurate, spelt correctly and laid out clearly. No time is wasted as only one answer is given for each term.

ii The following sample answer gained some marks available for this task

- a cohesive devices
- b tense
- c TBL direct testing
- d ~~homophone~~ minimal pair
- e lexical set/word family
- f production approach (writing)

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The candidate cannot be awarded any points for (a), (e) or (f). Candidates should note that terms must be correct, i.e. *product* not *production*.

iii The following sample answer gained almost no marks

- a) cohesion and coherence
- b) Tense
- c) Authentic assessment
- d) Homophones
- e) Main category
- f) English – Translation method

Examiner's comments on sample answer

Answer (a) cannot be accepted because the candidate provides one correct and one incorrect answer. Answers (c) – (f) show no accurate understanding of terminology. This was a trend within the centre.

4 Paper 1 Task Two

Provide a definition and an appropriate brief example or illustration for **four** of the terms below.

- a idiom
- b coordinating conjunction
- c modal auxiliary verb
- d direct method
- e allophone
- f formative assessment

4.1 Guideline answer

a idiom

Basic definition

- (fixed / semi-fixed) expression / phrase / groups of words / lexical unit / word sequence / other appropriate wording, in which the meaning is not literal / cannot be deduced from its individual words

Further point

- Normally colloquial / informal
- Idioms can be viewed as a loose term to include other chunks such as collocations, phrasal verbs
- Can be spoken or written
- Often taught as one 'chunk' of language without deconstruction to component parts
- They can be same / different / unique in other languages
- They can vary in how obvious their meaning is (literal / semi-opaque / opaque)

Example

- *face the music, a bird in the hand, feeling under the weather, cutting edge* or any other appropriate example

b coordinating conjunction

Basic definition

- A word which connects / links (independent) clauses words / phrases of equal importance/status/rank / have the same grammatical structure

Further point

- Coordinating conjunctions are a small/closed set of items
- The other type of conjunction are subordinating conjunctions which join a subordinate clause to a main clause, i.e. they do not join two clauses of equal status
- They are feature of parataxis / very common in spoken English
- There is generally no comma after a co-ordinating conjunction

Example

- *and, but*

c modal auxiliary verb

Basic definition

- (Auxiliary) verb which expresses the mood / expresses the attitude / modifies the meaning of the main verb (in a sentence)

Further point

- There are 9 pure modal auxiliary verbs
- They do not conjugate / inflect like 'normal' verbs
- They express functions such as possibility / ability / prediction / obligation
- They can have extrinsic (likelihood) and intrinsic (obligation, ability) meaning / each modal verb can express both meanings
- They are positioned before the main verb (in a sentence) / always followed by a bare infinitive
- Semi-modal / marginal modal verbs affect meaning in the same way but may conjugate

Example

- *Must, can, could, will, would, may, might, shall, should*

d direct method

Basic definition

- A method in which grammar rules are not taught / only the target language is used in the classroom / translation is avoided at all costs (candidates need to give two of these points)

Further point

- pure inductive approach
- emerged in late 19th century
- there is no tolerance of error
- use of real objects, pictures, dialogues, demonstration, synonyms, antonyms, definitions to convey meaning
- writing and reading taught only after speaking / focus on speaking and listening
- developments from direct method include audiolingualism / situational language teaching / strong focus on structure / pattern practice
- came after the Grammar–Translation approach

Example

- Berlitz Method / Situational Language Teaching / Callan method / teacher → learner Q & A in L2 / extended teacher – learner conversation in L2 / any other appropriate example

e allophone

Basic definition

- A phonetic / sound / pronunciation variation of a single phoneme

Further point

- The difference in pronunciation does not affect meaning
- The different pronunciations of the same phoneme are determined by position in a word
- The same phoneme may be aspirated / unaspirated / released / unreleased
- All phonemes have allophones
- Allophones may cause problems for learners who do not recognise the allophone as a variation of a phoneme (but see it as a new phoneme in its own right)
- In Japanese, /l/ and /r/ are problematic because they are allophones of one phoneme in the L1 (but not in English) / any other specific comment on particular L1

Example

- /p/ of pin and the /p/ of spin. The /l/ at the beginning of little and the /l/ at the end / any other acceptable example

f formative assessment

Basic definition

- Assessment which checks students' progress during a course / focuses on the stage of learning that students have reached during the course / tells the students and teacher how well the learners are doing

Further point

- Feedback can be used to reshape teaching/learning / influence the development of the rest of the course / decide what needs to be reviewed/focused on next
- Often associated with informal testing
- Only tests what has been taught on the course / does not test students' overall ability
- Contrast with achievement / proficiency / summative tests
- It's usually ongoing during a course

Example

- Progress test / diagnostic test / or any appropriate example

4.2 Candidate performance

Candidate scores ranged widely on this task with 60% of the candidature obtaining 6 or more marks. However, candidates performed worse on this task than they did in June and December 09 which could be because they found the terms *allophone* and *direct method* challenging to define. Without a clear and full definition, candidates automatically lose 2 marks per question, one for the definition and one for the further point, which cannot be credited if the definition is incomplete. Candidates should therefore note that it is crucial for them to give a full definition. However, on a positive note, they continued to lay out their answers more clearly by making use of bullet points and generally answers were more concise.

Stronger candidates provided a correct definition, example and item of extra information about the term. They laid their answers out clearly, often using the sub-headings of *definition*, *example*, *further point*. Weaker candidates generally gave no extra information, were vague or imprecise in their definition and gained marks only by giving a correct example. They also tended to be too verbose in their answers. Some candidates still continued to ignore the rubric and answered six rather than four questions. Candidates should note that only the first four questions will be marked and it is therefore not a productive use of time to answer more than four questions.

More specific points on content:

a) idiom – most candidates chose to answer this question and it was generally well answered although weaker candidates did not include the point that the meaning of an idiom cannot be deduced from its individual parts and therefore did not get a mark for the definition or further point.

b) coordinating conjunction – generally well answered but weaker candidates omitted to say that coordinating conjunctions connect phrases of equal importance and therefore could not get a mark for the definition or further point. Fewer candidates provided a further point.

c) modal auxiliary verb – this was often not well answered because candidates omitted to say that modal auxiliaries express the speaker's attitude and therefore missed out on a mark for the definition or further point.

d) direct method – this was the weakest answer because candidates only provided half the definition, generally that only the target language is used in the classroom. They omitted to say that grammar rules are not taught or that there is no translation although they were able to provide a further point. However, as above, this extra information could not be credited because the definition was incomplete.

e) allophone – this was the second weakest answer with a large number of candidates confusing an *allophone* with *regional variation / dialect*. In some instances, it was clear that this was the result of incorrect information provided by the centre as all the candidates produced the same incorrect definition. This lack of understanding also meant that these candidates gave a wrong example, e.g. /bɑ:θ/ vs /bæθ/.

f) formative assessment – this term was not a popular one to define but most of the candidates who did attempt it were able to provide an accurate definition and example although some confused *formative assessment* with *summative assessment* and others gave a *placement test* as an example.

Candidates are recommended to:

- only write about four terms
- give a basic definition, an example and one item of further information for each term
- lay their answers out clearly, using bullet points and sub-headings, as indicated in the guideline answer.

4.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained full marks for these definitions

2(a)

(b) A co-ordinating conjunction joins two clauses of equal weighting^{wh}. The co-ordinating conjunctions are 'and', 'but', 'so', 'yet'.^{Each-clause} (This is different eg from a subordinating conjunction e.g. 'because' where the 'because' clause cannot stand alone). Each clause joined by a co-ordinating conjunction can stand alone. (e) (d)

(e) an allophone is a variant on the production of a phoneme. It does not ~~change~~ create a change in meaning. e.g. the /l/ sound of loose and hotel is pronounced differently (light/l/ and dark/l/) but it is still considered the same phoneme.

(c)

A modal auxiliary verb is a verb such as 'can', 'might' or 'may'. If it used before a lexical or main verb and indicates attitude to the main verb.

There are two different kinds of attitude that can be shown –

extrinsic possibility: e.g. it might happen
or intrinsic: it should happen
my feelings about it.

2(a) idiom

An idiom is a fixed phrase that does not ~~ne~~ simply convey the literal meaning of all of its parts, but has a larger meaning. Sometimes the meaning of the phrase can be ^{worked} ~~worled~~ out from the ~~words~~ words. e.g. 'Like a fish out of water.'
Sometimes the meaning is obscure
e.g. 'a pretty kettle of fish'.

Smaller multiword verbs ^{can} ~~are~~ also ^{be} ^ idioms
e.g. 'to catch up with someone'

Examiner's comments on sample answer

All these answers are full but succinct. They give a definition, example and extra information. It would be helpful if the candidate labelled the different parts of her answer using the sub-headings of *definition*, *further point*, *example*.

ii The following sample answer gained some of the marks available for this task

2a

- an idiom belongs to a group of formulaic expressions, i.e. fixed expressions similar to collocations, phrasal verbs, proverbs, in that it consists of several words, which is learnt and retrieved as a chunk, i.e. a one-word expression .
- its meaning is not literal, but metaphorical and it is often also referred to as a 'saying' e.g. it is raining cats and dogs.
- The meaning of an idiom cannot be understood by adding up the meanings of the single words which compose it.

b

- coordinating conjunctions lead to parataxis
- they do not subordinate: contrastive, resultative, concessive clauses e.g. are started with a subordinating conjunction
- they are additive
- e.g. and, or

c

- modal auxiliary verbs are neither full verbs (e.g. go, sit), nor auxiliary verbs (have, be, do), nor semi-modals (have to, be able to)
- they are followed by the bare infinitive, do not have 3rd person 's' and do not have a present or past participle
- they need other verbs for their tense formation (can → will be able to; must → will have to e.g.)
- they are also called defective verbs for the above mentioned reasons
- e.g. can, must, will, may, shall, should, could, ought to, would, might

d

- The direct method goes back to Berlitz.
As a reaction to the grammar – translation method, it focuses on only L2 use in the classroom and on spoken English; it can be seen as the forerunner of audiolingualism, it was taken up by Krashen again who pleads for comprehensible input which is necessary to learn a language. When using the direct method, the teacher enters a communication process with the learner.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

Apart from the answer to (a) where a definition is provided, and therefore the further point can be credited, the other answers do not provide a full definition and therefore the extra information provided cannot be credited, only the examples.

iii The following sample answer was awarded few marks

2.

b. coordinating conjunction

Basic Definition:

A conjunction that links two main clauses.

Further Information

It needs to use comma before it

Example

but or and

The man looks happy, but he is really sad.

c. Modal auxiliary verb

Basic Definition

A type of auxiliary verbs that assure modality

(

Further Information:

It could refer to certainty/uncertainty
probability/obligation

Example:

can/could/should

d. Direct method

Basic Definition

It is one of the oldest approaches in TEFL or TESL. It suggests teaching grammar deductively.

Further information

Students in this method study grammatical rules explicitly. Form is more important than use.

Example:

- Form

	Present continuous	
-	am	+v(base) +ing
	is	
	are	

- Example He is playing football now

f. formative assessment

Basic Definition:

An assessment that measures Ss' achievement in a specific part of a course in order to improve their outputs

Further Information

This can be done after some lessons or a unit in a course book.

Example

End of unit assessment.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The definition for (b) is incomplete and therefore the further point cannot be credited. The definition for (c) is also incomplete and there is no appropriate further point provided. The definition for (d) is inaccurate and the answer to (f) contains an appropriate definition and example but no further point. The layout of the answer is clear.

5 Paper 1 Task Three

The extract for this task is a writing activity for pre-intermediate level (CEFR level A2/B1) learners.

Identify a **total of five key language features** learners at this level would need in order to complete the activity successfully. Provide an example specific to this activity to support each choice.

5.1 Guideline answer

Rhetorical structure / organising the leaflet into clear sections / paragraphs

Example *starting with a general statement, continuing with specific information about the place, possibly concluding with another general statement, finally giving contact numbers, practical information (minimum of two points need to be made);* Example *paragraphs / sections on How to get there, What places to visit*

Layout

Use of headings / bolding / bullet points Example * *Where to go*, * *What to do*

Inclusion of where to get practical information

Example *website, phone number, address*

Informal / neutral / semi-formal style

Example *you'll love the, have a go on the rides*

Addressing the reader

Example *you*

Language for recommending / suggesting / advice

Example *Why not visit, you might like to*

Language to describe where things are / prepositional phrases

Example *at the end of the high street, in the north of the country, not far from the*

Appropriate grammar

Example *modals you should / must visit, conditionals if you want something to do, you'll find, imperatives come to sunny Brighton, passive the castle was built in 1675, present verb forms Brighton has lots of things to do / it's had a long history of tourism*

Vocabulary for places and activities / collocations appropriate to topic

Example: *town, village, sights, monuments, go sightseeing, visit, enjoy, do watersports, take a trip, tourist attraction*

(Positive) adjectives for describing the place / descriptive language / comparatives / superlatives

Example: *stunning, interesting, historic*

5.2 Candidate performance

This task was well answered, with over 75% of the cohort obtaining 9 or more marks and 16% gaining full marks. Candidate performance was slightly stronger than in December 2009 as they identified a wider range of language features.

