



Skills for Life

Writing Entry 1 Examination Report

2011 – Test 106

Skills for Life Writing Examination Report: Entry 1

This report is based on candidate performance on one version of the Skills for Life Writing Entry 1 tests in 2010/11.

The report is intended as an aid to teachers and colleges in preparing candidates for future Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life Writing tests. It includes a number of sample candidate answers accompanied by examiner comments.

Test 106

The three tasks in this test are a supermarket shopping list, a note inviting a friend to go to the park, and a college writing task about summertime activities.

There are 27 marks available on the paper: 6 for Task 1, 9 for Task 2 and 12 for Task 3. The breakdown of marks available for each assessment focus (Text, Sentence and Word) is shown below.

| | Text | Sentence | Word | Total |
|--------|------|----------|------|-------|
| Task 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Task 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| Task 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 12 |
| Total | 9 | 6 | 12 | 27 |

Scores were highest for Word focus and lowest for Sentence focus.

Task 1 Supermarket shopping list

This task caused relatively few problems for candidates.

Word focus: Nearly all candidates were able to name and, for the most part, spell six items. Lists consisted mainly of food items and occasionally drinks. A small number of candidates missed the first question about which days they went shopping, possibly having been distracted by the more familiar list element of the task. Some candidates wrote a sentence in response to this question but to make marking fair, only the day/days were marked. Those who wrote only one day were deemed to have answered the question, but those who wrote more than one day were rewarded appropriately.

Task 2 Invitation to the park

This task was generally well answered.

Text focus: There were few problems here. Weaker candidates addressed the task appropriately, while stronger candidates expanded on when they wanted to go to the park and what they wanted to do. Nearly all candidates formatted the note appropriately.

Sentence focus: This was fairly straightforward. The first point, 'ask your friend ..', elicited appropriate invitation language from strong candidates; weaker ones often resorted to a statement of intent, which was accepted. The third point produced a range of sentence types with good use of modals from stronger candidates.

Word focus: The preferred type of activity (typically a game/sport, or a coffee) produced the greatest range of vocabulary. The second point tested spelling of days of the week and capitalisation, and also appropriate number format when suggesting a time.

Task 3 Writing about summertime activities

This was a straightforward task.

Text focus: Virtually all candidates understood the task and were able to write the appropriate number of words. A number of candidates wrote about what they 'would like' or 'are going' to do this/next summer, which was accepted. Better candidates were able to use time expressions to link sentences. Some weaker candidates just wrote a list of sentences, rather than a text, and therefore scored a little lower.

Sentence focus: This question produced a fairly narrow range of sentence types, typically involving the present simple tense. Better candidates produced compound sentences with simple linking.

Word focus: The general nature of the question produced a wide range of fairly common words with unproblematic spelling. Consequently, even weaker candidates scored well here.

Overall the paper was straightforward and candidates generally performed well.

Recommendations for Candidate Preparation

All Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life tests are based on the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum* and cover all the Basic Skills Standards in each mode at each level. Therefore, by following the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*, teachers will be preparing their students for the tests. Candidates will benefit from being reminded of the following Dos and Don'ts:

Do

- Do read all the task instructions carefully.
- Do make sure you know all the task types by looking at practice tests.
- Do make sure that your handwriting is clear and easy to read.
- Do read the task carefully and plan an answer which addresses all the content points of the task. Try to develop each point fully.
- Do consider who you are writing to and try to write in an appropriate style and tone.
- Do think carefully about whether the task requires you to ask, describe, invite, etc and make sure you do this in your answer.
- Do allow time to check through what you have written.

Don't

- Don't use a pencil.
- Don't worry if you make a few grammatical errors in tasks. Communicating the message is the most important thing.
- Don't write answers which are much shorter or longer than the recommended number of words.
- Don't spend too long on one answer.

- Don't write a full, rough copy of your answer. Just write brief notes to plan your answer.

Sample Scripts

Sample scripts are provided for each task in the question paper. Please note that it is not possible to reproduce the candidate answers in the original handwriting, and so any references in the commentaries to quality of handwriting will not be reflected in the samples provided.

Entry 1 (Test 106) Sample Scripts and Commentaries

Entry 1 Script A Task 1

(About 10 minutes)

Your supermarket gives you this questionnaire. Answer the questions.

| <i>Supermarket questionnaire</i> | |
|--|--|
| What days do you go shopping? | |
| I go shopping in Saturday. ----- | |
| What food do you buy from the supermarket? (Write 6 more things.) | |
| 1. tomatoes ----- | |
| 2. chicken wings ----- | |
| 3. orange juice ----- | |
| 4. milk ----- | |
| 5. eggs ----- | |
| 6. pasta ----- | |
| 7. bread ----- | |

Entry 1 Script A Task 1

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|---|----------------------------------|----------|
| Text focus | | Not assessed in this task | |
| Sentence focus | | Not assessed in this task | |
| Word focus | Candidate selects appropriate vocabulary. Spelling is always correct and handwriting is clear. | 3 | 6 |

