

# AS LEVEL

*Candidate Style Answers with commentary*

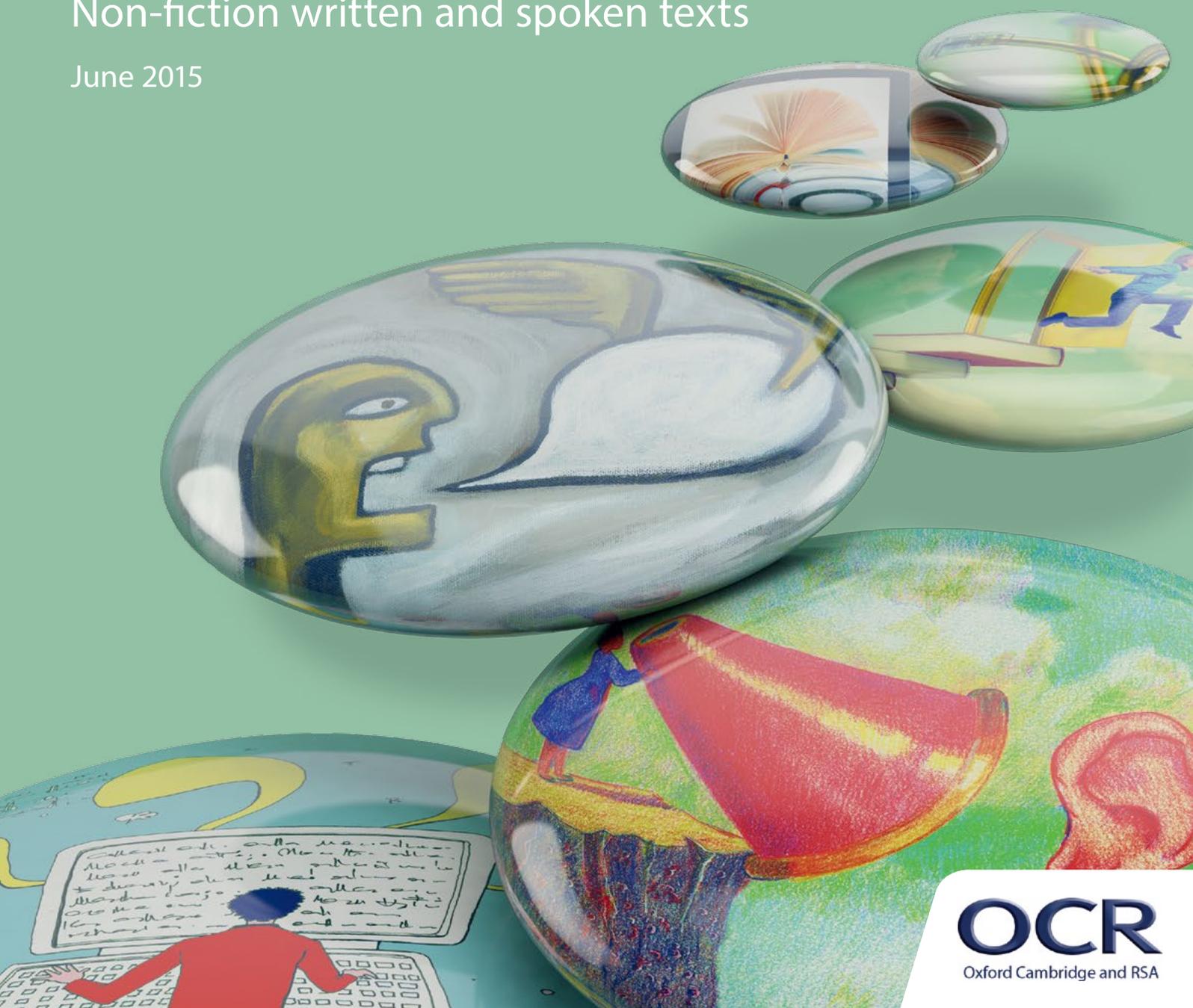
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# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (EMC)

Component 01

Non-fiction written and spoken texts

June 2015



# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
SECTION A: READING SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NON-FICTION	4
SECTION B: WRITING NON-FICTION	7



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# INTRODUCTION

These 'candidate style answers' have been written by subject experts to support teachers in interpreting the new OCR AS level Language and Literature (EMC) specification and sample assessment materials. These responses have been written to exemplify a good, or excellent, response to each question, but it is important to note that they were **not** written by AS level candidates. Exemplars of actual examination scripts and non-exam assessment tasks will be provided when they are available after the first examination series.