- Weaker answers did not specify the language functions required which were specific to the task, in particular, language to describe where things are. Examiners also commented that these answers often cited generic features, particularly cohesive devices, which were not specific to the text type of a leaflet and suggested that this feature might have been pre-learnt. Weaker answers also often listed too many grammatical features to the exclusion of others,

particularly the need to use an informal / neutral style. Whilst the examples provided were generally appropriate to the level, weaker candidates continued to provide more than one example for each feature, which is not required, provided too much information as to why a feature is included; and spent too long on the task. Some candidates continued to ignore the rubric and wrote about the content of the leaflet.

- Stronger answers discussed a range of features including the organisation of the leaflet, the style required, functional areas such as giving advice, language of location, and vocabulary/grammar specific to the type of leaflet. These answers were clearly laid out with the headings of *feature* and *example* and the examples were relevant to the text type and the level of the learners.

Candidates are recommended to:

- read the rubric carefully
- only discuss what the rubric requires
- make sure their answers cover a range of relevant language features
- make sure their answers, including examples, are specific to the activity described in the task
- always give one example per feature
- avoid repeating any one example
- make sure examples fully support points made
- avoid repeating any of the wording of the extract in their answers
- specify their points precisely
- list the points they wish to make, avoiding any introduction, summary or conclusion
- use a bullet point or similar format in their answers.

5.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained almost all the marks available

	Features	Examples
①	Students will need to be aware of features of genre associated with writing a leaflet + use of photographs/illustrations to make it more attractive.	eg – use of mixture of descriptive and informative language “Cambridge is a wonderful place to visit, with its historic university” “there are a number of hotels including The Royal Cambridge”.
②	Students will need to be able to use a range of lexis appropriate for descriptions + common words to of about places / sights, possible use of compound nouns.	beautiful magnificent lovely } adjectives castle, museum, cathedral, town hall
③	Students will need to be able to structure their answer using different paragraphs for different topics + group their ideas into suitable paragraphs.	① Intro to town/place ② description ③ things to do or ① Norwich ② London ③ Cambridge
④	Students will need to be able to give suggestions and make recommendations in order to appeal to the reader + persuade them to visit/possible conditional sentences.	Why don't you try punting? If it's sunny you can walk along the river.
⑤	Students will need to be able to use informative language and summarise key features of the places to transmit information. - possible use of passives	Norwich Cathedral was built in 1078 It has a population of 300,500. in the

	- use of dates/figures	
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Examiner's comments on sample answer

This answer refers to a range of language features: grammar (the use of the passive); lexis (adjectives); functions (making suggestions); and rhetorical structure (the use of paragraphs). The candidate's fifth feature cannot be credited as the use of illustrations is not a language feature. The examples are appropriate to the level of the learners and the answer is clearly laid out although there is no need for more than one example

ii The following sample answer gained over half of the marks available for this task

Lexical features

- ~~vocabulary~~ Use descriptive adjectives to describe places – amazing, wonderful
- Use modal verbs of suggestion + recommendation eg. you should visit the castle
- Short sentences for clarity e.g. The castle is ~~a must~~ worth visiting.
- Use cohesive devices ~~to give~~ ^{so the} text flows and reads easily.
The castle has a restaurant ~~as well as~~ a gift shop.
- Use elegant variation to avoid repetition e.g. the old buildings in the cities
~~in sh the famous~~ historic places
- Use superlative adjectives to stress how good something is
The castle is the most beautiful in ~~England~~ the country.
- Use comparative adjective to show how good something is
~~The castle's gardens are bigger than the~~
The mountains in the south of the country are more beautiful than the hills in the north.
- ~~Be aware of le~~
- Use lexical set for visiting eg look, go to, enjoy, spend time.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

This answer includes three features: adjectives to describe places (repeated three times); modals to make suggestions (credited once under language for suggestions) and vocabulary for activities. The points about short sentences, cohesive devices and elegant variation could not be credited as these features are not specific to this particular text type. The candidate's answer would be easier to navigate if she used sub-headings as indicated in the guideline answer as it is not always easy to distinguish between the feature and the example.

iii The following sample answer obtained few marks

This is a writing task for pre-intermediate level. In order to complete this activity learners need to do the following:

- personalising information about their country. If as, if they reflect on what they know about their country, they'll be able to write (describe) more.
e.g. the hot spring in.....
- listing out all the points ~~seem~~ keeping in mind the rubrics ie organising ideas,
eg. title
information of different places/things
information of what people can do.
- thinking of special vocabulary which ^{the learner} ↑ (they'll) will use,
eg Gorgeous, beautiful, etc [adjectives]
- ~~Draft a plan~~ Planning how to write
eg_ Heading
Body
Conclusion
- Drafting the content of the booklet.
eg writing the body of the booklet with informations in bullet points.
- Revising the draft or revise what they write.
e.g. ~~to~~ first checking and correcting errors.

requesting peers to do the same.

→ Editing the draft (Grammar/Lexis)
eg changing words. etc

→ Using illustrations.
e.g. they can also attach pictures to their draft if they are doing it electronically.
Photo from Google.

→ Giving opinion by summarising and evaluating ideas.
eg According to me this place is.....

Examiner's comments on sample answer

This answer contains two relevant points: organising the leaflet into sections and the use of adjectives to describe places. The remaining points cannot be credited because summarising and evaluating ideas is not a feature relevant to this text type; and the use of illustrations and the stages in the writing process are not language features. The layout of the answer is reasonable.

6 Paper 1 Task Four

- a** The text is a home page of a website. It is designed to introduce and promote the organisation *Bookcrossing*. Identify **five** features of the text that are characteristic of its genre. Give one example of each feature you identify. Identify no more than one feature of layout.
- b** Look at the following extracts from the text.
Comment on the **form** and **meaning/use** of the words in bold as they are used in this text. Do **not** write about the lexical meaning of *read* (i.e. to decode written text).
- *our unique method of recycling **reads*** (line 9)
 - *a new **reader*** (line 13)
 - ***Reading** becomes an adventure* (line 20)
 - *to be picked up and **read** by others* (lines 40-41)
- c** Comment on the **use of relative clauses** and **relative pronouns** in the following extracts.
- *Bookcrossing, where 791,837 people in over 130 countries come to share their passion for books.* (lines 1-2)
 - *A book registered on BookCrossing is ready for adventure.* (line 10)
 - *... by others, who then do likewise.* (lines 41-42)
- d** Look at the following extracts from the text.
- ***Used Books*** (title bar)
 - ***Found** a BookCrossing book?* (lines 24-25)
 - *with **like-minded** people* (line 35)
 - *as it is **passed on*** (lines 14-15)
- i** Comment on the **form** and **meaning/use** of the **words in bold**.
- ii** What problems of **pronunciation** might learners have with the following?
- *Used Books*
 - *as it is passed on*

6.1 Guideline answer

a features of the home page of a website

Layout (Only one feature from this section will be credited)

- Columns i.e. description on left and registering, member comments and definition on right
- Use of visuals, logos, icons, headings, bold, capitals
- Banner advert across top of page
- Header and footer i.e. with explanatory subheading of website and website address

Organisation

- Information is in sections, each related to a specific topic e.g. *welcome, member comments, definition, signing up* (Candidates must mention a minimum of 2 sections)
- Information in short easily accessible chunks / paragraphs, e.g. any of the paragraphs

Grammatical / lexical

- Simple / non-complex sentences (almost no subordinate clauses) / simple conjunctions, e.g. *Join BookCrossing. Help make the whole world a library and share the joy of literacy.*
- Website related lexis e.g. *sign in, click on, the link, track, forums, enter*

- Use of imperatives to give instructions / address the reader directly e.g. *simply click, share it, join hundreds*
- Creative use of lexis to engage reader, e.g. *BookCrossing, BookCross, catch and release books*
- Repetition of *book/join* and derivatives / related lexis/lexical field to reinforce the message

Style

- Enthusiastic tone e.g. *earth-friendly, share your books, clear your shelves, conserve precious resources, share the joy of literacy*
- Informal / colloquial written style / lexis, e.g. use of ellipsis *Found a BookCrossing book? How?, reads, tuck it onto a bookshelf, exclamation marks / contractions that's it! Anywhere it might find a new reader! Reading becomes an adventure when you BookCross!; use of 2nd person you gives you a way*

Content

- Links to access other parts of this website / other websites e.g. *sign up, FAQs, StumbleUpon*
- Positive quotes from members / testimonials, e.g. *it is so exciting to be able to share one's books*
- Gives legitimacy by quoting external body, i.e. *definition from Concise Oxford English Dictionary*
- Explains how the club works for new users, e.g. *Leave it on a park bench ... anywhere it might find a new reader*
- Persuasive e.g. numbers to show popularity, focus on ease of signing up, sense of excitement and benefits of the club
- Salutation – most websites greet the reader e.g. *Welcome to BookCrossing*

b form, meaning/use of each of the words in bold

Reads (line 9)

Form

- Plural / countable noun
- Nominalisation from verb / a noun made from a verb

Meaning/use

- Informal
- Books / reading matter
- Makes process of reading into a substantial 'thing'

reader (line 13)

Form

- Singular / countable noun
- It is formed from infinitive / base verb *read* + suffix *-er*
- *-er* is a grammatical morpheme / formed through grammatical morphology
- Direct object

Meaning/use

- Refers to a person / synonymy / part of a lexical chain / to avoid repetition / substitution
- Its use as an object forefronts / 'humanises' the book (rather than the reader)

Reading (line 20)

Form

- Gerund / verb + *-ing* / *-ing* form
- Subject

Meaning/use

- Acts as a noun/nominalisation / the act of reading
- The use of the gerund / verb + *-ing* makes the clause more succinct (compared to *An adventure happens when you read*)

read (lines 40-41)

Form

- (Irregular) past participle
- Passive
- Omission / elipted *be* auxiliary / ellipsis of *be* auxiliary / reduced passive infinitive

Meaning/use

- Book remains the focus / is subject of sentence
- Parallels *picked up* / continues infinitive of purpose structure (*to be picked up and read*)
- Maintains rhetorical structure i.e. topic / theme (book) followed by 'new' information / focuses attention on the action (read / action)
- Avoids repetition

c Use of relative clauses and relative pronouns

BookCrossing, where 753,148 people in over 130 countries come... (lines 1-2)

- Relative pronoun *where*
- *where* is used locatively / spatially (though not physically/virtual space in this case)
- *where* reinforces sense of website as a 'place' for people to visit
- Non-defining / non-identifying relative / adjective clause
- Gives additional information about the website/club / the sentence can stand alone without it
- Preceded by a comma
- Refers anaphorically to place/*BookCrossing* website/club / post-modifies *BookCrossing*

A book registered on BookCrossing is ready for adventure. (line 10)

- Defining / identifying relative/adjective clause / participle clause
- Specifies which type of book
- Sentence cannot stand without it
- Not preceded by comma
- Reduced relative clause / elipted relative pronoun (*which/that*) + auxiliary *be*
- Passive: elipted auxiliary *be* + past participle – *is/has been registered*

... by others, who then do likewise (lines 41-42)

- Non-identifying / non-defining relative/adjective clause
- Preceded by comma
- Gives additional information about *others* / the sentence can stand alone without it
- Relative pronoun *who*
- *Who* stands for subject of relative clause
- *Who* refers anaphorically to *others* (i.e. people) / post-modifies *others*

di form and meaning/use of the words in bold

Used (title bar)

Form

- Adjective
- Formed from past participle
- Base verb *use* + *d* not *-ed* as verb ends with *e*

Meaning/use

- *Used* means *books which have been read*
- Pre-modifies/ describes/qualifies noun *books* / attributive position
- Equivalent to relative clause *which have been used* / reduced relative clause

Found (lines 24-25)

Form

- (Irregular) past participle of *find*
- Ellipted present perfect / ellipted auxiliary *have* + (subject pronoun) *you*
- Question

Meaning/use

- It means *discovered* / *come across*
- Used transitively
- Informal style
- Meaning is clear from context / punctuation so there is no need to specify the auxiliary and subject pronoun

Like-minded (line 35)

Form

- (Compound) adjective
- Adverb + adjective
- Adjective formed from regular past participle (base verb *mind* + *ed*)

Meaning/use

- It means people who think in the same way / have similar opinions (as you)
- Pre-modifies noun (*people*)

passed on (lines 14-15)

Form

- (Regular) past participle
- Formed from base verb / infinitive + *ed*
- *on* is an adverbial participle / adverb
- Phrasal verb
- Passive

Meaning/use

- It means 'given to someone else' (implying a chain of giving and receiving)
- Allows the focus to remain on the book (the topic / theme / given information)
- Informal style

dii learner problems with pronunciation

Used books (title bar)

- Learners may pronounce /s/ instead of /z/, because of confusion with *used to* or because they are focusing on the spelling
- Learners may add extra vowel sound / extra syllable because of spelling **used** /ɪd/ instead of /d/
- Students may not recognise assimilation of /d/ to /b/ / elision of /d/
- Learners might use a long vowel sound in *books* /uː/ instead of /ʊ/ because of the spelling / double oo
- Learners may say /juːst/ instead of /juːzd/ because of confusion with *used to + infinitive* / *gerund*

as it is passed on (lines 14-15)

- Learners might add an extra vowel sound and produce /ed/, /id/ instead of /t/ and so make *passed* into two syllables
- they might say /d/ instead of /t/
- Consonant + vowel linking / catenation in *as it is* /æzɪtɪz/ and *passed on* /tɒn/ or /paːsɒn/
- Assimilation of s in *is* /z/ to /s/
- Confusion over stress / stress can be on *passed* or *on* or equal stress

6.2 Candidate performance

The quality of answers to this task varied widely. There were some very high scores and some extremely low ones but over 75% of the cohort obtained more than 50% of the total marks and, overall, performance on this task was the highest since the Module One examination was introduced. Those candidates who gained fewer than half the marks did so because of inaccurate or incomplete answers. Answers were inaccurate particularly in the area of relative clauses and when describing grammatical form, when a lack of terminology was noticeable, e.g. the inability to identify a past participle or a singular/countable noun. When an answer was incomplete, this was because insufficient information was provided, particularly in terms of the use of the items in the extracts, or incomplete because the candidate omitted sections or abandoned the task.

