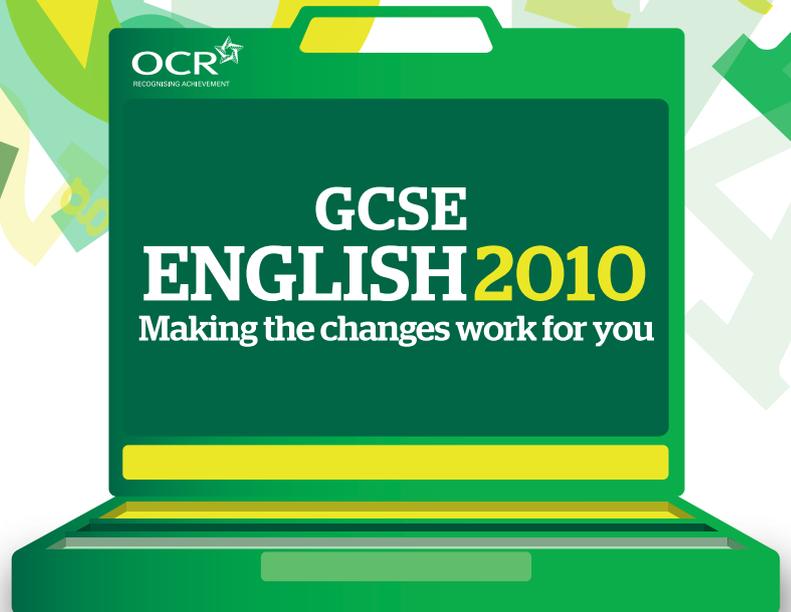


OCR GCSE in English/English Language written commentary and guidance

For English/English Language
Speaking and Listening DVD



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Introduction

Welcome to OCR's first Training and Guidance DVD for GCSE English and English Language Speaking and Listening, for first teaching in September 2010.

The DVD and this Commentary should be used in conjunction with the specifications for GCSE English and English Language and the Speaking and Listening marking criteria. The units covered are A643 GCSE English Unit 3 and A652 GCSE English Language Unit 2 Section A.

The DVD and this accompanying commentary and guidance are designed to support Centres in their delivery of these units and the Speaking and Listening marking criteria; in task setting and in their assessment of candidates' performances, applying the new criteria.

We will be looking at scenes from the legacy specification support material to show how tasks typically set will enable Centres to meet the new requirement of, "one activity must allow candidates to participate in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom". We will also be assessing performance against the new marking and assessment criteria.

All best practice of the 1900 specification: Speaking and Listening Unit should be continued into the new, including:

- multiple opportunities throughout the course be provided for candidates to develop and hone their skills and be assessed
- specific feedback on performance, linked to the criteria, given to candidates, involving them in the assessment process
- tasks planned and integrated into the overall structure of the course, rather than be "bolted on" activities
- an efficient method of recording marks and activities is maintained
- secure internal standardisation procedures in place

What stays the same and *what is different/new*

1 Entry options:

Candidates may be entered for January and/or June examination series.

There is a direct crossover between English A643 and English Language A652 Section A, so whilst assessment for Section A may be completed separately, entry must be made for the whole unit ie. Section A together with Section B: the Spoken Language Study.

2 Terminal rule:

Because the Units are controlled assessment units, Speaking and Listening may be used as part of the "terminal rule".

3 Record keeping:

Centres have appropriate recording procedures for candidates; formal and informal records are kept by Centres. OCR provides a Candidate Assessment form here for the purpose:

http://www.ocr.org.uk/download/forms/ocr_43219_form_gcse_2010.pdf

Many centres have developed their own on-going records and data tracking methods, which feed into the formal record sent as part of the sample to the external moderator.

4 Internal standardisation procedures:

Centres must have procedures in place to ensure that internal marking is standardised and that a reliable rank order of marks is sent to the external moderator. The internally set standard is judged against the agreed OCR standard by the use of filmed assessments from OCR and confirmed by visits to Centres.

