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GCSE (9–1)
Candidate Exemplar Responses

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

J351
For first teaching in 2015

Exploring effects and impact

Component 02

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Introduction

These candidate exemplar responses accompany the OCR GCSE (9-1) English Language J351 specification for first teaching from September 2015.

OCR has produced this resource to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE English Language specification and to bridge the gap between new specification release for first teaching from September 2015 and availability of exemplar candidate work following first examination in summer 2017.

These responses have been provided to help to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and to provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. These responses have been written by students in the first year of a legacy GCSE English course and demonstrate what a lower to middle response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions. The questions addressed in this document are taken from the sample assessment materials for Component 2, Exploring effects and impact: Section A: Reading, questions 2-4 and Section B: Writing, question 5.

As these responses have not been through full standardisation ahead of formal grade setting for the new specification in 2017, they have not been graded. There are instead, indications of what band level responses might include, in accordance with the mark scheme.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

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COMPONENT 2: EXPLORING EFFECTS AND IMPACT

Question 2

Look again at lines 12–21.

How does Clive James use language and structure to make his description of Mr Ryan's lesson entertaining?

You should use relevant subject terminology to support your answer. **[6 marks]**

One assessment objective is assessed in this task:

AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

He is **excited**[1] because something dangerous happened which caused a massive panic. 'Mr Ryan came away never to return.' **The use of the word 'never'**[2] shows a **negative**[3] tone and the quote is very over dramatic. This shows exaggeration which **in the lesson must have been entertaining**[4]**.**

Clive James uses language techniques **'shocked, scorched and gassed'**[5]. This suggests that is was hot and smokey, **emphasised by use of sibilance and rule of three**[6] . He also uses **metaphors**[7] 'Mr Ryan looked like a greek god'. He can't really look like a Greek God.

1. Not quite excited.

2. Good precise focus on a specific word.

3. Lacks precision – what kind of negative?

4. Focussed on what makes the lesson entertaining not what makes the writing entertaining.

5. Good precise quotation.

6. Relevant subject terminology.

7. "Like a Greek god" is a simile.

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James uses **irony**[8] to make the description humorous 'Certainly you had to be more careful than he was'. He also uses a **comparison**[9] to show how bad his new teacher was **to make Ryan's lessons seem more entertaining**[10]. 'Mary Luke, having ruined science for a whole generation of school boys, came back from the shadows to ruin science for me.'

8. Perceptive comment about a more sophisticated way that the text is entertaining.

9. It is repetition not comparison.

10. The focus of the response is again skewed towards what makes the lesson entertaining.

He uses **long sentences**[11] s to show how exciting/ how much drama is in the lesson. 'Wreathed by dense smoke, the stunned Mr Ryan looked like…' the 's' suggests **there is so much excitement in the lesson you have to wait to fit it all in**[12]. He uses **a lot of descriptive words to show the entertainment**[13].

11. A difficult concept to exemplify – looking at the kinds of connectives used would provide a more focused analysis.

12. Attempts to engage with structure.

13. Too vague and general.

He **shows that Mr Ryan's lessons were entertaining**[14] by showing that the teacher did a lot of dangerous experiments for the children's enjoyment. He also uses sentences like 'Certainly you had to be more careful than he was' which makes the teacher sound like he doesn't really follow the rules of having potassium in water. **The scene went from Mr Ryan telling the children to be more careful to the entire supply of potassium being dropped into the water by Mr Ryan. There is a sense of irony in this**[15].

14. Good try at linking back to the question but not quite the right sort of entertaining.

15. Shows good awareness of how structure is used to entertain.

Commentary:

Although the candidate tends to focus on what makes the lesson entertaining there is some implicit understanding of how the writer has used language to make the piece entertaining. There are clear links made between the writer's purposes and particular choices of language but a less clear focus on the impact on the reader. There is some accurate use of relevant subject terminology but the explanations of what the writer wants to convey are not always precise or accurate enough. There is more about language than structure but the last paragraph makes some perceptive comments about the writer's use of contrast. The comments about irony are particularly insightful and show elements of Level 3 but the lack of precision is more characteristic of Level 2.

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Question 3

Look again at lines 1–23.

Explore how the writer presents Miss Brodie's attitude towards Miss Mackay, the headmistress.

Support your ideas by referring to the language and structure of this section, using relevant subject terminology. [12 marks]

One assessment objective is assessed in this task:

AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

In the text it is implied that Miss Brodie looks down on her school pupils, I have assumed this by **'I don't believe in talking down to children'** [16]. We could assume that she really means 'don't' but in fact she does.