Candidates should be advised to make as many points as possible in Task Four (within the time available) as some weak answers were very skimpy in terms of content and the number of points made. They should note that this task carries a maximum of 40% of the marks for Paper 1 and should therefore be allocated the appropriate amount of time.

In relation to specific points on content:

a features of the home page of a website

- There were quite a few good answers here, with most candidates being able to identify the easier features, connected with the layout, the short paragraphs and various features of language such as the use of imperatives, colloquial lexis/style and positive quotes from members.
- Weaker candidates relied overmuch on the visual/layout issues, for example counting the columns, visuals, logos etc. as separate categories. There was also evidence of pre-learnt features, taken from previous guideline answers, such as the use of the present simple to talk about facts.
- Features generic to information texts were not credited, e.g. the use of cohesive devices such as anaphoric referencing or coordinating conjunctions. Candidates need to make their answers specific to the text type given.
- Many candidates spent too long on this part of the task, gave more than one example for each feature and gave reasons for the features, which is not a requirement. They should note that a maximum of 5 marks is available for this section and that they are only required to list the feature and give an appropriate example from the text provided.

b reads / reader / Reading / read

- Most candidates were able to identify the following points: *reads* is a plural noun made from a verb which means *books*; *reader* is a singular noun which refers to a person; *reading* is a gerund which refers to the act of reading; and *read* is a past participle used in the passive to focus attention on the action.
- Very few candidates considered the style of *reads*; mentioned whether the item was the subject or object of the sentence; considered the use of the item, e.g. to avoid repetition, to focus attention onto the action or the book or detailed the process of affixation in *reader*.
- Most answers were presented in note form, using bullet points, which showed improvement on previous sessions.

c relative clauses / relative pronouns

- Many candidates struggled to analyse relative clauses accurately, even to the point of being unable to distinguish between a defining and non-defining relative clause or identify the relative pronoun in the extracts. This task therefore acted as a good discriminator between those candidates who knew about relative clauses and those who did not, although even those who had a good knowledge lost marks because they did not consider the discursive use of the relative pronouns *where* and *who* in terms of anaphoric reference or the fact that the second extract is an example of a reduced relative clause. A similar comment was made in the June 2009 examination report.
- Other candidates discussed the use of relative clauses in general terms rather than with specific reference to how they are used in these particular extracts.

- Some candidates discussed all three extracts as one, which meant that they missed out on points because their answers lacked specificity.

d **Used / Found / like-minded / passed on**

- The majority of candidates were able to identify the following points: *used* is an adjective formed from the past participle which means *second-hand*; *like-minded* is a compound adjective which means *people who think in the same way*; and *passed on* is a past participle, as a phrasal verb in the passive which means *give to someone else*. However, again, fewer candidates considered how *used*, *like-minded* and *passed* are formed in terms of affixation or how they are used, e.g. in terms of their style or whether they premodify a word.
- Candidates had the most difficulty analysing *Found*. Many did not look at the extract carefully enough and therefore labelled *Found* as the reduced form of the simple past *Did you find ...* rather than the ellipted present perfect (*Have you*) *found* and they also did not recognise that *Found* was being used as a question. Based on performance in this session, candidates are advised to find the extract in the text in order to analyse it in its original context. Candidates also frequently failed to state its meaning or use.
- In terms of learner problems with pronunciation, phonological analysis continues to challenge candidates. The majority were able to identify problems with the regular past participle endings, the consonant – vowel linking in *passed on*, and the elision in *used books*, presumably because candidates can be trained to look out for these features. However, fewer candidates were able to identify problems more specific to these lexical items, i.e. the pronunciation of *s* in *used*, the long vowel in *books*, and the assimilation of *s* in *is*. This would suggest that more detailed phonological analysis needs to be integrated into examination preparation.
- As in previous sessions, answers often failed to contain phonemic transcription and where it was included, it was often inaccurate; for example mentioning the ‘elision of /d/’ but failing to show this in the transcription or describing /uː/ as ‘oo’. As stated in the last examination report, candidates must use phonological terms to describe features and be able to use the phonemic script accurately to illustrate them.

Candidates are recommended to:

- make their answers as detailed as is required, making as many points as possible, as indicated in the guideline answer
- lay out answers in list form, and make it clear which part of the answer they are writing
- analyse each extract separately rather than combining them, in order to maximise the marks that they can gain
- read the rubric carefully and refer back to the text to see the extracts in their original context
- remember to discuss **use** as well as **meaning** if both are asked for
- pay attention to words given in bold and only comment on them in the way required, not on accompanying or surrounding words
- make use of precise linguistic / technical terms rather than the more simplified terms they might use with students
- make use of phonemic script as appropriate; they will not be awarded marks if this is not used or not used accurately, when relevant

6.3 **Sample answers**

i **The following sample answer gained a high number of marks**

④
a

Layout

- Main text on one side (left) with surrounded by other smaller pieces of text on right, e.g. personal quotation advert (line 29-37) adverts (above main text)

- Organisation

Short paragraphs, sometimes just one sentence, e.g. line 16-18.

- Grammar

Imperatives – reflects the fact that the page shows you how to sign up and participate

e.g. click on the link below (line 5)
leave it on a park bench (line 11)

- Style

Informal use of fragments

- 'that's it!' (line 6)
- 'anywhere it might find a new reader!' (line 12-13)

- Style

Short sentences help give memorable information

e.g. Join Bookcrossing

Help make the world a library and share the joy of literacy
 Reading becomes an adventure when you Bookcross (lines 19-21)

ⓑ

- reads (line 9)
 - plural noun (read + s)
 - synonym for 'books'
- reader (line 13)
 - singular noun
 - agent ('person who reads')
 - formed from read (v) + 'er' (agent)
- reading (line 20)
 - gerund (read (v) + -ing)
 - used in nominal subject position
 - singular subject of verb 'becomes'
 - means (abstract) 'act of reading'
- read (line 41)
 - past participle of 'read'
 - pronounced /red/
 - passive with ellipses of auxiliary
 'to be picked up and (to be) read'

ⓒ

- Bookcrossing, where (line 1-2)
 - non-defining relative clause
 - uses comma after main clause
 - give extra (not 'defining') information about main clause/referent of relative pronoun
 - 'where' as relative pronoun shows place – in this case a website
- 'a book registered on Bookcrossing' (line 10)
 - defining relative clause (no comma)

- object relative pronoun (which/that) and passive auxiliary verb elided 'a book (which is) registered on Bookcrossing'
- ellipses could be 'which' or 'that' because defining relative clause
- ellipsis possible because defining relative clause
- gives essential (defining) information
- by others, who... (line 41-2)
 - non-defining relative clause
 - subject personal relative pronoun 'who'
 - not possible to elide because
 - non-defining
 - subject of relative clause
 - adds extra/non-essential information

d
i

Used books

- means 'read' or 'second-hand'
- past participle (verb + ed)
- used as adjective to give passive meaning

Found

- ~~past~~ irregular past participle (find → found)
- ellipses of subject + auxiliary in present perfect tense
'(have you) found....?'
- means 'discover' (find) not

instigate
(found)

Like-minded people

- compound adjective composed of
- adjective 'like' + past participle 'minded' (with hyphen)
- means 'people who think the same way as you do'

As it is passed on

- phrasal verb
- means 'moved along a chain'
- present simple passive → past participle + adverbial particle

4
ii

- Used books
 - /'ju:zd 'bʊks/
 - semivowel /j/ may be left out
 - /u:/ and /ʊ/ easily confused
 - /d/ probably elided
 - /z/ in 'used' may be pronounced /s/ because of interference from 'use' /ju:s/ (n.) or from spelling
- 'as it is passed on'
 - /æz ɪt ɪs 'pɑ:s tɒn/
 - unstressed syllable /æz/ → /əz/
 - catenation /æ zɪ tɪz pɑ:s tɒn/

- possible elision of unstressed syllables
 either: /æz tɪz/
 or: /æz zɪts/
- possible confusion /z/ - /s/ and /æ/ - /a:/

Examiner's comments on sample answer

Part a

This part of the answer is clear and accurate, backed up by relevant examples although it is not necessary to provide more than one example per feature. It covers a range of types of features: layout, organisation, language and style. The layout of the answer is very clear. Whilst it is positive that the candidate only mentions one feature of layout, he cannot gain full marks for this section, because he does not describe the short sentences as being simple as well as short.

Part b

The candidate is succinct and accurate in his answer and provides a good amount of detail in terms of form (including morphology) and meaning, but less so in terms of use. The answer is also helpfully laid out.

Part c

Again, the candidate's answer is clearly laid out and labelled and he does not waste time using a discursive style to make his points. His answer contains a high number of accurate points and it is clear that he is confident in his knowledge of relative clauses and pronouns.

Part d

In d(i), the candidate's analysis is accurate but he focuses on form and meaning and omits comments on language use. Some accurate detail is given though several more points could have been made.

Part d(ii) is the weakest part of the answer and the candidate only gains two marks for his phonological analysis of *used books*: the elision of /d/ and the pronunciation of s. With regards to *as it is passed on*, it is not sufficient to write *catenation*, followed by the phonemic script as it is not clear where the catenation occurs or what the candidate understands by the term. This lack of clarity also applies to his points about the possible elision of unstressed syllables (which ones?) and the confusion between individual sounds.

ii The following sample answer gained just under half the marks available for this task

4

a)

- Highlighted/bolded first sentence to catch reader's attention, including the website's name (i.e. **"welcome to Bookcrossing,"**).
- Use of rhetorical question to emphasize how 'easy' it is for books to take a life of their own (i.e. "How? It's easy")
- Use of imperative to convince the reader of joining this community. (i.e. "leave it", "share it", "join hundreds..", "help she spread...")
- ~~repetition~~ Use of repetition of key words/concepts in the text, i.e. "Join..." "Join" "Help..." "books".
- Coining a word for the website: "to bookcross" (i.e. "Reading becomes an adventure when you bookcross").
- Using chains of nouns and verbs, i.e. "share your books, clear your shelves" and conserve..." "on a park bench, a coffee shop, at a hotel..." (tripling).

b)

- 'recycling reads'
 Meaning/use: the verb 'read' is used here as a noun; short version of ~~things~~ "books that people have read".
 Form: 'read' (noun) + s (→ plural)
 Pron: /rɪ:ds/
- 'a new reader'

Examiner's comments on sample answer

a

The candidate's answer refers to layout and language features, but in order to gain full marks for this section, she also needs to consider features related to organisation, style and content. Her last point is generic and not specific to this particular genre.

b

The information provided is accurate but more detail needs to be included, particularly in terms of the form and use of the items.

c

The answer to this part lacks detail. The candidate needs to be more specific in terms of her analysis, e.g. what is the anaphoric reference to or what type are the relative clauses. The comment referring to who might make such errors is outside the remit of this part of the task because candidates are not asked to write about potential linguistic problems.

d

Part (i) includes a generally accurate answer but it focuses mainly on meaning, as in part b. The candidate needs to provide more detail on form and use in order to gain more marks. The focus on phonology in part (ii) is very limited in that she only identifies two features and there is an error in her transcriptions of *used books* which means that only one of the points can be credited.

iii The following sample answer obtained fewer than half the marks available

4a

- use of "you" and "we" and "our" to indicate that the organisation is a family to which we all belong (l. 7 you, l. 14 our, l. 16 our, (l. 17 your, etc).
- use of lots of imperatives to indicate just do steps 1, 2, 3 and you are with us and our family (click, sign up, leave, share, tuck, track, join, help, help).
- greeting formula at the beginning to personalise the text, to attract the reader's attention, to speak to him, in fact.
- give the organisation importance, objectify it by using figures (791,837 people in 130 countries)
- using mainly main clauses or parataxis, i.e. sentences are linked by "and" and not subordinated (and sign, and give, and conserve)
- using visuals to attract attention (join now, it's free, sign up >>)
- appeal to reader and tell him how necessary he/she is (help spread, help make the world, share the joy)
- on the whole the text consists of mainly imperative sentences or main clauses and linking device = "and".
- the text is easy to follow and straight-forward to appeal to anyone and be understandable for anyone.
- There are heaps of advantages mentioned, if you just join: earth-friendly, gives you a way to share (ll 7-10)
- ll. 7-10: repetition of "book-crossing" to hammer the organisation into people's heads.
→ With agent formation: book-crossers + verb: .21 to bookcross
- l. 11 anaphoric reference 'it' 2x
- l. 12 " " 'it' again
- l. 17 enumeration: authors, characters and books for easy understanding.