5 Task setting:

Tasks/activities are Centre selected, subject to OCR approval, to cover the specification requirements. The three contexts continue.

The Range of Purpose triplets have gone. Within any of the three contexts, "one activity must allow candidates to participate in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom". The three contexts have a clearer focus: Individual Extended Contribution-Communicating and adapting language; Group Activity/Interaction-Interacting and responding; Drama-focussed Activity-Creating and sustaining roles.

6 Assessment:

The weighting of 20% of the final total is unchanged. The mark range of 0-40 is unchanged. The method of assessment is unchanged; the application of given criteria: centre assessed and externally moderated. The process for marking is unchanged; the most appropriate band fixed on and then, whether performance was top, middle or bottom of the band and finally a specific mark awarded. Visits to Centres will continue as part of the assessment and moderation process.

The assessment criteria are changed. There are fewer bands and the mark range within a band has changed. The final mark awarded is now based on a mathematical average, rather than a "best fit", balancing strengths and weaknesses from a bank of General Criteria. Now the three performances, one from each context, to be used for the final overall mark, are each marked out of 40; they are then totalled, giving a mark out of 120. The mark out of 120 is divided by 3 to provide the final mark. The relationship between bands/marks and grades has changed. There should be no assumption that a band equates to a grade.

7 Support:

Training and guidance material will continue to be issued to Centres. There will be an annual DVD, general guidance in the bi-annual Principal Moderator's Report to Centres and a programme of Advisory visits to Centres by external moderators.

Commentary on the material featured

The DVD menu is designed so that it may be used to look at types of activity; the context requirements and or the levels of performance.

As a resource it is hoped that it will support the work of all Centres and be available to all teachers delivering the new specifications.

Also as this is the first in a series of DVDs, it is hoped that Centres devise storage methods appropriate to their circumstances, so that these resources are kept for future reference and serve as a bank of material to be built up and considered across the life of the specification.

The following activities are seen:

1. **Jack – Individual Extended Contribution** on his role in the Youth Parliament.
2. **Kirsten and Kayleigh – Individual Extended Contribution:** joint presentation on breast cancer.
3. **Raj, Leanne, Charlotte and David – Group activity** on a healthy eating campaign.
4. **Joanna and Rhianne –Group activity** on “The Merchant of Venice”.
5. **Jack, Alex and Greg – Drama-focussed activity** based on “The Merchant of Venice”.
6. **Ben – Drama-focussed activity** based on the poem “Limbo”.
7. **Joanna – Individual Extended Contribution** making a bid for charity funding.
8. **Jordan –Individual Extended Contribution** making a bid for charity funding.
9. **Jordan, Kayleigh, Livia and Kirsten –Drama-focussed activity** based on work placements.
10. **James, Alice, Robyn and Ben P –Individual Extended Contribution** a series of personal facts.

1 Jack

Jack’s account of his speech given to the Youth Parliament and the answering of questions on the work of the Parliament hits the first strand in Band 1, with complex and demanding subject matter. In his presentation he employs a range of strategies to engage his audience and to communicate to them. Clearly structured, he presents a clear narrative, raising issues, making comparisons and posing rhetorical questions. His style of delivery is assured, employing a suitable degree of formality; the colloquialisms used are appropriate to his audience.

He answers questions fully and precisely, expanding on the straightforward questions and showing an ability to reflect before answering.

His use of written prompts is effective and unobtrusive.

The ending is rather abrupt and the line of argument presented in his account could be open to more direct challenge by a less “accepting” audience. However he is securely at the top end of Band 1, if not at the very top.

Band 1: a mark of 36.

2 Kirsten and Kayleigh

A joint presentation often gives moral support to weaker and or less confident candidates, and could therefore be used to build up skills and confidence in the early stages of the course.

Here the two candidates manage to share the presentation quite well; dividing content and delivery with a degree of equality.