Entry 1 Script B
Task 1

(About 10 minutes)

Your supermarket gives you this questionnaire. Answer the questions.

| <i>Supermarket questionnaire</i> |
|--|
| <p>What days do you go shopping?</p> <p><i>I go to the shopping every day.</i></p> <p>-----</p> |
| <p>What food do you buy from the supermarket? (Write 6 more things.)</p> <p>1. tomatoes</p> <p>-----</p> <p>2. <i>bread.</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>3. <i>Pananas</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>4. <i>Carots.</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>5. <i>Potauto</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>6. <i>Pinaapel</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>7. <i>Salt</i></p> <p>-----</p> |

Entry 1 Script B Task 1

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|--|----------------------------------|------|
| Text focus | | Not assessed in this task | |
| Sentence focus | | Not assessed in this task | |
| Word focus | Evidence of ability to select vocabulary appropriate to task. Handwriting is legible, but there are some spelling errors. | 2 | 4 |

Entry 1 Script C
Task 2

(About 10 minutes)

You want to go to the park with your friend Mike.

Write a note to Mike. In your note

- ask Mike to go to the park with you
- say when you want to go to the park
- say what you want to do in the park.

Write about 30 words.



Hi Mike:

I want go withe you to the park

I'm go to the park at afternoon

I want have lusha with you in the park and blay football withe New friend

I thenk enjoy time I hope go with me to the park by car. waik with me if

you like this so. see you letter.

thank you Becouse go withe me to Park.

Kiss for you Sanoo.

Entry 1 Script C Task 2

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|--|------|----------|
| Text focus | Candidate has covered the content points and the audience would be informed. There are opening and closing formulae and text is largely coherent. | 3 | 3 |
| Sentence focus | Full stops and capital letters are sometimes used as sentence boundaries. Shows evidence of some control of verb tenses. | 2 | 2 |
| Word focus | Candidate's handwriting is legible but sometimes requires effort. Some evidence of ability to select vocabulary appropriate to task. However, there is confusion with some words, e.g. 'lusha', 'waik'. | 2 | 2 |

Entry 1 Script D
Task 2

(About 10 minutes)

You want to go to the park with your friend Mike.

Write a note to Mike. In your note

- ask Mike to go to the park with you
- say when you want to go to the park
- say what you want to do in the park.

Write about 30 words.

Hi Im Cem I have go to park Im free

Next wek at my OF at sun day

I wel be coll you be for sanday

Cem se you sun

Entry 1 Script D Task 2

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|---|------|----------|
| Text focus | Audience would receive very limited information but candidate shows awareness of the basic idea of the task. | 1 | 1 |
| Sentence focus | Candidate uses simple sentences without conjunctions. Some control of word order is evident though meaning is sometimes difficult to decipher. Capitals are used but no full stops. This just makes a Band 2. | 2 | 2 |
| Word focus | Candidate can spell some basic words correctly, but there is some confusion, e.g. 'wek', 'wel', 'sun'. Limited evidence to select vocabulary appropriate to task. | 1 | 1 |

Entry 1 Script E
Task 3

(About 20 minutes)

Your English class is talking about the summer. Your teacher asks you to write about what you like to do in the summer.

Write about 50 words.

Summer is time when I, and my friends take all money
and we go anywhere where there is much water. Often it
is the Baltic sea, but last time we liked going to a lake
in Poland. Poland is a country where there are more than
1000 lakes. The Sniardwy is the biggest lake in
Poland. There are very nice forests. Always in the
summer a lot of people. I, with my friends went
swimming, played football. At night we went to
a disco. There we were dancing. We were talking about us.
Always it is very nice.

Entry 1 Script E Task 3

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|--|------|----------|
| Text focus | Candidate covers task with expansion. Text is coherent with evidence of ability to organise text using simple cohesive devices. | 3 | 6 |
| Sentence focus | Candidate shows some evidence of ability to construct compound sentences. Evidence of control over basic verb tenses. Despite problems with word order, the meaning remains clear. | 3 | 3 |
| Word focus | Good range of appropriate vocabulary. Handwriting is always legible. The few spelling mistakes do not impede understanding. | 3 | 3 |

Entry 1 Script F
Task 3

(About 20 minutes)

Your English class is talking about the summer. Your teacher asks you to write about what you like to do in the summer.

Write about 50 words.

I play football in the summer, and I go whis my friends

to the ceniam and then go to the gme.

I go to the defrent city for fun useally go swimm

oll friend go to the holleuday

oll friend is defrent country

I spek Einglish for my Eing

Entry 1 Script F Task 3

| Commentary | | Band | Mark |
|----------------|---|------|----------|
| Text focus | Candidate shows awareness of the basic idea of the task, but there are instances of incoherence. | 2 | 4 |
| Sentence focus | Some evidence of ability to construct compound sentences, but sentence boundaries not always clear. | 2 | 2 |
| Word focus | Spelling frequently causes confusion, e.g. 'whis', 'ceniam', 'Eing'. | 1 | 1 |