4b

reads = conversion of verb to read becoming a noun taking on plural form
meaning books, all sorts of printed texts.

reader = affixation of er (=suffix) changes word class to agent
the reader: person who reads

reading = verb + affixation (= suffix) of ing becomes a gerund/noun

read = past participle of read pronounced [red]

4c

Where 791,837.... = non-defining relative clause, additional information which could be left out.

a book registered is a contact clause, i.e. no introducing rel. pronoun; it is defining; there could be that or which for a thing (a book)

Who then do likewise = non-defining rel. clause with who for people, namely others, cannot be omitted, gives additional information.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

a

Out of the thirteen points that the candidate makes, seven of these appear in the guideline answer and another four are repeated. Candidates should note that this is not a productive use of time as they can only gain 5 marks for this part of Task Four. By spending too long on this part of his answer, the candidate does not have enough time to provide sufficient detail for the remaining three parts. The layout of the answer could be clearer with the use of subheadings of the features which would help the reader and would also show the candidate that his answer is over-long and contains repetition.

b

The candidate's answer is accurate but too brief.

c

The candidate's answer to this part is also accurate but too brief.

d

The candidate did not attempt this part of the task, perhaps because he had spent too long on Part a.

7 Paper 1 Task Five

The text for this task is reproduced on the opposite page. It was written by a learner in a pre-intermediate class (CEFR B1) in response to the following task:

You travelled by plane last week and your suitcase was lost. You have still heard nothing from the airline company.

Write to the airline and explain what happened. Describe your suitcase and tell them what was in it. Find out what they are going to do about it.

You should write at least 150 words.

You do NOT need to write your address.

Begin your letter as follows;

Dear ...

- a Identify **three key strengths** and **three key weaknesses** of the text. Provide an example of each strength and each weakness.

Your answer should focus on some or all of the areas listed below:

- Task achievement / effect on the reader
- Organisation and cohesion
- Accuracy of grammar
- Complexity of grammar
- Accuracy of spelling

- b** Which one of the **weaknesses** identified above would you choose to prioritise? Give **three** reasons for your choice.

7.1 Guideline answer

a Key strengths and weaknesses

Key strengths

- **Task achievement and effect on target reader:** All the points required in the task are covered (within the minimum word count of 150 words) / the target reader will be informed, i.e. the learner explains what happens, describes their suitcase, says what was in it and asks the airline for action (a minimum of 2 examples of what is included is required to award a point for the example).
- **Organisation and cohesion:** the letter follows a logical development / progression, i.e. introduction - background – situation – outcome required.
- **Organisation and cohesion:** cohesion is generally good (through accurate use of conjunctions) and referencing, e.g. *so, because, but, and*
OR
Complexity of grammar: some successful complex sentences (through use of conjunctions) e.g. ... *because ..., ... so ...*
- **Accuracy of grammar:** reasonable control of modals in the present, e.g. *can't go, have to find, can you look*
- **Complexity of grammar:** the learner uses a range of tenses, e.g. present simple *I come*, present perfect *I've been*, past simple *I stayed*, past continuous *I was travelling* / range of forms e.g. questions *Can you look for it?*, negatives *I can't go* (candidates need to mention a minimum of 2 points for the example)

Key weaknesses

- **Task achievement and effect on target reader:** the request for action is too direct / inappropriate / abrupt, i.e. *you have to find ...* which might result in the airline being uncooperative
- **Task achievement and effect on target reader:** the ending of the letter is abrupt / there is no signing off, e.g. *Yours faithfully*
- **Organisation and cohesion:** the learner has not used paragraphing to signpost his writing for the reader candidate needs to give an example of where a paragraph would be inserted
- **Accuracy of grammar:** use of past simple (instead of bare infinitive) after auxiliaries (in the past) e.g. *don't found, couldn't found*. There are a lot of surface errors, possibly caused by a lack of proofreading.
- **Accuracy of spelling:** many basic words misspelt e.g. *trevlling, thay, spook, colore, thir, peper, airbot, friend, dgree, weels, pleas*
- **Organisation and cohesion / Effect on the reader:** there is an overuse of coordinating conjunctions which makes the text sound more spoken than written. He could use basic linkers for contrast, e.g. *although, however* and addition, e.g. *furthermore*.

b Which weakness to prioritise

Candidates may choose any of the key weaknesses listed in part a. They should provide three reasons for their choice from the list below:

- the learner's level
- the learner's exams and future study needs
- the learner's job needs
- fossilization of error
- transfer to other genres
- transfer to other skills
- specific to the learner's context
- specific to the communicative purpose / success of the text (i.e. reference to genre in its own right)
- the effect on the reader
- easy to rectify, therefore motivating

7.2 Candidate performance

The mean score for this task was just under half the marks available. Overall performance on this task was in line with the last two sessions and continues to be much stronger than the first Module One examination taken in December 2008.

a

- Most candidates were able to identify at least two strengths and two weaknesses accurately, with most citing task achievement as the main strength and paragraphing and spelling as the main weaknesses.
- Whilst it was positive that the majority of candidates did not waste time by identifying more than three strengths and three weaknesses, a large number either did not attempt the task or complete it. This is a very poor strategy to adopt as this task carries a large number of marks, i.e. 27.
- Some candidates contradicted themselves over the learner's use of linking devices, identifying them as a strength and then saying that there aren't any used in the text. These candidates failed to recognise that the learner had overused the same ones rather than utilising a range of more sophisticated linkers.
- A significant number of candidates did not give an example in the weaknesses of a lack of paragraphing or the absence of a valediction. In order to be awarded a mark for these examples, the candidates needed to say where a paragraph could be inserted into the text or what the missing valediction should be.
- Some candidates also failed to explicitly state that the task had been achieved and so the mark could not be awarded. Under the criteria of *Complexity of grammar* and *Accuracy of grammar*, candidates frequently lost marks because they did not explicitly state the language items which were present, e.g. a range of tenses such as the present simple (+ example) and present perfect (+ example) or which were used inaccurately, i.e. the past simple (+example). Candidates should note that they must be explicit in their analysis and state the obvious.
- Some candidates were awarded extra marks because they included commentary on how the strengths or weaknesses impacted on the effectiveness of the text but the majority simply presented their points as a list. This meant that they could not be awarded the four additional marks which are allocated to this part of the task in order to reward candidates for their knowledge and insight into why and how the strengths and weaknesses aid or negate the effectiveness of the text.
- Weaker candidates continued to include more than one example for each strength or weakness cited. They also evaluated the text in terms of criteria which were not listed in the rubric, particularly in terms of the learner's range of lexis.
- Some candidates did not separate their answer into strengths and weaknesses but listed the points as they came to mind which resulted in some repetition and lack of clarity.

b

- Most candidates chose an appropriate area to prioritise although some chose an area, e.g. grammar, which they had not mentioned in (a). This meant that the examiner did not know which area of grammar the candidate planned to work on and could not award any points for part (b) of the task. Again, candidates should note the importance of being explicit.

- The majority of candidates also identified three justifications easily. However, they were usually only awarded one mark per justification because they simply presented the three justifications as a list and did not develop them. Other candidates reproduced a long list of justifications from previous examination reports which was not a productive use of time as only the first three justifications could be credited. Candidates should note that, in order to be awarded two marks per justification, they need to expand each justification to provide an appropriate amount of depth.

Candidates are recommended to:

- only discuss the areas given in the rubric
- give both strengths and weaknesses as required
- discuss only three key strengths and three key weaknesses; marks are not given for more than three of either
- make sure they give one example for each strength and each weakness cited
- bear in mind the learner's level when commenting in part a on the text's strengths and weaknesses
- include comments in part a on the effect the particular strengths and weaknesses have on the effectiveness of the text
- use a bullet point or grid layout for the strengths and weaknesses
- only discuss in b a weakness mentioned in a
- only discuss one area of weakness in part b
- limit answers in b to reasons for prioritising an area
- fully develop the justifications provided in b
- make sure they organise their time in order to fully complete this task

7.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained all of the marks available for this task

5

STRENGTHS

① Task achievement

The learner has satisfied the requirements of the question by fulfilling the criteria:

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| eg/ | explain what happened | – lines 2-5 |
| | describe your suitcase | – brown, not big, etc |
| | what was in it | – papers, clothes |
| | find out what they are.... | – <u>etc.</u> |

This means they have satisfied the req of the task.

② Complexity of grammar/(cohesion)

The learner has attempted to use quite difficult structures for his level and, although not always successful, has taken good risks at attempts at using more complex linking words + cohesive devices.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| eg/ | I've been now for 4 days....., |
| | because |
| | I was on your airline, <u>so</u> you..... |

This has a good impression on the reader who is impressed by his attempts at using the language.

③ Organisation and cohesion

The answer is organised in a logical order – he follows the rubric of the question + the ~~order in wh~~ chronological order of the situation.

eg/ why he's writing, what happened, describe the suitcase, etc...

Good use of cohesive devices

eg. linkers, adverbials, because/so/and/but.

Weaknesses

① Accuracy of grammar

The learner makes a number of mistakes when using the past simple (+ other tenses!) both regular and irregular forms and negatives.

Form + spelling
 e.g. I was travelling
spook
 I don't found it

This may make the text harder to follow by the reader

② Organisation

Although written in a logical order, the learner fails to use any paragraphing. This makes the answer harder to read + understand + has a negative impact on the reader.

eg = needs paragraph after "help me"//
 "clothes"//
 Etc

③ Accuracy of spelling

The learner makes a number of spelling mistakes with common words which he should know at this level.

eg colore,
peper
 (typical of an Arabic student?)
 b/B?

These can distract the reader and may cause some confusion.

b) At this level, I would work on the structuring of his answer and use of paragraphs.

Why?

- ① As the student attempts more difficult tasks + uses a wider range of vocabulary + grammatical structures, it's important that he is able to structure his answer using paragraphs. Otherwise it makes it harder for the reader to follow his answer + ~~destra~~ distracts from the positive aspects of his writing.
- ② It would be a relatively easy area to tackle using model examples, + reformulating his answer. It is something that is common to many learners at this level + could be tackled in class very effectively.

It is a useful skill which will be transferrable to other tasks + will be used by the student as they progress in their learning to higher levels. Can be used in a number of contexts + very important for exams.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The answer refers to the areas outlined in the rubric. It clearly cites three key strengths and three key weaknesses of the text and gives clear examples. What is particularly impressive about part a is that the candidate includes three reasons as to how the features impact on the effectiveness of the text, i.e. the complexity of grammar makes a good impression on the reader who *is impressed by his attempts at using the language*; the problems with the accuracy of the past simple *make the text harder to follow by the reader*; and the spelling errors are *with common words which he should know at this level*. Part b picks up on an area identified in part a. The candidate provides three justifications which are fully developed and convincing in terms of her choice of area to work on.

ii **The following sample answer obtained approximately half the marks available for this task**

5a

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity of grammar. The student makes frequent attempts to use co-ordinating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent spelling errors e.g. 'weels', 'colore', 'importent'

<p>conjunctions e.g. ...to look for it <u>but</u> I don't... ...I look for it, <u>and</u> I ask...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task achievement. The student addresses all parts of the rubric e.g. what happened 'I was travelling...' describe the suitcase and what was in it 'it is brown...' 'paper for my degree...' Find out... 'please can you look...' • Some attempts at modal verbs 'they <u>couldn't</u> find it...' "I can't go to university" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of prepositions e.g. I stayed two 2 hours look... ^for ^to • Use of tenses – frequent inappropriate choice of tenses e.g. I am writ I write × -> I am writing ✓ it is have × -> it has ✓ • Effect on the reader Some inappropriate style e.g.
--	--

5b) I would focus on spelling with this student.

REASONS

- Fossilisation – this S has poor spelling habits that could become fossilised
- Learner level – at pre-int level the student should be able to spell 'colour', 'important' and 'degree'
- Context – this learner is obviously a student so has a particular need to spell words correctly that are associated with study

Effect on the reader – simple spelling mistakes may give the reader a poor impression

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The strengths are well identified and exemplified. However, in the section on weaknesses, the candidate only identifies spelling as a problem. In order to be awarded a mark for accuracy of grammar, the candidate needs to explicitly state the problem that the learner has with control of the simple past. In terms of the other two weaknesses cited, prepositions are not a major problem in the text and the weakness under *Task achievement* is not related to inappropriate style but inappropriate tone. As there is no example to illustrate this weakness, the examiner had to conclude that the candidate meant style (as written) and not tone. In terms of part b, a relevant weakness is identified and four valid reasons for selecting it are given but only three marks can be awarded because the justifications are presented as a list, and only a maximum of three reasons can be credited.

iii The following sample answer obtained fewer than half the number of marks available for this task

a

- + The task is not achieved in terms of word count but the has provided the information according to the rubric
- His spelling of common words
eg. problem, friend.
- It is a semi-formal letter and use of contracted forms is inappropriate
eg. It's very important.
- Not organising his writing into paragraphs makes is difficult to read. He should set his writing out first how he lost his suitcase, ~~des~~ then description and what he has in it, next what he wants the airline to do and then a concluding paragraph.
- + He has addressed the letter correctly as it is to a someone he does not know, eg. Dear Sir.
- + His introduction, setting out the purpose for writing. eg. I write to you about.....
- + He has sequenced his account clearly so the reader can follow (^{albeit} ↑ with some difficulty) the thread of his ~~what had happened~~.