Kirsten is the stronger in her confidence, looking directly at her audience and using clear rhetorical devices. She understands the power of emotive language in the context of the subject matter, but the range is rather limited, despite the force of her delivery. The use of power point is there to raise audience awareness and engage; to add impact.

However not all of the statistical evidence is accurate and this must affect her assessment. Similarly there is hesitancy when choosing her words; “a variety of vocabulary” but not “a range of well-judged”. So Kirsten has met all the criteria for Band 4, but just stops short of achieving Band 3.

Kayleigh’s contributions are more brief and less well-developed, but again she shows an awareness of rhetorical devices to impact on her audience. She just seems a little more reliant on the screen for her prompts.

Kirsten - Band 4: a mark of 15
Kayleigh - Band 4: a mark of 12.

3 Raj, Leanne, Charlotte and David

The group have a clear purpose, to decide on the elements for a healthy eating campaign in the school. This gives focus to the discussion, with all members understanding the task. All four candidates show careful listening skills; interacting and responding to others in the nature of the context.

Raj is fully involved listening carefully to the others and responds positively and appropriately, adding his own ideas and making specific contributions. But his ideas are fairly simple and he does not expand on the ideas of others. He tends to use mostly straightforward language, which can become rather insecure in expression when making a more extended contribution.

Leanne shapes the direction and focus of the discussion. She is supportive of others and ensures all are involved, either by direct prompting for ideas or by citing the points made by others to develop the discussion (particularly so in the case of Charlotte). She initiates and sustains her own ideas without dominating, adding depth.

Charlotte listens closely and attentively and quietly makes significant contributions, which move the discussion forward. With her diffident manner, she is easy to overlook or underestimate, but with a sympathetic acknowledgement of her ideas, by Leanne, she plays an effective part in the discussion.

David uses his personal confidence to good effect; developing and responding to what is said in a thoughtful and considerate way. He challenges Raj’s ideas without making it a personal attack. He helps structure the discussion by summing up key points.

The discussion overall however lacks resolution in the form of specific points of action or agreeing the next stage. This would have confirmed ideas and outcomes.

Raj - Band 4: a mark of 9

Leanne - Band 1: a mark of 34

Charlotte - Band 3: a mark of 17

David - Band 2: a mark of 24.

4 Joanna and Rhianne

The discussion again has a clear purpose; preparation for a written assignment on a literary text, with the essay forming the basis for the discussion.

There has obviously been preparation by the candidates beforehand; the issues have been given thought and class notes been looked through.

Joanna, although tending to follow Rhianne's lead, nevertheless makes a significant contribution herself. She engages with Rhianne's ideas and promotes her own point of view; referring to the text to support this. However there is a received nature about some of her ideas which are not always fully developed or explored.

Rhianne manages the task, shaping the direction of the discussion, making probing and constructive contributions of her own and achieving a positive outcome and conclusion. For higher achievement, greater depth in the actual content would be required.

Joanna - Band 2: a mark of 25

Rhianne - Band 1: a mark of 32.

5 Jack, Alex and Greg

In this drama-focussed activity based on scenes from "The Merchant of Venice", the setting has been transported into a contemporary world of business and finance. This gives candidates the opportunity to create and sustain their own roles, using the play as the stimulus but being able to put their own interpretation on the characters involved. So assessment is not based on a shown knowledge of the play, rather on the ability to create and sustain a role. There is no requirement to use a drama text as the stimulus for this context.

Jack creates a complex role, based on his reading of the ambivalent nature of Bassanio in the original text. His feckless self-seeking is ingeniously developed through a range of appropriate techniques, which are completely convincing to an audience. His choice of language is sophisticated and inventive, adding to the role. He is helped by strong performances from Alex and Greg, but his response to shifting relationships places him securely at the top end of Band 1.

Alex in his role as Shylock, whilst drawing on the original, nevertheless gives a contemporary twist and feel to his performance. He uses intonation and pausing to great effect. The actual drawing up of the contract just has an unsatisfactory briefness about it.

