
AS

English Language

Language and the Individual
Report on the Examination

7701/1
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General

It was very clear that students of all abilities could access the data provided for the 2018 series. The key differentiating factors were the students' linguistic knowledge and their ability to analyse and interpret language features in relation to representation. A problem which arose in the 2016 series was that students were producing uneven responses in terms of quality, depth and length across the three questions (with question 3 often the weakest response – often linked to timing issues). However, this series saw students appear to manage their time far more effectively and marks across all questions were far more comparable.

Textual Variations and Representations

Question 1

Assessment objectives for Question 1:

AO1:

Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression (10 marks).

AO3:

Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning (15 marks)

Question 1 invited students to write about meanings and representations in an extract taken from the 'Clip 'n' Climb' website. Students of all abilities showed a clear awareness of mode, purpose and audience. Many students, for example, wrote about the dual purpose of inform and persuade and recognised the wide range of audiences which the website could appeal to (young people, adults, and parents). It is also very pleasing to report that the number of students who tried very hard to focus on representation further improved this year. For AO3, students commented with confidence on the representation of:

- Clip 'n' Climb as a fun activity
- Clip 'n' Climb as a challenging activity
- Clip 'n' Climb as an activity open to all ages
- Clip 'n' Climb as a new and fresh activity

- The staff at Clip 'n' Climb
- The importance of safety at Clip 'n' Climb
- The text receiver and producer.

Focusing solely on these representation and contextual factors is a feature of band 2 of the mark scheme and centres should remind students of the need to exemplify such points by referencing specific examples from the data (AO1). It is important that students link language features with meanings and representation. Centres are reminded again of the need to reference the data when discussing AO3 if students are to achieve a mark in levels 3 and above (the criteria for level 3 clearly states 'link specific language choices with an aspect of context').

To ensure the link between AO1 and AO3 is embedded throughout a response, students could begin planning their response by firstly identifying the various representations within a text and then annotating the data to find appropriate language features to support their points. This will ensure that representation is at the heart of the response and that the language features identified are relevant.

With regard to identifying these specific language features for AO1, almost all students used some linguistic terminology – very few students relied on using ‘the word’ in place of the precise term. In line with the mark scheme, students were rewarded for this accurate identification. Students also need to be aware of the need to identify features which are of value to the task rather than any ‘random’ feature they have found (starting with representation in their planning will help this). Most importantly, all students should also be encouraged to be precise when identifying specific language features. Importantly, precision will be rewarded more than range. Real precision when labelling an appropriate number of relevant language features is far better than using more general terms in a wide range of less relevant features. For example they will be rewarded for precision when identifying a ‘deontic modal verb’ rather than just a ‘verb’; they will get greater credit for labelling an example as a ‘relative clause’ rather than using the term ‘clause’. Whilst the latter examples in these two scenarios will still be rewarded for AO1, students who achieved the highest marks offered that extra level of precision. In addition to being precise, students who scored highly for AO1 also identified patterns. As an example of this, they recognised that language features do not always work in isolation and that a particular representation was achieved by, for example, the combined use of the second person pronoun, a modal verb and a noun phrase.

Question 2

Assessment objectives for Question 2:

AO1:

Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression (10 marks)

AO3:

Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning (15 marks)

With regard to question 2, many of the generic points about AO1 and AO3 in question 1 are applicable once again: the most successful students identified a range of language features for AO1 and explored AO3 in detail covering genre, audience, purpose and representation. Students, for example, discussed with confidence the genre of the data and the various interactive aspects associated with this genre. Once again the best responses considered and analysed a range of representations and how these representations differed depending on the individual posters:

- The positive and negative representations of Clip ‘n’ Climb
 - As a fun and exciting place
 - As an attraction which can be enjoyed by all ages
 - As a place where safety is important
 - As a place which is not value for money
 - As a company whose website is misleading
- Self-representation of the various posters.

With regard to AO1, the students who achieved the lower marks tended to, yet again, use general terms such as ‘word’ or used linguistic terminology without any exemplification. It is important for schools and colleges to realise that to be credited for AO1 the student must give an example and label it accurately. Once again, the most successful students made judicious choices when identifying a good range of language features.

Q1 and Q2: A Summary

To summarise, best practice was seen in questions 1 and 2 when students:

- structured their response based on various representations
- supported their points about representation with specific and relevant language features, using precise and accurate linguistic terminology when labelling.

Less successful responses for questions 1 and 2 included:

- a lack of precision when writing about language
- a lack of exemplification for AO1
- limited discussion of representation
- writing about context without any reference to the data.

Question 3

Assessment objective for Question 3:

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods (20 marks)

In the first series, a general pattern emerged of students possibly running out of time and the responses not being reflective of their ability or comparative to their achievement in Q1 and Q2. As noted in the introduction to this report, this has improved over the past two series with many students responding very positively to the comparative task. Stronger responses made a series of valid connections involving linguistic features well as context and content. Students explored similarities and differences and such students also exemplified their points on language features that linked the texts. Centres should note that such links and references to language are indicative of the higher bands in the mark scheme.

Less successful responses relied on paraphrasing the two texts or focusing only on content and contextual similarities and differences.

It was pleasing to see that very few students were awarded 1-3 marks; the vast majority of students did manage at least ‘one/two explicit connections’ in their response and even those who fell into this category were very much in the minority.

It is also important for centres to note that students are not penalised for repeating any points or examples from questions 1 and 2.

To summarise, best practice in Q3 was seen when students:

- compared and contrasted language, context and content offering a range of connections

- exemplified their discussion with specific language features, integrating linguistic knowledge into their comparisons
- linked language to context as part of their comparison.

Less successful responses to Q3 included:

- a focus solely on content to compare and contrast.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.