~~b Spelling~~

~~1 He is at university and accuracy in spelling is a basic requirement if he wants to be taken seriously.~~

~~2 Poor spelling would not give the impression of someone who is educated.~~

b Grammar

1. His grammar is simplistic. It gives the impression of writing by a child.
2. Improving his grammar would also help him go up the levels as the requirement will be harder.
3. Not corrected now, the errors would be fossilised.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

In terms of strengths, the points about task achievement and organisation are accurate but the candidate loses marks because neither point is accompanied by an example. The candidate's discussion of the weaknesses in the text is slightly more convincing as he outlines two appropriate weaknesses (poor spelling and a lack of paragraphing) and gives an example for each. The other weakness of the inappropriate use of contractions cannot be credited as this is not a major weakness of this text. The layout of this part of the answer is confusing. In terms of part b, the area cannot be accepted because accuracy of grammar is not cited as a weakness in part a, and it is therefore unclear whether the candidate plans to work on the learner's accuracy of the simple past. Unfortunately, he crosses out his first choice of spelling which would have been accepted as an area to work on. The candidate therefore gains no marks for this part of his answer.

8 Paper 2 Task One

The text for this task is reproduced on the opposite page. It is being used in the following situation:

E works for a large company giving investment advice. She uses English in her contacts with clients over the telephone, in conference calls and when giving presentations. She is at upper intermediate (CEFR B2) level and has booked a short tailor-made one-to-one English course to improve her speaking skills for work. Her teacher has decided to give her this test to find out her needs at the start of the course.

Using your knowledge of relevant testing concepts, evaluate the effectiveness of the tasks in this test for this learner in this situation.

Make a total of **six** points. You must include both **positive** and **negative** points.

8.1 Guideline answer

Positive points

- **Tasks→data** The number of parts / range of tasks to this diagnostic test / needs analysis should give a good sample.
- **Level** It is appropriate for E's level / an upper intermediate learner would be able to tackle the tasks but still finding them a challenge.
- **Fresh starts** The *fresh starts* make the test more reliable.
- **Instructions** There are clear instructions and prompts which help reliability.
- **Speaking test** It is a direct test of the speaking skill, i.e. it tests performance / what she can do with her knowledge / it's a speaking test.
- **Integrative test** It is an integrative test / a combination of skills and language systems.
- **Style** The style is semi-formal – neutral and so is valid as a test.
- **Task type** The test has (face) validity / (content) validity as there is an interactive conversation / discussion and monologue / it tests speaking sub-skills for these task types.
- **Language** The test requires language to talk about change, problem solving, comparing and giving opinion.
- **Topics** The test is contextualised in personal experience and opinions / the topics are general / not reliant on knowing obscure lexis / the test begins with an easy topic.

Positive applications

- **Evidence for T** The teacher should gain a fairly good indication of E's ability and the course will be designed with E in mind .

- **Evidence for E** E will be able to judge which situations she finds easier / more difficult to respond to and so be more aware of her own needs.
- **Motivation** E will be motivated because it's a speaking test /because of the language / because of the work context.
- **Appropriate level** She will feel the course is likely, as a result, to be at her level.
- **Relevant** E will feel test is relevant / E is more likely to perform well if she thinks the test is relevant.
- **Appropriate style** E is most likely to use a semi-formal style at work so will see the test as valid.
- **Communication vs imagination** It tests E's ability to communicate rather than her ability to invent the contents / her imagination.
- **Speaking vs lexis** It is a test of E's speaking ability rather than her knowledge of lexis so it will be useful as a speaking needs analysis.
- **Format** E will be able to perform to the best of her ability without being hindered by the test/task format / unknown lexis / If E goes off track or gets stuck, she has other opportunities.
- **Familiarity of the topic** this will make it easier for E to complete the task.

Negative

- **Topic / context** The topics of traffic, games and competitions have low content and face validity / it's not set in a business / work context.
- **vs group** All the tasks are one-to-one whereas, at work, E participates in group discussions which reduces the validity of the test / it lacks good predictive validity.
- **Speaking situations** All the interaction is face-to-face so telephone skills / conference calls are not tested.
- **Language avoidance** E can avoid language she finds difficult (especially in part 2) / she has opportunity to avoid risks because she has to talk about general topics / she can choose what she wants to say.
- **Assessing** It is difficult for the teacher to act as an interlocutor and assess E's speaking at the same time, thus affecting reliability.

Negative Applications

- **Needs** The test is not relevant to her situation / her specific needs.
- **Motivation** E may not be motivated to perform well.
- **Topics** E may not be interested in the topics and so find it difficult to speak, especially in the monologue.
- **Not a full picture** Evidence of some of E's weaknesses may not emerge as the sample is limited (to face-to-face interaction / general topics) / E may not be accurately assessed and so the teacher may not have a true picture of her needs.
- **Course** E may not feel the course will address her needs.

8.2 Candidate performance

Marks on this task averaged just above the mean; only 42% of the cohort gained more than ten marks for this task, indicating that candidates are not completely confident about this area of the syllabus. However, examiners noted improvement in terms of candidates understanding what is required in this task. Fewer candidates evaluated the test in terms of how well it met criteria for good tests such as reliability, washback, validity, without evaluating the test for the purpose, learner and situation specified in the task rubric. Candidates' use of terminology was also less scattergun in this session and layout was clearer.

Weaker answers:

- forgot to state the overall purpose of the test, i.e. diagnostic.
- used terms as the headings for their points which resulted in the terminology not being related sufficiently to the point being made. As a result, it was unclear whether the candidates understood the terms or not and they lost marks.
- continued to misinterpret the meaning of *washback*. They did not appear to understand that this term refers to the effect that the test has on a course rather than an effect in general.
- did not use a wide enough range of criteria with which to evaluate the test, in particular the appropriateness of the style of the test. Instead they made the same point two or three times, particularly in terms of the topic of the test, i.e. the topic of traffic would not be relevant to the learner, the topic of games and competitions would not be relevant to the learner, the topics are not related to a work context and so would not be relevant to the learner.
- repeated pre-learnt points that they had seen in previous Guideline answers, particularly with reference to subjective marking which is not relevant to this particular test.
- in relation to the above point, they did not appear knowledgeable in terms of the issues surrounding the assessment of speaking tests. They therefore did not identify the fact that it is difficult for the interlocutor to act as an assessor at the same time
- did not include an application for the learner or show how the reason for the effectiveness of the test applied to this specific learner
- repeated the same application, particularly in terms of the test being (de)motivating or (ir)relevant for the learner.

Stronger answers (did the opposite of the above PLUS)

- considered the value of the test in terms of what skills, language, style and spoken situations it tested.
- applied the use of terminology to the test as appropriate so that it was clear that they understood the meaning of the terms.
- outlined a range of points in terms of the content, purpose, and marking system of the test.
- evaluated the test holistically, rather than discussing the test task by task which would have resulted in repetition.

Candidates are recommended to:

- read the situation in the rubric carefully, seeing how each part of it can be relevant to the test and to the specified learner.
- evaluate the test in terms of its effectiveness for this learner in this specific situation and make sure their answers are specifically about the particular test and learner.
- avoid approaching their evaluation through assessing the test against testing concepts such as validity, reliability, washback, etc.
- avoid repeating the same application to the learner under different points.
- use terminology only when relevant and integrate it in their discussion of the relative effectiveness of the test.
- cover a wide range of points relating to the test's effectiveness in their answers.
- use subheadings of *Point* and *Application* rather than a grid layout which can result in cramped and messy answers.
- make sure they make six points, including both positive and negative points.
- avoid including an introduction or a summary in their answer which are not required.

8.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained a high number of the marks available for this task

Positive Points

The test tests different types of speaking – part 1 is a conversation on a familiar topic, part 2 is a short monologue, part 3 is a discussion on a topic. Because it tests these different types of speaking the teacher is more likely to diagnose which type of speaking E has difficulty with and thus create a course that would focus on the type of speaking that E has a weakness with. If the course focuses on an area that E is weak in it is more likely to be a better course for E.

Part 1 of the test includes activities where the student has to talk about herself. She

is ~~use~~ probably used to this ^{so it will not be challenging} ↓ and so this will help her to relax and this might help her to perform as she can do in the next two parts.

E needs to speak for her job and this test is a direct⁽¹⁾ test of speaking in that it will enable her to demonstrate her speaking ability. In this sense the test has face⁽²⁾ validity because E will feel that it is testing the skill that she feels she needs to improve in. The different parts also relate to her needs – thus part 2 – the monologue is ~~related~~ similar to giving a presentation which E needs to do for her job.

Negative Points

E wishes to improve her business skills at the work but the topics introduced (games and sport) ~~don't seem to be~~ in the test are not really related to business. In this sense the test lacks face validity because ~~it won't~~ E might think it doesn't test the language that she will use at work.

E needs to speak to clients so accuracy is probably very important but this test has no direct focus on grammatical accuracy. When answering the questions or having discussions E might try to avoid errors and thus the test wouldn't give enough information about whether E could use language accurately.

The marking of this test would be very subjective and this would make reliability an issue – ~~the student E might~~ The person marking might not be fair to E and thus the course might not deal with her needs

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The candidate identifies three positive aspects of the test with different applications for the learner and two negative aspects, again with two different applications. The last negative point is not accurate. It is positive that the candidate integrates testing concepts into her evaluation of the effectiveness of the test, thereby showing her understanding of the terminology. In order to achieve more marks for this answer, the candidate needs to incorporate more terminology in her discussion of the different points and use a wider range of criteria to evaluate the test in terms of the relevance of the speaking situations used.

ii The following sample answer gained half the marks for this task

POSITIVE POINTS

- + E wants to improve her speaking skills and this is a test assessing her speaking skills. E may think it'll be useful for her (face-validity).
- + It's a diagnostic test which is composed of several stages, each of which has a different purpose. PART 1 tests the ability to speak about E's herself, PART 2 asks the learner to speak in certain situations and PART 3 is about formal/academical topics. All of these will help E improve her speaking skills in different contexts.
- + Tasks are level-appropriate to her level. As an upper-intermediate learner, E can improve her fluency.

NEGATIVE POINTS

- Questions asked in the tasks aren't about what E prefers to talk about. It's not relevant to her needs considering her job (negative face-validity).
- Questions aren't prepared for ESP, in this case E is a businesswoman but Questions are general, not about business language. This may undermine the reliability of the test and E may ^{be} disappointed with the course.
- E may find the questions too easy for her level ~~any~~ as well as they're time-consuming. This can be demotivating.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

This answer contains three positive points and one negative point but the candidate loses marks because there is a limited amount of reference to E. In terms of the positive points, there is only one clearly stated application in the first point. The other two, of helping E to improve her speaking skills in different contexts and the appropriateness of the level are general and do not apply specifically to the effectiveness of the test itself. In terms of the negative points, the first two are the same point, i.e. the lack of relevance of the topic to E, and the last point is not accurate. In order to gain more points, the candidate also needs to think of the appropriacy of the speaking situations themselves to this particular learner. However, it was positive that she integrates some testing terms into her answer.

iii The following sample answer gained only a few of the marks available for this task

Strengths

- Face Validity

The test has face validity, it looks like a test E will be confident that she is being tested effectively.

- Construct Validity

The test has construct validity in that it is testing that which needs to be tested in terms of the skill of speaking. Again, E will be confident that this is an effective diagnostic test.

Weaknesses

The test may be weak in that it lacks reliability.

Testing speaking is very subjective and E may dispute the results if she is not happy with the graders assessment.

Content Validity

The test lacks content validity in that the topics covered, every day life is not strictly relevant to T's needs as a business English learner. she may have been expecting more relevant topics and this may affect her performance.

- Content Validity

Content validity is compromised in that the range of grammar points being tested is not very wide, mainly present simple tense and present continuous. E, therefore may not be able to demonstrate her full capability.

*additional Strength

The test has construct validity in that Part two allows E to plan before she speaks. This will allow E to demonstrate her language skills better than other sections and also gives the test further face validity.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The candidate only identifies one positive point with an application to the learner and one negative point with an application. The first and third strengths are general points about testing and are not related to this test – this illustrates the shortcomings of using testing concepts as criteria to evaluate the test as the evaluation can become generic in its approach. In terms of negative points, neither the first or third weakness is accurate, thereby showing the candidate's lack of experience of evaluating speaking tests and also the fact that he has not looked closely enough at the test in terms of what the learner could be expected to produce.

9 Paper 2 Task Two

The purpose of the extract as a whole is to teach the functional language of requests and appropriate responses to upper intermediate (CEFR B2) level learners.

- a Identify the purpose of the exercises in the box below in relation to the purpose of the extract as a whole.

Exercises for Task Two
Exercise 14
Exercise 15
Exercise 17
Exercise 18a
18b

- b Identify a total of **six** key assumptions about language learning that are evident in the exercises in the box above and explain why the authors might consider these assumptions to be important for language learning. State which exercise or exercises each assumption refers to.