As these responses have not been through a full standardisation and moderation process, they have not been given a final mark or a grade. Instead they are presented as 'higher level' responses that clearly demonstrate features of a Level 5 and / or Level 6 response. Please also refer to the marking criteria in the AS level Language and Literature Sample Assessment Materials when reading these 'candidate style answers'.

Please note that this resource is provided as guidance only and does not constitute an indication of endorsed answers or grading.



## SECTION A: READING SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NON-FICTION

Text A is an extract from Horrible Histories CBeebies TV programme about prehistoric times.

Text B is an extract from the BBC TV live commentary on a snowboarding event at the Sochi Winter Olympics.

### 1. Compare the ways in which the writers or speakers use language to present the events they are describing.

In your answer you should consider:

- context
- mode and genre
- purpose and audience.

Text A is a scripted spoken text aimed at a TV audience of children. Its purpose is to both inform and entertain its audience. Text B is a transcript of a live commentary on an Olympic snowboarding event aimed at a general audience, albeit one interested in sport, particularly snowboarding. **Despite these differences in mode and audience, the many shared characteristics, in language, register and structure show that Text A is a deliberate generic parody of the sports commentary context exemplified by Text B.**<sup>1</sup>

In Text B the register and conventions of sports commentary are used throughout, with two speakers commenting on a live event in the form of a conversation. **The language is generally informal with ellipsis ('it's not...' 'That was...oh he's gone down!') and hedges ('And that') included which emphasise the unscripted nature of the text.**<sup>2</sup> **Both texts also use non-verbal sounds, which underline their live – or apparently live – context, such as 'ta-ta-da' and 'uh-oh.'**<sup>3</sup>

**The transcript in Text B suggests that Ed Leigh takes the agenda-setting position, using rhetorical and actual questions to elicit responses from Tim Warwood, such as 'Can Shaun White handle the pressure?' His slightly controversial question, 'How badly did he sit down here?' leads Tim Warwood to disagree partially in his response 'Well he gets the grab' 'Oh I don't know', introducing more drama to the commentary.**<sup>4</sup>

**In contrast, apart from a summary introduction from the anchor, Text A is in the form of a monologue by Bob Hale. The writers have introduced some of the genre conventions seen in the unscripted text, with dramatic exclamations 'But not for long!' and rhetorical questions 'Do you recognise this fellow?' that echo the conversational two-person live commentary and introduce drama. Adjacency pairs ('goodbye Stone Age, hello Bronze Age') are also used to make the tone seem more conversational.**<sup>5</sup>

#### 1. A03/A04:

Understanding of contextual factors related to purpose and similarities and differences between the texts.

#### 2. A01/A02:

Reference to characteristics of spoken discourse, use of appropriate terminology e.g. ellipsis, hedges.

#### 3. A02/A04:

Use of phonology to show similarities between the texts in relation to the context of the broadcast.

#### 4. A02/A04:

Features of interaction in spoken discourse related to the context of a co-commentary.

#### 5. A04/A02:

Comparison between texts related to grammatical and lexical features.



The News Anchor's introduction and handover locate Text A firmly in the genre of TV commentary, which we also see in Ed Leigh's opening and closing comments in Text B, where he provides a brief introduction to Shaun White and then summarises all the scores at the end.<sup>6</sup> His use of metaphor in these introductory remarks - 'The king of snowboarding. His throne is under threat' - suggests that some of his comments may have been pre-scripted for insertion at appropriate moments.<sup>7</sup>

This is in contrast to the many characteristics of spoken discourse throughout both texts. There is turntaking: 'How badly does he sit down here? / Well, he gets the grab,' 'Bob. / Thanks Anne.' Some unfinished or elliptical sentences: 'Huge backside air. Bit of a sketch there, Front side 1080. That was...oh he's gone down.' And repetition: 'it's bigger than that. Always bigger than that.' 'Now the replay...the replay is key.'<sup>8</sup> Although ellipsis and repetition indicate spontaneity, there are not very many examples, even in unscripted Text B, suggesting that both speakers are experienced commentators.<sup>9</sup>

In both texts we see a variety of sentence types, such as imperatives: 'Sit back and watch this'; exclamations: 'There it is!'; 'He's gone down now!'; interrogatives: 'Can Shaun White handle this?' and rhetorical questions: 'how did he land that?'; 'And why?'<sup>10</sup> This range of sentence types, in addition to declaratives, helps to create interactivity between the speakers in Text B, and between speakers and the audience in both texts.<sup>11</sup>

The language used in Text B is very informal, with some colloquial usage throughout: 'yanking', 'bum' and 'alley-ooop'. This informality is in keeping with the purpose of sports commentary, to provide a more informed explanation of an event to a general audience in an accessible manner. However, both speakers also use some subject-specific lexis throughout - 'backside air', 'Double McTwist', 'gets the grab' - which assumes a certain level of familiarity from the audience. The combination of informal and specialist lexis within the discourse works to invite the audience into an exclusive club of snowboarding aficionados, even if this exclusivity is more impressionistic than actual.<sup>12</sup>

This combination of informal and specialist lexis is also used in Text A, which marks the text as a parody of live commentary.<sup>13</sup> In this case, Bob Hale mixes idiomatic expressions like 'hard as nails' and informal expressions, 'gets a few jobs done', with specialist historical terms like Stone Age, Neanderthal and Homo heidelbergensis.

