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# Coursework Training Handbook

Cambridge IGCSE<sup>®</sup>  
First Language English  
0500 and 0522

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## Introduction

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### The purpose of this handbook

This handbook provides a guide to the coursework option (Component 4) in the Cambridge IGCSE® First Language English syllabus (Syllabus Codes 0500 and 0522).

Its purpose is to give advice and clarification on:

- the content of the coursework portfolios
- planning and carrying out the work
- assessing the coursework
- preparing the coursework for external moderation.

It contains examples of assignments with the Moderator's comments.

### How to become an accredited coursework assessor

The coursework components of the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English syllabus (0500 and 0522) are marked by Centres themselves and it is a requirement that each Centre has at least one registered, accredited coursework assessor to ensure that marking within the Centre is both accurate and consistent. There are two routes to becoming an accredited coursework assessor.

#### Accreditation by prior experience

If you have enough experience of education and assessment, particularly the assessment of coursework in this subject, you may be suitably qualified to obtain accreditation without needing to complete coursework assessor training.

If you consider that you are in this category you should send a full and detailed C.V. to the following address:

IGCSE Accreditation Coordinator  
Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU  
United Kingdom

Ensure that your C.V. includes the following information:

- positions held and the roles carried out while in those positions
- qualifications
- teaching experience (including examination boards and syllabuses)
- experience of coursework, moderation and moderation training
- any further experience.

Please allow 4–6 weeks from the submission of your application for Cambridge to respond. Applicants are notified by post rather than by email or phone.

If you do not have sufficient experience to be considered suitable for accreditation via the prior experience route, you will need to complete the coursework assessor training in this Coursework Training Handbook. Remember to leave sufficient time to undertake the training if your application by C.V. is unsuccessful and it becomes necessary for you to re-submit any subsequent attempts via the Coursework Training Handbook route.

### Using the Coursework Training Handbook to achieve accredited status

To acquire accredited status using the coursework assessor training you will need to:

- read the advice and guidance provided in Sections 1 – 4 of this handbook
- copy the Cover Sheet and Assessment Mark Sheets at the end of Section 5. Fill in your personal details on the Cover Sheet
- read through the Accreditation Portfolios in Section 6 then fill in your marks and comments on the Mark Sheets
- make a copy of all completed forms and send them to the address above. You may also scan in the completed forms and email these to [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk) taking care to put 'IGCSE Teacher Accreditation' in the subject line of your email.

Again, please allow 4–6 weeks from the submission of your application for Cambridge to respond.

Where an application proves to be unsuccessful, the teacher will receive a feedback report indicating how they might improve. They will then be invited to try again in the light of this feedback advice. Please remember to submit your application for accreditation in sufficient time to permit possible further attempts should they be required.

### Classroom support for teachers and learners

Our ethos of excellence in education extends to support and services, to help you deliver engaging and effective courses, and develop as a professional.

#### Teacher resources

We have a wealth of teaching and learning resources to help you plan and deliver the course. They suit a wide range of teaching methods and different educational contexts and include:

- endorsed textbooks
- recommended workbooks
- examiner reports.

The examiner reports for your individual centre are received by schools at the end of external moderation when the results are published. They inform good practice for the cohort in the following series. Additionally, useful information about this component, written by the Principal Moderator and including general comments about how candidates have approached the tasks, is published in the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers. This is available on Teacher Support <http://teachers.cie.org.uk> after each examination series.

## Teacher Support

We offer secure online support resource for Cambridge teachers: <http://teachers.cie.org.uk>. Access is free for Cambridge schools. Here you will find all the materials you need to teach our syllabuses.

## Cambridge Professional Development for teachers

We offer regular training workshops (INSET) for Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses. Online training is also available, increasing access for teachers who have limited time or are a long way from training events. Details and availability of courses can be found at [www.cie.org.uk/events](http://www.cie.org.uk/events)

We also provide Professional Development qualifications for teachers. They help develop teachers' thinking and practice and build the knowledge and skills they need to help learners succeed with Cambridge.

## What other resources are available for teachers?

Subject communities and discussion forums are accessible on Teacher Support.

A list of textbooks and resources from publishers are also available on Teacher Support.