Greg as Antonio gives a varied performance creating a complex character, through gesture and language choice; there is a more robust contemporary feel to his creation.

As with all drama-focussed tasks, the choice of roles; who is assigned which character influences outcomes and assessment.

Jack - Band 1: a mark of 38

Alex - Band 1: a mark of 33

Greg - Band 1: a mark of 35.

6 Ben

This activity is based on the poem “Limbo” by Edward Kamau Brathwaite . Due to the structure and management of the task, Ben is able to achieve a mark. Weaker, shy or reluctant candidates often struggle to achieve in this context. The presence of sympathetic stronger candidates gives him the confidence to create the role of the “reluctant warder”, stepping out of the action to give his “real” thoughts; a role which moves beyond the stereotypical.

Ben speaks clearly and shows understanding of his character in his contribution.

Ben - Band 4: a mark of 10

7 Joanna

This activity involves a visitor to the Centre and is a suggestion as to how the new requirement of the “real-life” context could be fulfilled.

Joanna’s contribution is well sustained, if quite reliant on the support of notes. There is general clarity of organisation and ideas are clearly sequenced to present her case. Questions are answered using relevant detail. However, the questions themselves raise issues in using visitors in this way. The questions are not really helpful to Joanna in terms of extending her performance. It is obviously not possible to dictate too closely the wording of the questioning in this situation or the nature of comments visitors to a Centre may make. Rather the training should be given to candidates as to how to deal with and respond to sometimes less than helpful questioning if outside unknown adults are used. It is a skill, which would benefit all candidates.

However Joanna does well to sustain the formality of the occasion.

Joanna - Band 2: a mark of 26

8 Jordan

In the same activity as Joanna, Jordan uses various strategies to present his case, but relies more heavily on his supporting notes than Joanna. His overall argument is strongly presented but is less than convincing on specific details. Again the closed nature of the questioning does not help performance, but even so Jordan does not answer them in much detail, and his use of Standard English is not always consistent. However he manages the formal nature of the interview situation well, with both a strong introduction and closure.

Jordan - Band 3: a mark of 16.

9 **Jordan, Kayleigh, Livia and Kirsten**

This activity shows another interpretation of the “beyond the classroom” requirement; that of the use of role play to fulfil this requirement.

Jordan attempts to sustain a straightforward role with some use of movement and gesture. However his language is not always secure and limited in choice; the delivery is not engaging.

Kayleigh takes the more prominent role of the two workers, giving a lead to Jordan. She develops and sustains her character showing some insight into the changing nature of the relationships involved.

Livia conveys the change from worker to supervisor with some authority through the use of gesture, intonation and language choice. However her language choice is not always effective when addressing the workers.

Kirsten has little opportunity to sustain the role created and this assessment could be replaced given further opportunities. She is however convincing as the manager creating more than a simple character; she uses appropriate choice of diction, even if she struggles to maintain fluency in this.

Jordan - Band 4: a mark of 11
Kayleigh - Band 3: a mark of 16
Livia - Band 3: a mark of 18
Kirsten - Band 4: a mark of 11.

10 **James, Alice, Robyn and Ben P**

This activity is a further suggestion for the “beyond the classroom” requirement. There is a clear sense of a wider audience in the way the task has been set up, with candidates introducing themselves to the selectors of the reality TV programme.

The task has been heavily structured to enable weaker candidates to achieve and teacher intervention further encourages, but both must be taken into account when marking. Each of the four candidates relies heavily on notes and prepared material, but they go beyond merely reading it.

Dealing with very familiar material, James and Alice sometimes develop detail to add interest to their accounts.

Robyn and Ben P go a little further, showing more of an awareness of audience and the importance of presenting themselves to more than just the teacher, by giving a more extended narrative.

James - Band 5: a mark of 5
Alice - Band 5: a mark of 4
Robyn - Band 4: a mark of 8
Ben P - Band 4: a mark of 10.

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OCR customer contact centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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