9.1 Guideline answer

a Purpose of the exercises

Exercise	Intended purpose
Exercise 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to set the scene / engage the learners / generate interest to contextualise the target language to expose the learners receptively to the target language / give an opportunity to notice the language to listen for specific information / detail
Exercise 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide examples of the target language to check / practise the form of the exponents / lexical phrases of requests / focus on requests formed with infinitive and gerund to check / raise awareness of the level of formality
Exercise 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to input language for (non-specific) informal requests for help / to recycle exponents from Ex 15 to focus on the collocations / fixed expressions to test the forms learnt in Ex 15 to allow learners to produce / practise / use examples of the target language
Exercise 18a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to input and check appropriate / polite (positive and negative) replies (to adjacency pairs) to provide a record of the language
Exercise 18b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to focus on the problem of the negative reply in <i>Would you mind ...?</i> to give an opportunity to use /check the responses from Ex 18a

b Assumptions and reasons

It's useful to teach language functions [All exercises]

Because functional language has high surrender value for learners

Students need different exponents for the same function / upper intermediate students already have knowledge of basic exponents [All exercises]

Because students need different / more sophisticated ways of expressing the same function to deal with more complex situations / make them more native-like

It is important to focus on style [Exercise 15]

Because learners need to be aware that language is appropriate to different situations / it's part of knowing the meaning/use of language / particularly relevant to this target language

Language should be learned as chunks rather than deconstructed / important to focus learners on collocations [All exercises]

Because pre-fabricated chunks will increase the speed of production / fluency reflects the way native speakers use lexis

It is important to focus on discourse / adjacency pairs / responses [Exercise 18]

Because requests on their own are not so useful / learners can both use them and respond to them / responses are part of the use

Inauthentic texts are useful for presenting language / it is important for target language to be contextualised / listening texts are a good way of introducing language items [Exercise 14]

Because the language can be controlled / there is no defective language / the examples of the target language will be clear / because context provides meaning / because it is similar to learning L1

It is useful to have a task which doesn't focus on target language even if the prime reason for the text is linguistic / learners need to understand meaning of a text before focusing on target language [Exercise 14]

It's important for learners to have opportunities to listen as this is often something which they need practice in / it encourages learners away from focussing too soon on language items / it might help activate their existing knowledge of the language. An initial focus on meaning provides a context for the language / ensures the learners process the text for meaning before they attend to the language and will encourage good reading habits outside the classroom.

It is useful to expose the learners to the language receptively before they produce it [Exercise 14]

Because learners may notice the language / it replicates what happens in real life

It is useful to focus on form / highlight problems of form through focused exercises / focus on accuracy [Exercises 15 and 18b]

Because students will learn better if there is an explicit focus on points of difficulty/form they need to consider / makes students aware of what they are learning / many students expect an explicit language focus

It is useful for learners to use dictionaries / important to encourage learner autonomy [Exercise 17]

Because learners will not always have a teacher on hand to help them / because it forces them to take responsibility for their own learning / helps their learning outside the classroom

Visual stimuli / pictures are useful. [Exercise 14]

Because they are engaging / appeal to visual learners / are a useful way of conveying meaning

It is useful for learners to do cognitively challenging tasks when focussing on the target language / to work out language patterns [Exercises 15 & 18a]

Because engaging with the language aids retention / allows the teacher to check how much learners know / it is motivating for the learners to check what they know and discover what they don't know

It is important that learners leave a lesson with their own written record of target language
[Exercise 18a] *Because writing a record will aid memory / because teacher can check correctness of form student has recorded*

It is valuable to categorise language according to meaning / function [Exercise 18a] *Because categorising language in this way makes it easier to focus on its use and appropriacy / helps learners store the language efficiently*

9.2 Candidate performance

This task was generally well done with 66% of the cohort gaining more than 15 marks for the task. However, candidates performed slightly worse on the task than in December 2009 mainly because part b contained fewer generic assumptions than had been the case in previous sessions. Nevertheless, examiners commented that candidates clearly understood how to approach both parts of the tasks: in part a, the majority of candidates gave more than one purpose per exercise; and in part b, they identified six assumptions, referenced these assumptions clearly to specific exercises in the extract, and gave some rationale for their inclusion in the design of the material.

a

Weaker candidates

- described what candidates had to do in the exercises rather than stated their purposes.
- did not consider skills purposes, i.e. listening sub-skills in Exercise 14.
- did not state what the target language was or how the language input was developed over the exercises.
- discussed the rationale / beliefs behind the purposes or evaluated the exercises which is not required.
- discussed the purposes of exercises not included in the rubric.
- wasted time by listing as many purposes as they could think of.
- produced generic comments from previous Guideline answers, e.g. *to prepare students for the next exercise / to allow the teacher to monitor the learners.*

Stronger candidates

- were more focussed on the language purposes of the exercises and how they progressed from one to the next.
- explicitly stated what the target language was in the text.
- linked the purposes of the individual exercises to that of the extract as a whole.
- focussed their answers to a maximum of four purposes per exercise.

b

Weaker candidates

- mentioned the more generic assumptions which exist in most material, i.e. personalisation, activating schemata, visual stimuli, language in reading texts, integrated skills, collaborative learning, guided discovery and the value of controlled practice. This was not an effective strategy as the majority of these assumptions were not evident in this particular sequence of material.
- did not consider the importance of the language focus, in this case functions, adjacency pairs and lexis.
- did not give reasons for the assumptions.
- repeated the same reason for more than one assumption.
- gave a very limited rationale. The most common reasons given were to aid recall / retention, this is how people learn their L1, to motivate / interest the learner, to replicate what happens in the real world, to encourage learner independence, to aid learning. Centres need to spend more time considering the reasons behind the ways material is designed and training their candidates to produce fuller rationales in order to gain maximum marks.
- combined their answers to part b with those of part a. Candidates should be advised not to do this as it can lead to repetition, confusing purposes and assumptions, and omitting the reasons for the assumptions.

Stronger candidates

- analysed the material in terms of assumptions which were particular to this sequence of published material, especially in terms of what the language focus is and how it is dealt with. They identified assumptions in terms of the need to teach language functions and within this, the need to teach different exponents to express the same function, the importance of focusing learners on style and discourse / adjacency pairs, the value of asking learners to categorise language according to meaning / function and the need for learners to leave a lesson with a written record.
- gave a wide range of reasons for the assumptions, particularly in terms of the way the language was presented.

Candidates are recommended to:

- discuss only those exercises specified in the task rubric
- write several relevant purposes for each exercise
- note that in part a they should discuss the purpose of the exercises **in relation to the purpose of the extract as a whole**, rather than just the purpose of the individual exercises
- think carefully about the verbs that they use to state the purposes, e.g. there is a significant difference between *introduce / expose students to / teach the target language*
- look more carefully at how language (or a subskill) is presented / revised and also practised
- group their answers together as indicated by the task rubric sections, i.e. discuss only purposes in part a, and only assumptions and reasons for them in part b
- in part b, lay their answers out as in the Guideline answer, using the sub-headings of *Assumption, Example* and *Rationale* to organise their answers

9.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer gained almost full marks for this task

2

Ex 14

- to be ^{time} ↑ efficient in 'the use of a lead-in', (no messing around)
- To ~~med~~ provide a context with which the TL can be located.

Exe 15

- To introduce students to the polite/direct ^{spoken} request & phrases using the context of the listening in no. 4
- To check the register of the target language before moving further into the lesson.
- To check learners understanding of ing + to infinitive use after each of the phrases.

Ex 17

- to introduce lexis that can be used with the target language
- to promote learner autonomy by using the dictionary
- to highlight the ~~use of~~ collocations that are commonly used in request language

Ex 18a

- To introduce 'chunks' of language that can be used in response to the requests which were introduced in the earlier stages
- To categorise the responses in a clear and concise way.

Ex 18b

- To ^{highlight/draw learners attention to} ↑ ~~test learner ability~~ to ^{the response} ↑ ~~respond~~ to a particularly difficult request phrase using 'mind'. (often the answer yes means no and vice versa).
- To provide some practice in the correct responses. To assess whether learners have categorised correctly.

b

6 assumptions

- That providing a context is for the target language is important because in that way the learners can understand the meaning of the forms and how we commonly use them (E-ex exercise 14).
- ~~that learners should be moved from receptive to noticing~~
- That communicative competence is important, not just our ability to know about the request forms. We need to know when to use the language and whether it is formal or informal (exercise 15).
- That learners should discover the form of the target language without being explicitly told. Through testing learners in exercise 15, ~~the teacher is able to work out whether they know the ing / to-inf form~~. This inductive approach is said to aid ~~cognit~~ deepen cognitive processing and error motivate learners to find out the answers.
- That language should be provided in chunks because these phrases (which are not deconstructed) can be recalled more easily by learners and aid fluency when they are later produced. This is linked to ideas in the Lexical Approach (EX 18a).
- That autonomous learning should be encouraged because when learners are less dependent on their teacher they can improve their own metacognitive and cognitive strategies and transfer these to other situations/problems ~~in the~~ they confront in the language (ex. 17)
- ~~That learners should negotiate~~
- That learners should ~~move from rec~~ start with ~~receptive~~ learning the language receptively, in this case through a listening text (ex 14).
- That visual learners will benefit from a picture in ex 14.
- That learners should be given support – gaps in no. 15

Examiner's comments on sample answer

In part a, the candidate discusses the exercises indicated in the text, organises his answer clearly and outlines no more than three purposes per exercise. He also explicitly states what the target language is and makes clear reference to it throughout his answer. In part b, the candidate identifies seven appropriate assumptions. Whilst he will only receive marks for six assumptions, it is a useful exam technique to adopt in case one of the assumptions is not in the guideline answers. The candidate includes reasons for all the assumptions and, in the case of the importance of context, working out language patterns, language in chunks and learner autonomy, his reasons are well developed.

ii The following sample answer gained under half the marks available for this task

2a

Exercise 14: aims to introduce learners to the activity. It arouse interest by providing a ~~øt~~ picture, and learners will recognize the information in the picture (ie a family).

The picture gives learners an identifiable context to aid them with the listening activity. The listen for specific information using the context of the picture.

Exercise 15: aims to introduce some of the target language by providing it and asking learners to insert it in the correct place. This engages learners cognitively.

Exercise 17: aims to encourage learners to formulate their own questions by using options from the table. Learners are challenged to make correct lexical choices from the available language by thinking about which words collocate with each other to make expressions.

Exercise 18a: aims to encourage learners to use their existing knowledge to try to correctly categorise the expressions given. Categorising these items may assist learners in correct reproduction of them.

It also aims to expand ways learners can agree ~~øf~~ to a request or disagree, etc.

Exercise 18b: ~~aims~~ provides restricted, oral, practice of the language items in exercise 18a. This encourages recycling and ~~may~~ practises pronunciation.

2b

(i) Exercise 18b shows the assumption that learners need restricted ~~practice~~ practice of (new) language items, and need to recycle them in order to increase understanding and ability to recall, recognize and produce such language.

(ii) Exercise 14: it is necessary to activate learners' schemata to aid understanding before a listening/reading activity. Once learners use their own background knowledge, they can more effectively use top-down processing to understand what they hear because they are prepared for the topic/subject, and language they are likely to encounter.

(iii) All exercises: Learners need ^{to do} ↑ tasks to 'break-down' language items, and help them understand and use new language.

(iv) Exercises 15, 17 and 18: Learners can learn best through an inductive, guided discovery approach, where they are given language examples, and have to work out the rules/patterns for themselves.

(v) Exercise 17: Learners need to practise new language they learn, and talking to their peers can increase their confidence (as well as awareness) of using the new language.

(vi) Exercise 14: Learners benefit from pictures and visual clues which activate schemata and assist with predicting what is to follow and top-down processing. Some learners also find visual clues motivating as they are easy to identify with and personalise.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

In part a, the candidate has produced full answers but they include a large amount of description of what the learners have to do, rather than the purposes of each exercise. In order to gain more marks in this section, the candidate needs to be more succinct and identify more purposes for each exercise. She also needs to be more consistently explicit in terms of what the target language is in each exercise. Her response to part b is full but is reliant on generic assumptions which are not evident in this particular sequence of material, i.e. the need for controlled practice, the value of activating schemata, the use of guided discovery, the need to scaffold students' learning and the importance of learner collaboration. The candidate therefore gained very few points in part b.

iii The following sample answer obtained few of the marks available for this task

2a

Ex 14 provides context for requests and responses. Allows sts ~~to~~ an insight into meaning of lang of following exercises

Exercise 15 focusses sts on target language and asks the to categorise them – predict the ~~nature~~ meaning of the phrases by listening to them in context. Scaffolds following exercise dealing with form, e.g. ex 21.

Exercise 17 – Scaffolds production of the question form of the target language. It also scaffolds later exercises which are freer production e.g. Exercises 19 and 22.

Ex 18a ~~stud~~ gets sts to workout the meaning / ~~to~~ use of the response to the question the formed in ex 17.

2b

Student are encourage to brainstorm, activates existing knowledge. Extends the range away from the past encountere in the listening.

Listening texts like the one use in Ex 14 are a good way of introducing student to new language because it ~~eel~~ mirrors the way languages are learnt naturally in L1 ie receptive firsts production second.

Ex 15 – students need a focus on this example a gapfill when listening because listening for specific information stops them from being ~~overwhel~~ overwhelmed.

The listening activity is

Students need a structure which has more of a focus on structure with freer practice at the end because this allows work on accuracy which will give the confidence in the fluency activities at the end. Ex 15, 17 – accuracy 22 – fluency

Student need

Group activities like Ex 16 are important Ex 16 because ~~st~~ personalizing activities aids retention of language

Students benefit from

↓ Skills ~~should~~ being integrated because this is more like authentic use and the language work in one skill supports the language work in another.