Text A also inserts vague language into sentences alongside precise descriptors, which makes the text appear more spontaneous and for humorous effect: 'Yes, Homo sapiens, our great great great great tons of million grandparents'

In Text A, the combination of the specialist with humour also helps to simplify the information for a young audience.<sup>14</sup>

**6. A04/A03:** Comparison of similarities between texts related to the context of television conventions.

**7. A02/A02:** Exploration of use of language for effect contextualised in relation to the semi-prepared nature of the live commentary.

**8. A04/A02:** Comparison of features of spoken discourse.

**9. A03:** Effective commentary on wider contextual factors.

**10. A01:** Appropriate use of terminology e.g. Imperatives, interrogatives.

**11. A03/A04:** Comparison sentence structure of texts, related to the interaction between speakers and audience in a broadcasting context.

**12. A01/A02/A03:** Effective commentary on lexis related to wider contextual factors/ audience appeal.

**13. A04:** Similarities between texts.

**14. A02/A03:** Effective commentary on lexis related to wider contextual factors/ audience appeal.



As well as serving to underline the genre conventions, the mixture of register in Text A also contributes greatly to the humour, where serious factual data is undercut by jokes, puns and repetition. Rhyming pairs ('mean and 'lean', 'tons of fun') and punning repetitions, 'it's cold like ice for an age. It's called an Ice Age', are also reminiscent of the slightly clichéd language of sports commentary. They also serve the purpose of the text which is to present history in an entertaining manner to a young audience.<sup>15</sup>

15. Effective commentary on lexis related to wider contextual/generic factors and appeal to a specific audience.

Overall comment:

This is a strong response that fluently compares the two texts, and explores their audience and purpose; it makes thorough reference to language features of grammar and lexis and considers contextual factors.



## SECTION B: WRITING NON-FICTION

4. Write about an aspect of your daily routine in the style of a sports commentary for T.V. or radio. Your purpose is to entertain the audience.

**Well, good morning and welcome to this year's annual first day of term pentathlon.<sup>1</sup>**

You join us just as the plucky Stoke Newington contestant is limbering up for the first of these challenging events. And to recap, she will have to complete the Getting out of Bed, Eating Breakfast, Getting Dressed, Catching the Bus and Arriving at School events with near-perfect scores to stand a chance of reaching the medal table. **Emma, you've seen her in training, what are her chances?<sup>2</sup>**

EMMA: Yes Gabi, **it's a big ask, but she's a tough cookie, so maybe she's in with a fighting chance.<sup>3</sup>** Last season she was handicapped by both **a faulty toaster and slow-walking friends<sup>4</sup>** but she's done a lot of work with Dad, **her trainer,<sup>5</sup>** over the summer so ...<sup>6</sup>

**GABI: Oh that was the alarm so we're off! And that was a beautifully curved arm arc there as she turns off the alarm but, oh dear, slight fumble on the glasses. Will the judges spot that?<sup>7</sup>**

EMMA: I'm afraid they will but she does recover well with a complicated **double leg swing<sup>8</sup>** into the slippers and gets the glasses right in place. What a trooper!

**1. A03:** Use of generic opening suited to context of sports commentary.

**2. A03/A05:** Cohesive links between sections, drawing on turn taking conventions of TV presenting.

**3.A03:** Deliberate use of colloquial language/ cliché;

**A05:** Co-ordinating conjunctions (but, so) used to create balanced sentence.

**4.A05:** Expanded noun phrases add detail concisely.

**5. A05:** Subordinate clause used for comic effect.

**6. A03:** Interruption shown through ellipsis conveys spontaneity of sports commentary.

**7. A05:** Variety of sentence types used (exclamatory, declarative, interrogatory).

**8. A03/A05:** Effective parodic use of technical terms associated with sports.



GABI: The glasses are crucial here, aren't they, especially now the course has the cat on the stairs to overcome.

EMMA: It's a tricky one but she glances past and bounds down the stairs... oooh she didn't see the ball at the bottom and has really tumbled there. **That's gonna**<sup>9</sup> seriously eat into her time on **the next event, the Eating Breakfast.**<sup>10</sup>

GABI: **She's in now, she's in the kitchen! What is she doing? I think this is new. Yes!**<sup>11</sup> She has skipped the toast which used to give her so much trouble and has completely changed her routine to go down the cereal route. What will that do to the scores?