Miss Brodie seems to have a dislike[17] **towards Miss Mackay**[18]. As Miss Mackay leaves, the writer says 'Miss Brodie looked hard at the door for a long time.' The writer uses **the word 'hard'**[19] which is **a harsh word suggesting solid, strong**[20]. This shows that Miss Brodie was **showing her hate through an evil face expression**[21]. It also seems there is a competition between them. 'Miss Brodie passed behind her with her head up'. **By lifting her 'head up' indicates Miss Brodie is making a statement: up suggests higher, more important** [22]**.**

The writer makes Miss Brodie seem like she is a higher rank than Miss Mackay. 'Miss Brodie passed behind her with her head held high.' **'high' suggests she is the boss in charge**[23]. The writer makes Miss Brodie being a teacher seem like a higher rank than the headteacher.

16. A relevant quotation is used but the implicit criticism of Miss Mackay is not made clear.

17. Should make it clearer that this links to the word "attitude" in the question.

18. A clear summary of the main point of the passage.

19. Good focus on specific choices of vocabulary.

20. Attempts an explanation but not clear or relevant enough.

21. A perceptive point though not elegantly expressed.

22. These comments are precise and perceptive and rooted solidly in the text.

23. Another perceptive comment rooted in the text but begins to repeat the same idea.

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The writer (Muriel Spark) shows us that Miss Brodie does not like Miss Mackay by her saying, or rather **repeating, what Miss Mackay has said. 'Are we downhearted, no.' When a person does this, they are mocking the person who said it first**[24] in a way of subtley indicating that they do not agree with what they do or say. **In the fourth**[25] Miss Brodie **closes the open door with 'upmost meaning' which gives you the idea that Miss Brodie slammed the door with annoyance and sarcasm**[26]. Spark's presentation of Miss Brodie's attitude is portrayed in her actions and speech.

24. Perceptive interpretation of less obvious details from the text.

25. Begins to locate the quotation more precisely.

26. Good attempt to comment on precisely selected quotation – annoyance yes but sarcasm maybe not.

Miss Brodie passes by the headmistress with her **head up**[27] which could show that she does not respect the head as much as she should by showing that she is the 'head' of her class. Also when the head walked out, she was staring at the door 'hard' which could mean that **she was looking quite cold and unhappy because her lesson was disturbed**[28]. Another thing was that she was repeating what the head has told the girls which could mean that **she felt like it was her that was supposed to say this not the head**[29].

27. Begins to repeat quotations with a slightly different spin. It would be better to put these comments together or at least asterisk additional thoughts. More planning before writing may have helped with the organisation of the response.

28. A better interpretation than earlier.

29. Another comment on a quotation already used.

Miss Brodie seems to have **a mimicking attitude towards Miss Mackay. She says 'Are we downhearted, no, are we downhearted, no.' It seems she is mocking what Miss Mackay says**[30].

30. Repetition of earlier quotation and comment.

Commentary

The candidate organises the response clearly and each paragraph is relevant to the question but there are no clear signposts using the word "attitude" to link what is said more clearly and explicitly. Their understanding shows some elements of Level 4 because it begins to develop answers in more detail than in Q2. There is nothing about structure, however, and, towards the end, the candidate begins to repeat the same ideas. There is also too little relevant subject terminology to award it a mark in Level 4.

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Question 4

'In these texts school is **presented**[31] as a **challenging**[32] place for the pupils.'

How far do you agree[33] with this statement?

In your answer you should:

- discuss your impressions of **the pupils' various experiences**[34] at school
- explain what you find **unusual**[35] about their school environment
- **compare**[36] the ways the writers present the pupils' experiences of school.

Support your response with quotations from both texts. **[18 marks]**

Two assessment objectives are assessed in this task:

AO3: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.

AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

31. Key word points towards critical aspect of the task.

32. Key word – needs to be addressed explicitly in the answer.

33. This phrase is meant to prompt evaluation and hints that there should be some counter-argument, i.e. reasons why school is not challenging.

34. Must be addressed in the answer.

35. Another key word – there should be at least one paragraph on what is "unusual".

36. Comparison AO3 is worth 6 marks out of 18 so should be a significant part of the answer.

In text 1 school seems quite challenging due to the fact children **are getting moved away from their friends**[37]. 'Disaster struck on the first day.' The use of **the word 'disaster'**[38] is **a powerful word which shows us that he has strong feelings**[39] to what the school has done.