Eg listening ex 14
pron ex 19
/ speaking ex 22

Ex 18 ~~presen~~ gives the sts ^{an} opportunity to problem solve this is useful be cause it engages them with the language, presents a cognitive challenge which aids retention.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The candidate makes very few points in part a, and it contains a large amount of description, particularly when referring to Exercises 18a and 18b. The layout of this answer is very cramped and messy and the candidate would have been better advised to use bullet points which might have ensured that she included more purposes per exercise as she generally only has one purpose per exercise. In part b, this candidate is also reliant on generic assumptions which are not pertinent to this sequence, i.e. the importance of personalisation and the value of integrating skills and language work. Her second and third points are general in terms of materials design and also describe what the learners are asked to do in the exercises.

10 Paper 2 Task Three

Comment on the ways in which the exercises 19, 21 and 22 combine with the exercises discussed in Task Two.

10.1 Guideline answer

Exercise	How exercise combines with exercises in Task Two
Exercise 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recycles / continues with / revises the exponents of requests and refusals from the previous exercises focuses explicitly on intonation (productively) / adds pronunciation/intonation to meaning/form dealt with in previous exercises
Exercise 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extends the learner's knowledge of the language from the previous exercises focuses on excuses / the importance of politeness allows learners to personalise / use their ideas to generate the target language from the previous exercises provides (controlled) oral practice of making excuses / replies
Exercise 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gives learners more freedom than in previous exercises to formulate requests/responses / gives learners less controlled/freer practice gives an opportunity for learners to use the language (act it out for

	<p>the class) / combines meaning/use, form and pronunciation (from all the previous exercises) / consolidates what has been learned in the previous exercises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes the medium to writing / gives variety • focuses on accuracy (because learners have to write the dialogue) and so explicitly practises the forms introduced earlier • completes the cycle of receptive to productive
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10.2 Candidate performance

This task continues to challenge candidates with only 41% of the cohort gaining five or more marks for it, with performance being slightly lower than in December 09 and significantly lower than in June 09. Examiners commented that few candidates appear to clearly understand what is required in this task, and answers were often very skimpy, a sign that the candidates had decided to move on to Task Four.

Weaker candidates

- related their comments to the whole material rather than to the exercises detailed in Task Two.
- discussed all the exercises together so that it was difficult for the examiners to pinpoint which exercises they were referring to.
- only made one point per exercise and therefore lost marks.
- barely attempted the task.
- described what the learners had to do in the exercises.
- described the purpose of the exercises without saying how they combined with one of the exercises in Task Two.
- described how the exercises within Task Three combined with each other.
- simply wrote *Exercise 19 combines with Exercise 18* without saying how it does this, e.g. *by focussing the learners explicitly on the intonation of the exponents for making refusals*.
- misread the rubric and discussed Exercise 20 in addition to the other ones detailed in the rubric.
- discussed the assumptions behind the exercises, which is outside the remit of the task.

Stronger candidates

- made at least two points per exercise, or more.
- considered both language aspects of the material AND considered how other features of the material combined, e.g. in terms of the type of practice opportunities provided and how guided they were; when the focus changed from speaking to writing; and the progression of the material.

Candidates are recommended to:

- read the rubric carefully and only discuss the exercises they are asked to discuss and no others.
- make sure they discuss how the specific exercises combine with the exercises in Task Two, and do not discuss anything else.
- consider each exercise in its own right, and not together with another exercise. It is helpful for the candidates if they use a sub-heading for each exercise.
- note that there may be several ways in which each exercise can combine as shown in the Guideline Answer, so they should try to identify more than one way.

10.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer obtained nearly full marks on this task

- #19 – provides further exposure to TL, again in spoken form (which hasn't been done since ex 14 – except for Ss' production)
- gives Ss further exposure to the correct pron of the TL
 - gives Ss practice in the way intonation affects the meaning of the expressions used in previous exercises – expands their understanding of their uses – ie. how definite the responses are

#21 – gives further exposure to request expressions and their pronunciation (helps memory off them)

- gives Ss chance to practice producing the ↑ ^{response} expressions in a uncontrolled activity
- gives Ss chance to be creative in their practise
- provides 'production' stage of lesson cycle

#22 – gives Ss chance to be more creative with the language studied – to personalise it possibly (helps memory)

- ~~gives for a~~ gives opportunity to focus on written form of TL (not done since ex 15 and 18 - and in more extensive way than then) – focus on spelling, contractions, etc)
- gives Teacher chance to check their production of written forms and correct use of requests and responses, inc. correct grammar
- acting it out: completes production stage of lesson
- provides Ss with more exposure to oral forms
- chance for Ss to learn from each other
- ~~having f~~ chance to have some fun with the TL.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

This answer consistently refers back to the exercises discussed in Task Two, thus commenting on how the exercises combine with those in Task Two, which is the required focus of this task. The answer also shows good awareness of the different ways in which exercises can combine, e.g. through language systems, the type of practice provided and how one exercise builds on a preceding one.

ii The following sample answer obtained over half the marks available for this task

- prepares them for the next exercise (#21) in which they will use the TL in spoken form
 - practice Ss receptive skills raises awareness of inton
- #19
- stays on the same familiar topic/TL (#18)
 - recycles the TL but this time in a dialogue (#18)
 - ~~provides SS with the TL in written form / while listening (speaking)~~
 - give SS an opportunity to reinforce letter/sound correlation
 - give Ss the chance to L for intonation/speech features.
- #21
- gives SS a chance to use the TL in a ~~more~~ different context (compare to 14/15)
 - provides SS an opportunity to use the TL in speech S a new skill in this lesson (L in 14 or 15)
 - provides opportunity for Ss to recycle the TL from the previous exercises (#17)
 - gives T a chance to diagnose how well SS master the (17/18) TL (#
 - give SS a chance to practice #19 intonation in speech
- #22
- allow Ss to move from more controlled W practice of TL (#15) to freer W practice
 - give Ss the chance to use the TL in a different context than before (#14/15/#21)
 - practice W after L/R/S which further reinforces the TL from the previous exercises (14-21)

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The candidate understands how to approach the task and makes clear reference to previous exercises and how the ones in Task Three build on what has gone before. However, she needs to be more explicit in her reference to the target language, i.e. she needs to specify what the target language is (requests, refusals, excuses) and to consider issues such as the focus on politeness and the extent to which learners are allowed to use their own ideas in the practice activities.

iii The following sample answer obtained few of the marks available for this task

Exercise 19 allows learners to listen to the target language in context. This is slightly more authentic practice. As learners are upper intermediate level they should enjoy this more challenging task of interpreting what Speaker B means. Learners have to infer meaning of language not explicitly stated.

Exercise 21: provides further restricted practice of the target language. Learners have to use more cognitive effort which is also engaging and motivating. Learners must also think about register and connotations – a more advanced skill.

Exercise 22: Learners often retain more new language if they write it down. Pairwork, and working collaboratively, can encourage peer-correction, and be motivating. It can increase speaker's confidence.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

The answer mostly does not address the rubric. The majority of the answer either describes what the learners have to do in the exercises, e.g. *Exercise 19 allows learners to listen to the target language*, evaluates the effectiveness of the activity, e.g. *Learners often retain more new language if they write it down* or how the learners would respond to it, e.g. *they should enjoy this more challenging task of interpreting what Speaker B means*. Even in the points which are valid, i.e. Exercise 21 providing more restricted practice and focussing on style, the candidate needs to be more explicit in terms of which exercises Exercise 21 combines with.

11 Paper 2 Task Four

Below is an extract from a magazine article on teaching grammar.

- a Bress suggests that 'students should be allowed to work out the rules of grammar for themselves'. What are the possible benefits of this approach, for the students and the teacher?
- b Why might Bress see metalanguage as needing to be 'kept to an absolute minimum'?
- c In what circumstances might the use of metalanguage be an advantage?

11.1 Guideline answer

a Possible benefits of this approach

- The cognitive challenge of working out rules may lead to greater cognitive processing which leads to greater retention / understanding/makes learning more memorable / aids acquisition.
- Rules will be formed in a way that learners themselves understand (because they've formulated the rules themselves).
- It is more motivating / engaging because it allows learners to be involved in the learning rather than passive recipients / arouses students' curiosity.
- Learners will feel more positive about learning grammar because working out rules will give them a sense of achievement / it's empowering.
- It appeals to analytic learners / adult or conceptually mature learners / those learners who like working out rules.
- Learners may be more willing to later revise / adapt their own rules.

- Learners can apply the knowledge they already have to the lesson and see where the gaps in their knowledge are.
- Learner autonomy is prompted because students can use the same approach when studying outside the classroom
- It allows for cooperative learning with some learners scaffolding/supporting the work of others / students benefit from working in groups as they can share / compare / test their knowledge.
- While learners are working, the teacher will be able to gauge how much/little the learners understand of the rules (this is less possible with front-of-class explanation). / The teacher will be able to input information based on what learners need to know rather than simply explaining everything.
- The teacher does not have to adopt the role of front-of-class explainer (which some teachers may find intimidating) / acts as a facilitator.

b Meta-language kept to a minimum

- Learners might find metalanguage intimidating / de-motivating.
- Learners may pay less attention to the grammar itself and focus more on the meta-language used to describe it.
- It may lead to discussion about language and not much use of language.
- Metalanguage may not be useful outside the classroom.
- Time may be wasted learning metalanguage.
- Metalanguage is an additional burden / students don't know it / it can be confusing when learners are already challenged to learn the grammar itself
- Learners may see meta-language as a tool for the teacher rather than for learners / may not see the point of learning metalanguage.
- Learners who have had previous bad experience with grammar learning may associate metalanguage use with this (and therefore become blocked).
- L1 learners learn the language without use of meta-anguage – so, it's not necessary for learning.
- May not be suitable for younger / less analytic / low-level learners.
- It may encourage the teacher and learners to dissect language rather than look at language in chunks thus reducing learner fluency.

c Meta-language as an advantage

- A knowledge of metalanguage will help learners to use reference / self-access materials (and so increase learner autonomy).
- Most course books use metalanguage so learners need to be familiar with it.
- Once learnt, metalanguage can be applied to different lessons / areas of language.
- It is clear when describing rules / patterns / it is difficult to describe rules without using metalanguage.

- It's more efficient / saves time / speeds up the clarification stage of a lesson /when correcting errors.
- It makes learners feel like 'adults' / is less patronising.
- It suits students who have an analytical learning style.
- Some learners expect it from their teachers (depending on previous learning experience) / learners may think their teacher doesn't know it if s/he doesn't use it / they may have a lack of faith in the teacher.
- Teachers need to understand it when researching grammar.
- It is a tool of the profession / it is good professional practice to be able to use metalanguage appropriately and accurately.
- It is helpful when comparing with learners' L1.
- It's appropriate for those learners who have learnt their own language / another language by using metalanguage.

11.2 Candidate performance

The mean score for this task was under half the marks available with only 45% of the cohort gaining 20 or more marks, mirroring candidate performance in the June 09 examination. The reason for poor candidate performance could be the result of two factors: time pressure and the choice of topic. In terms of time, candidates frequently did not spend enough time on the task and so lost a large number of marks. In terms of the topic, candidates performed much better in December 09 when the focus of the question was on language drills. It therefore seems to be the fact that the use of guided discovery, and particularly metalanguage, is not an area of methodology which candidates had given much thought to. Examiners commented that the task discriminated well between those candidates who appear to have a wide range of teaching experience in different contexts and those who do not.

a

Weaker candidates

- used Part a as an opportunity to refer to teaching approaches or methodologies, particularly The Natural Approach or the Lexical Approach, and so went off track in an attempt to bring them into their answer.
- tried to list the same number of benefits for the students and the teacher, which resulted in repetition in terms of the latter because there were fewer benefits for the teacher and more for the learners.

Stronger candidates

- had a good understanding of what constituted guided discovery and were able to use their experience of using different approaches to teaching language to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.
- used the rubric well to organise their answer.

b and c

Weaker candidates

- sometimes gave very detailed examples, e.g. of how metalanguage might be useful in contrastive analysis. This was not a productive use of time as no extra marks are given for detailed exemplification.
- interpreted metalanguage as being the same as deductive teaching or assumed that metalanguage would not be used in guided discovery and assumed that if metalanguage was 'kept to an absolute minimum', this would mean that there would be a complete absence of a grammar focus or language.

- interpreted *In what circumstances* as 'when' rather than as 'when and why', which meant that their answers lacked sufficient rationale and therefore depth.
- combined their answers to parts b and c which meant that they lost marks.

Stronger candidates

- had a good understanding of the issues around the use of meta-language and were able to use this experience to go beyond their immediate teaching environment and consider other teaching contexts.
- provided a good level of rationale for their points.
- organised their answer clearly and ensured that they divided their time between all three parts of the task.

Candidates are recommended to:

- read the rubric very carefully.
- only provide the information they are asked for about a subject, i.e. keep to the point.
- make as many relevant points as they can under each section.
- organise their answer according to the rubric.
- signpost their answers clearly to show which part of the task they are answering.
- allow themselves enough time to complete the task.
- refer, where appropriate, to a range of learners and contexts.