EMMA: **Well that is just...**<sup>12</sup> I wasn't expecting that at all. **The scoring is based on a mixture of execution and difficulty.**<sup>13</sup> So she's hedged her bets on this one going for an easier move with the cereal but she'll have to score very high on execution. But that double pour of milk and corn flakes was a beauty so she may just get away with it.

GABI: **The camera just zooming in on Dad in the crowd and he's clearly pleased with that one.**<sup>14</sup> Good tactical decision there I'd say.

EMMA: It's very early to call it, but I think this change of coach will make a big impact. There was a lot of whispering about flare-ups with her previous coach, **Mum,**<sup>15</sup> so I hope this change will be positive for her. It's always ....

GABI: **Sorry to interrupt but she's on now to Getting Dressed.**<sup>16</sup> But, oh no! She's been called back to the kitchen to put her bowl in the dishwasher. **Disaster! That's a huge error. Will she argue with that call? She looks like...but no, she's thought better of it and is pressing on. Good girl.**<sup>17</sup> So now she has to make up a lot of time on the next event.

**9. A05:** Deliberate use of colloquial language to convey informality of context.

**10. A05:** Thematic link throughout the commentary, maintains overall textual cohesion. Use of definite article for humorous effect.

**11. A03/A05:** Use of short sentences, repetition, questions and exclamations to convey spontaneity and drama of the situation.

**12. A03:** Use of sentence fragment and ellipsis to convey spontaneous speech.

**13. A05:** Continued use of context specific lexis sustains and develops overall theme.

**14. A03:** Use of contextual conventions of the sports broadcast to add realism.

**15. A05:** Effective use of subordinate clause provides a 'call-back' to an earlier joke, developing overall textual cohesion.

**16. A03:** Continued/consistent use of cohesive devices to link sections of the text and move the description on.

**17. A03/A05:** Selective use of similar sentence structures appropriate to the context throughout the text provides consistency and supports overall cohesion.



EMMA: Well this is one she really excels at. She's prepared well for this so I expect good things. Yes! Lovely **flip-up tights entry**<sup>18</sup> there and she's straight into the shirt. I do want to point out the new elastic cuff buttons, a technical innovation that many competitors are using this year.

GABI: That will help them gain valuable seconds won't it? Although there have been questions raised on whether performance-enhancing equipment is allowed in this event. **I'm surprised the judges have let them in to be frank.**

**EMMA: You have to move with the times, Gabi. In years past trousers weren't allowed in the women's pentathlon, but now they're an accepted part of the sport. Do they enhance performance? Arguably yes but...**<sup>19</sup>

GABI: Ok the scrunchies are on and now she's being helped on with her schoolbag and she's ready for **the speed section of the pentathlon, the Catching the Bus.**<sup>20</sup> And here she really needs to work with her team-mates in getting in formation on the way to the bus stop.

EMMA: **Yes and there has been a lot of movement in Team Stoke Newington since their disastrous performance last season. So here you see them all converging at the end of the road, that's beautiful choreography from the coaching team and they're into the sprint with Wright at the front, closely followed by Sherman and Kidjowski.**<sup>21</sup>

**GABI: The Hornsey team are coming in from the north side there so they'll need to keep that pace up. And here it comes! The bus is already in sight and they're nowhere near the bus stop. Wright now makes the break to really sprint and she's got to get across the main road through the traffic. I don't think she can do it!**<sup>22</sup>

EMMA: **No! Yes! She's there! She's caught the bus. How did she do it?**<sup>23</sup>

GABI: So that's Wright on the bus in a dramatic finish **to the penultimate event.**<sup>24</sup> Wow, what a morning!

Overall comment:

This is a very effective, entertaining piece that follows the conventions of a sports commentary with a high degree of control of the chosen techniques and awareness of the ways language varies according to contextual factors.

**18. A05:** Parodic use of context specific lexis sustains acts as call-back to earlier examples and sustains overall theme.

**19. A05:** Effective and controlled shift between wider reflection/discussion and description of the event between the two commentators.

**20. A05:** Theme of 'pentathlon' events again returned to as cohesive device to structure the commentary.

**21. A05:** Effective management of shifts in tense for clarity.

**22. A03/A05:** Viewpoint of commentators sustained throughout the piece, effectively using vocabulary and sentence structure to consistently suggest spontaneous speech appropriate to the generic context.

**23. A05:** Use of exclamations and rhetorical question to create drama appropriate to context.

**24. A05:** Final use of 'events' as a reference chain running through the whole commentary as a cohesive device.



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