37. Identifies a "challenging" aspect of school life.

38. Good focus on a key word. This repeats an idea from the first task. There is no penalty for this because the candidate is doing something different with it. **(AO4)**

39. This comment is a little vague – what kind of powerful? What kind of strong?

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My impression of the student[40] in text 1 is that he likes to exaggerate, we know this by him saying 'Mr Ryan was carried away never to return.' The word **'never' shows that he is acting over the top**[41] because it is a powerful use of language. In text 2 it seems to be the teachers that have more of an issue with each other. We know this because the way **Miss Brodie changes around the head teacher**[42]. She doesn't want to be rude but makes it known that it is her class and her classroom. 'With her head up, up' shows she is **confident with herself and her classroom**[43] but she doesn't want to be too full on. **There is quite a big contrast between the two texts. It doesn't say much about the pupils in text 2 but text 1 is much more about how the pupils feel**[44].

I agree a lot[45] with this statement. At school there is a lot of challenge and it can be tough for students. A lot of students enjoy and succeed in lessons because of the teacher. In text 1 he 'was coping with Physics and Chemistry well enough while Mr Ryan was still teaching'. The teacher has a massive effect on how well you will do. **I find the strange thing is that there is a type of rivalry between the teachers and students individually**[46]. You don't see a lot of teachers that can barely stand the sight of each other. 'Miss Brodie **passed behind her with her head up, up**[47] and shut the door with the utmost meaning.'

I do agree with this statement. My impression of Clive's experiences are that he had a hard time trying to fit in with his friends. 'Nobody looked up to me any longer.' This implies he is upset. **For Muriel Spark I agree but in a different way that the teachers feel it's all about them, not the pupils**[48].

40. Begins to address the impact on the reader.

41. A possible misinterpretation – the teacher did never come back.

42. The relevance of this point needs to be made clearer.

43. The beginnings of a good point – it needs to be more precisely expressed, however.

44. Shows a general awareness of how the texts differ in relation to the task. **(AO3)**

45. Attempts to respond to the "how far" part of the question. **(AO4)**

46. Needs to signpost more clearly the transition between the two texts.

47. Keeps returning to this quotation – should try to look at other details from the text to avoid a response that is too limited.

48. Another general comment about how the texts differ. **(AO3)**

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I do agree quite far[49] with this statement. For example in text 2 **when the girl could not answer the question**[50] she was called 'stupid' by the teacher. 'Stupid as ever' this shows a **disrespect**[51] to other students because she is the teacher so she should make sure that the children know what to do and are smart. Also referring **to the words 'as ever' this could show that the teacher does not believe in the child's learning and shows that it's not the first time**[52] the girl did such a thing. This shows that the teacher was very cold hearted and always gives her personal opinion on everything.

I think the writer from **Unreliable Memoirs goes into more depth about school life because they described what happened outside of lessons**[53]. The quote 'But he was always surrounded by lots of new friends'. This shows that **James maybe didn't have new friends**[54] around him and **James looked different**[55] to what Carnaby did and Carnaby made more friends because of this. This text shows that school is a **challenging**[56] place for pupils. The writer from The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie **doesn't really go into depth**[57] about school life being challenging. But I think for the two new girls it could be challenging. The quote **'You will get used to our ways'** [58] shows that **there past school life could be different to the school there in now**[59] . I think the writers describe the schools differently because schools now wouldn't do what they did like not doing lessons when your meant to. The first text fitted with the statement but I don't think text 2 did.

Yes I think that this is true. 'Disaster struck on the first day'. Clive James faced a challenge straight away in finding new friends. In text 2 it says 'Mary did not know. 'Stupid as ever' said Miss Brodie'. Both these students are clearly struggling and getting no help[60].

49. Attempts to evaluate. **(AO4)**

50. Good to precisely locate the quotation in this way. **(AO4)**

51. Along with cold-hearted these words attempt to express what it is that makes schools challenging. **(AO4)**

52. A very precise interpretation of a well-selected quotation. **(AO4)**

53. Another good general comparison. **(AO3)**

54. Not quite accurate.

55. A reasonable comment but not clear enough about how James looked different from Carnaby.

56. Needs to use this word as a signpost more often.

57. An implicit link with the previous paragraph.

58. Good selection of a particularly relevant quotation.

59. A fairly straightforward comment shows a general understanding of the quotation's significance. **(AO4)**

60. Begins to repeat ideas in the same way as for Q3.

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I agree strongly[61] with this statement, both texts give **good impressions of the pupils**[62], it shows that they are smart and hard working, I get the impression that they are working at **very strict schools with high expectations. I find it unusual that in text 2 the windows have to be open six inches**[63]. I also find it **unusual**[64] that the students and teachers get away with quite a lot in text 1, they play with fire and various chemicals, nearly suffocated everyone and burnt down the school and no one battered an eye lid. **The writer from text 1 showed that the students had a laid back and entertaining experience at school. Compared to the writer in text 2, they showed that the students had very strict teachers with a very uptight, hardworking experience at school**[65].