11.3 Sample answers

i The following sample answer obtained very high marks for this task

4

(Ls) = learners

(a)

(T) = teacher

- Working out the rules for themselves allows (Ls) to become more involved in the learning process. This engages their interest and encourages deeper cognitive processing (i.e. the brain is more engaged and more able to process the information).
- It can encourage peer teaching if (Ls) are working in groups → (Ls) can learn from each other e.g. some learners might have much more grammar knowledge/understanding than others, and ~~will~~ both will benefit from explaining through peer teaching.
- This will aid memory and retention of the grammar rules → (Ls) will remember and internalise the rules more quickly, and be able to remember them more easily.
- It allows the (T) to hand over autonomy to the (Ls) and put them in control of their learning → this allows the (T) to play a more 'facilitator' role, guiding rather than instructing.
- It avoids the (T) having to give lengthy explanations about grammar rules → especially good if (T) is not a native speaker, or is slightly unsure of some rules.

4b

- Some (Ls) switch off if they hear too much metalanguage, especially young learners.
- Using metalanguage which contains too many technical terms can confuse the learners, even though they might understand the grammar rules themselves.
- Beginner or elementary level (Ls) will probably not understand most metalanguage.
- ~~S~~ Most (Ls) are more interested in the meaning of the grammar structures and how they can use these structures in daily life → the technical descriptions of structures can be unnecessary or unimportant to them.
- Overuse of metalanguage by the (T) takes too much time (teacher talking time) and reduces the time (Ls) can practice and experiment with the language.
- A lot of ~~learn~~ learning styles would not enjoy listening to metalanguage e.g. visual, kinaesthetic, interpersonal → they would rather be looking at a picture to understand, or communicating with each other.
- Incorrect use of metalanguage (e.g. by a beginner teacher) can lead to even more confusion for the (Ls)

4c

- Some learners want to know the metalanguage themselves → e.g. the names of the tenses. These may be analytical or serialist learners.
- LS from certain educational backgrounds which put an emphasis on grammatical competence and knowledge will expect and demand to know such technical terms.
- The use of metalanguage shows that the T has a thorough knowledge of the language, which could gain respect from LS – e.g. young learners, adult Business learners.
- Sometimes the grammatical structures are very complicated and using an inductive approach may take too long → in this case it can be quicker [↑] and easier for the T to explain using metalanguage.
- The LS may need knowledge of metalanguage in order to help them pass a specific test, or if they are going on to linguistic study at university for example.
- Most coursebooks use metalanguage, therefore for LS to progress through such a coursebook requires them to know the names of tenses etc – otherwise they will fall behind.
- It is useful for LS to know the metalanguage so that they can use reference books to check up on grammar points they haven't yet understood, or want more information about.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

a

The candidate makes five valid points with a good level of clarity although she could provide less detail and include more points, e.g. it is not necessary to give an example of what learners can learn from each other or give a definition for cognitive processing. She could omit this detail and make more points.

b

Again the candidate makes five pertinent points but she could give more thought to what experience of metalanguage learners can bring to the classroom, e.g. in terms of how they learn their first language or how it is used in their previous learning. The last two points cannot be credited because they are not specific enough to the use of metalanguage.

c

The candidate's experience shows through in this section and she identifies a range of points in terms of the advantage of metalanguage in terms of classroom and self-study material, the learners' expectations and the use of metalanguage in the classroom.

ii The following sample answer obtained just over half the number of marks available for this task

4a)

Benefits for the students

An inductive approach benefits the learners in a number of ways

- more cognitively engaged and therefore involved in the lesson as an active participant
- this is believed to aid retention of language
- is more student-centred and therefore more engaging and motivating
- allows learners to discuss the language (meaningful negotiation) which is communicative, and assists with intake
- Students at higher levels are likely to have seen many grammar presentations, so there is little need to present the form again -
- Promotes the use of the language in the discussion early in the lesson rather than at the end.

Benefits for the teachers

An inductive approach allows teachers

- to use a task diagnostically. This is very useful when teaching a class for the first time – to see what they know.

- teachers are free to monitor carefully as they are not at the board presenting at length
- Teachers may use this approach as a way of changing groupings (classroom management).
For example – mixing stronger and weaker students in groups to facilitate peer teaching (hence building learner confidence)
- is a variation of the PPP approach, by giving learners a task.

4b

The use of metalanguage can isolate and intimidate some learners. Learners come from varying educational and cultural backgrounds and may not all have been exposed to this it. For example: some students may have naturally learnt English through various forms of the media or because it's a second language in their country – Therefore they are unaware of the terminology.

In addition metalanguage is not used outside an English L2 classroom, and the majority of native speakers do not use it. So the lack of frequency and limited applications may be Bress' belief.

Metalanguage is also very specific and is not needed for understanding the gist, the meaning and use of grammatical items within a context. This focus may distract learners from understanding the bigger picture.

4c

Metalanguage is extremely useful in to explain to learners why language is constructed in a certain way. It is beneficial when providing error correction in both writing + speaking – as it can assist with pinpointing the error.

For example: S) I recently graduation from university

T) You have the incorrect form – you need to change graduation into a past tense verb.

Using this terminology is effective in exam classes such as Cambridge and IELTS where accuracy is important. By understanding the metalanguage, both students + teachers can address language quickly.

Metalanguage is also relevant if taking a bottom-up approach to reading or analysing writing, as it aids making sense of words, sentences and syntax in general.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

a

The candidate makes a variety of points in this section although there is some repetition in terms of the teacher being free to monitor the learners and learners benefiting from working together. The points about the use of language coming earlier in the lesson and it being a variation of PPP are inaccurate.

b

The candidate makes fewer points in this section, restricting her comments to the fact that learners might find metalanguage intimidating and that it might have limited use inside and outside the classroom. The candidate needs to consider other issues, such as the previous experience of metalanguage that learners bring to the classroom.

c

The candidate only makes two points here (that metalanguage provides clarity when explaining language and it therefore saves time) but repeats both of them twice. Again, she needs to consider a wider range of contexts and situations where metalanguage is useful. Based on her performance in Parts a and b, the examiners commented that the candidate might have found it difficult to produce a variety of points because of a lack of experience of different teaching contexts.

iii The following sample answer obtained a small number of the marks available for this task

4a

Benefits of working out rules -

- If students work out & notice grammar rules through an inductive approach, they often learn it better.
- Steven Krashen ~~who~~ argues extensively about the benefits of teaching little or no grammar & argues that many learn through exposure to input (input hypothesis), i.e. ~~the~~ written or spoken language around them.
- If students are simply shown grammar rules deductively (as in the grammar translation method), ~~they may not see the rules on intraca finer elements of the language. Most sh~~ Many learners learn by writing things out. ~~By doing this~~ They may not really learn the rules. It may be learned through memorisation rather than real understanding.
- Modern communicative approaches do advocate some attention to grammar and form, but many believe that students learn more and acquire language ^{more} through using language in order to achieve certain objectives. This was the premise of the task-based-approach pioneered by Pradhu in the seventies.
- The teacher will not have to spend so much time on grammar & can focus more on ~~language &~~ other things such as monitoring and giving feedback.
- ~~The~~ Because it is a problem-solving activity, it gives students a challenge which can, in itself, be ~~far~~ enjoyable and motivating.
- It gets students to actively think about rules and forms making it more learner-centred and less teacher driven.

b

Metalinguage may open up a can of worms ~~on~~ in that some learners may suddenly come up with many more questions and queries, thus slowing down the class. This could also raise anxiety in the learners.

If Michael Lewis & his lexical approach and Krashen and his comprehensible input theories are to be believed, (due to learning of chunks of words or being immersed in input) students don't need explicit teaching of grammar.

c

Metalinguage would be useful when particular questions or issues are raised that require a grammatical explanation in order to ~~make it~~ aid students' understanding. Especially useful if there are no other ways to explain it.

Some students who are used to a deductive approach & ~~using metalinguage~~ may appreciate ~~its~~ ~~usage~~ using metalinguage.

~~metalinguage is useful to help the teacher diagnose and remedy issues~~

- Using metalinguage is useful to help improve accuracy using language & forms.
- ~~Many theories argue that guided discovery is far better than explicit explanation~~

b. cont.

If students have had a bad experience with grammar rules & metalinguage, this may create unease in the learner, thus hampering learning (affect).

Most native speakers don't learn grammar rules using metalinguage, so many argue it shouldn't be used (much) in L2 teaching.

Students can spend more time on ^{producing} using ↑ the language.

Examiner's comments on sample answer

a

Whilst the candidate has recognised that a number of points need to be made, much of his answer is off task and does not relate to the benefits of learners working out language rules for themselves. Instead, he discusses other approaches and how they impact on language learning. Only the comments relating to the benefit of cognitive challenge, the chance for the teacher to monitor the learners and the motivating nature of working out the rules can be credited.

b

The candidate's response to this section is brief and there are only three points which can be credited: learners might find meta-language intimidating; they might have previously had a bad experience learning grammar; and you learn your L1 without knowing metalanguage. Again, the comments referring to Lewis and Krashen are not relevant to the answer.

c

This part of the candidate's answer is very short and only contains two points: that it helps when giving grammatical explanations (stated twice in the first and last bullet points); and learners may expect to use it because of their previous learning background. The examiners concluded that whilst the candidate's comments are accurate, he needs to make more of them and avoid referring to approaches/methodologies which are not relevant to the focus of the task.

Appendix: Sample Paper 1 Task Five

On pages 60-62 is an example of a Paper 1 Task Five which focuses on a spoken text. This is for the reference of trainers and candidates preparing for Delta Module One, in conjunction with the Sample Paper 1 Task Five in the Delta Modules Handbook (p.21), which focuses on a written text.

Task Five (25 minutes)

The text (220 words) for this task is reproduced on the opposite page. It was spoken by a learner in an intermediate (CEFR B1) class in response to the following task:

Answer your teacher's questions about a memorable event and ceremonies in your country.

- a** Identify **three key strengths** and **three key weaknesses** of the text. Provide an example of each strength and each weakness.

Your answer should focus on some or all of the areas listed below:

- Organisation and cohesion
- Accuracy of grammar
- Accuracy of lexis
- Accuracy of pronunciation: stress, individual sounds and sounds in connected speech.

- b** Which one of the **weaknesses** identified above would you choose to prioritise to help this learner? Give **three** reasons for your choice.

Write your answers in your answer booklet.

(words with boxes above are stressed in sentence)

What is your most memorable event?

My memorable event was my 21st birthday. At the time I was so busy to study, so don't expect any

party. My friends prepared ... my friends prepared my birthday party. They copied my house key. And

they decorated with balloon and they bought presents and they made delicious food for me. At the

time I was sad because I wasn't doing well at school so they wanted to increase me to start study

here. ... When I open the door I was very surprised because I didn't expect anything so my friends

hid in some place and they come. come out and I was happy and surprised and maybe I couldn't

forget this event.

What are the most important events or ceremonies in your country?

People spend many time to prepare their wedding ceremony and they spend their time and a lot of

money. The interesting thing was we have two kinds of wedding ceremony. The first one is western

style ceremony so they wear white dress and man wears suit. But the second ceremony we wear our

traditional custom we call Hombok made of silk. It's very fabulous and colourful and nice. And each

occasion ... so we have both of them.

(220 words)

Sample paper 1 Task Five Guideline Answer

a Key strengths and weaknesses

Key strengths

- Organisation and cohesion: systematic approach to task
Example: introduction, events in order and conclusion
- Organisation and cohesion: effective and accurate use of conjunctions
Example: and, because, but, when, so
- Accuracy of grammar: good control of basic sentence structure
Example: They made delicious food for me, I didn't expect anything
- Accuracy of lexis: accuracy of topic-related lexis for describing events
Example: balloons, decorated, delicious, fabulous, colourful
- Accuracy of lexis: accurate use of collocation
Example: do well at school, spend time and money
- Accuracy of pronunciation: individual sounds and sounds in connected speech: certain weak sounds
Example: /wəz/
- Accuracy of pronunciation: individual sounds and sounds in connected speech: elision
Example: /ənai /

Key weaknesses

- Accuracy of grammar: inconsistent use of present and past simple forms
Example: was ... don't expect, When I open the door I was
- Accuracy of grammar: determiners (articles and quantifiers)
Example: spend many time, man wears suit
- Accuracy of grammar: gerunds and infinitives
Example: so busy to study, increase me to start study, spend many time to prepare

- Accuracy of lexis: incorrect choice of word that could confuse listener
Example: increase, custom
- Accuracy of pronunciation: individual sounds and sounds in connected speech: incorrect word stress
*Example: /pɑ:'ti:/ /eni:'sɪj/
/serɪ'məʊni:/ /dekə'reɪtəd/
/'bælən/*
- Accuracy of pronunciation: individual sounds and sounds in connected speech: incorrect sentence stress – tendency to always stress last word / syllable of sentence
Example: here / me / key / nice
- Accuracy of pronunciation: individual sounds and sounds in connected speech: individual sounds
*Example: /θ/ - /eni:'sɪj/ /bəʊs/
/bɜ:sdeɪ/*

b Which weaknesses to prioritise

Candidates may choose any of the key weaknesses they listed in part a. They should provide a rationale for their choice that is reasonable, informed and refers to some/any of the areas below:

- the learner's level
- the learner's future needs (e.g. exams)
- the learner's future needs (e.g. future study)
- the learner's future needs (e.g. job)
- fossilisation of error
- transfer to other genre
- transfer to other skills
- specific to the learner's context
- specific to the communicative purpose/success of the text (i.e. reference to genre in its own right)
- the effect on the listener
- easy to rectify, therefore motivating