61. Further link back to "How far…" **(AO4)**

62. Implicit response to impact on the reader. **(AO4)**

63. Good use of specific reference to back up a point. **(AO4)**

64. Attempts to address the "unusual" bullet point. **(AO4)**

65. Begins to make slightly more precise comparisons between the texts. **(AO3)**

Commentary:

The candidate clearly tries to engage with the evaluation aspect of the task and uses comparison in some small ways to support that evaluation. A good range of quotations is used but key words and phrases within a longer quotation are not always identified. There is some clear discussion of the purposes writer may have had when choosing to express their ideas in a certain way but the impact on the reader is addressed only implicitly when discussing the implications of particular choices of word. The candidate begins to make some general comparisons between the texts with some more specific comments towards the end but does not even begin to compare how the writers have expressed themselves. Overall, this response shows some elements of Level 3 work but is hindered by the lack of detailed comparisons.

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Question 5

Imagine you are writing your autobiography. Describe your experiences of starting a new school.

You could write about:

- **the people that made the biggest impression on you**
- **the ways in which you behaved**
- **the way that you feel about those events now.** **[40 marks]**

Two assessment objectives are assessed in this task:

AO5:

- Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences
- Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Well[66] I'm John and I am in High School. I was living in Plymouth **when**[67] I was in Year 2 and 1 and then I moved to Rugby. I don't know why it was Rugby, **yes**[68], I have family that live nearby but that's a 25-30 minute drive. Well **when**[69] I started my new school I was quite nervous I didn't know anyone but after about a few hours into my school day a lad called Shaun said 'do you wanna sit with me?' Shaun began to be my best friend, after school my mum would pick me up with my little brother Sam (very annoying) and we would walk to the car and drive home it was about five minutes and **occasionally**[70] we would walk home, just to look around. Some days I would go down the park with my family and Shaun's family we were there for about two hour each time we went. **Eight months went quickly**[71] and I was about to go into the Junior School. When I got there it looked quite big. Again I had to make new friends but I still had Shaun. When I was in Year 6 I was told I would be going to High School. I knew it was gonna happen at some point but it just seemed to happen so quickly. I choose to go to -----. I met new people again and I was split up from Shaun. I was getting used to meeting new friends and **before I knew it, bang, I'm in Year 9. Where have all the years of my life gone!**[72]

66. Although it may be good to include some colloquialisms, the use of "well" seems inappropriate in this context. **(AO5)**

67. Beginning to use complex sentences. **(AO6)**

68. Again – not quite the right style and tone.

69. Needs to vary the connectives used in complex sentences.

70. Complex word spelled correctly. **(AO6)**

71. Should prompt a new paragraph.

72. A good attempt to vary sentence structure and vocabulary for effect. **(AO5/ AO6)**

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When I first came to this school it wasn't easy to fit in **especially**[73] when you don't know the language very well. The first two weeks were the hardest at lunch and break I usually stayed inside and sat in the classroom alone. People were different here and they behaved differently. There were some phrases that had a different meaning to them. It was hard to be friends with someone at first everybody was in groups, everybody had their own friends and people to hang out with. In a weird way I met and became friends with people in Math. I find that I have changed a lot since I came to this school. I was shy and held back at the beginning but now I start to have more confidence in myself and I have a group of really good friends who I spend most of my time with. We do a lot of fun stuff together and we always come up with the same things to do **we are never bored and always look out for each other.**[74]

73. Complex vocabulary spelled correctly. **(AO6)**

74. A limited sense of an ending.

Commentary:

The candidate does not seem to have a clear grasp of what the autobiographical form is like and has adopted a slightly inappropriate style at times. There is a sequence of sentences which would benefit from being divided further into coherent paragraphs joined by suitable connectives. The sentences themselves are sometimes complex but there is too much use of the word "when". Punctuation between sentences is usually accurate but less secure in ore complex sentence structures. Most of the vocabulary used is appropriate but too little of it is ambitious in any way. Overall, this piece of writing would earn its creator a good Level 2.

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