Ask Cambridge – frequently asked questions, which is accessible at <http://ask.cie.org.uk>





## Section 1: About the coursework component

### 1.1 Requirements of the syllabus

#### 1.1.1 Advantages of coursework

Coursework allows learners, with the support of teachers, the freedom and scope

- to improve their writing skills over a period of time.
- to choose topics of personal interest to them, reflecting their lives and their localities.
- to consider the quality of their work and to edit, revise and correct it independently.
- to take pride in their completed portfolios.

#### 1.1.2 Aims of coursework

- For learners to become better writers and thinkers (and in Assignment 3, better readers).
- For learners to express their personal views on the world about them, appropriate to their age, maturity and experience.

#### 1.1.3 Assessment objectives for Writing

The contents of the portfolio should test the following Writing assessment objectives of the syllabus in equal measure.

*W1 Articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined.*

*W2 Sequence facts, ideas and opinions.*

*W3 Use a range of appropriate vocabulary.*

*W4 Use register appropriate to audience and context.*

*W5 Make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.*

#### 1.1.4 Assessment objectives for Reading

In Assignment 3 only, where 10 marks are available for Reading, the following Reading objectives are assessed.

*R1 Demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings.*

*R2 Demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes.*

*R3 Analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions.*

This assignment is similar in purpose to Question 1 of Paper 3 in the written examination where the main emphasis in the award of 10 marks is placed on the evaluation of reading material.

### 1.1.5 The contents of the portfolio

Candidates submit a portfolio of **three** assignments, each of about 500–800 words. These assignments may be completed in any order, but should be presented as shown below. The maximum mark for the portfolio is 50, of which 40 marks are for Writing and 10 are for Reading (Assignment 3).

- Assignment 1: informative, analytical and/or argumentative
- Assignment 2: descriptive and/or narrative
- Assignment 3: a response to a text or texts, of approximately two sides of A4 in total, chosen by the Centre. The text(s) should contain facts, opinions and arguments. Candidates respond to the text(s) by selecting, analysing and evaluating the content of the text(s). They may write in any appropriate form they wish. Different candidates in the same teaching set may choose to respond to different text(s) and/or in different forms.

The text upon which Assignment 3 is based **must** be included in the sample sent to the Moderator.

The portfolio must include the first draft of **one** of the three assignments.

Assignments may be hand-written or word-processed.

Dictionaries/spell-checks may be used.

### 1.1.6 Length of assignments

Marks should **never** be deducted for exceeding the upper figure of 800 words per assignment. However, work that is significantly over or under the suggested length tends to be self-penalising. Many candidates who write at great length cannot sustain content or style effectively. They should especially be taught to avoid long sections of narrative that do not relate to the theme of a story (including irrelevant detail, and dialogue that does not add impetus to the plot). Work that is under 500 words may not be long enough to develop and structure the piece of writing satisfactorily.

The discussion about a first draft should include consideration of length, and/or whether some of the material could be cut to make the writing more powerful or effective.

500 words per piece are sufficient for the award of the highest marks. 800 words should normally but not necessarily be seen as the upper limit.

### 1.1.7 Teacher responsibilities

Teachers should:

- plan and set assignments that meet the requirements and are appropriate to the abilities of their learners
- assess the effectiveness of each assignment against the objectives
- annotate the candidates' work to indicate the reasons for marking decisions to external moderators
- give a final mark out of 40 for the writing for the three assignments **as a whole**, and a mark out of 10 for the quality of the reading in Assignment 3
- where appropriate, if a Centre has more than one teacher/moderator, contribute to an internal moderation in which all the Centre's candidates are placed in rank order.

It is **not** permissible for teachers to correct a draft of a candidate's work.

### 1.1.8 Incomplete folders

The contents of the portfolio should be assessed in the usual way, giving a mark for the overall quality of the writing. Then, for each assignment that is missing, a third of the total awarded should be deducted. If Assignment 3 is missing, the mark for reading is 0.

### 1.1.9 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work or ideas as one's own. This might happen in a number of different ways, e.g.:

- failing to acknowledge quotations
- using particular phrases or sentences from another author without giving them credit, e.g. via inverted commas and a footnote
- writing something that is only very slightly different (e.g. a few words altered) from another author's work (i.e. paraphrasing it)
- buying a project from an internet site and presenting it as your own
- pasting in text or images from an internet site without acknowledgement
- having somebody else write all or part of the work on the author's behalf.

It is the Centre's responsibility to make sure all coursework is the original work of learners. Teachers need to make clear the consequences of plagiarism, both at the outset of the course and at intervals thereafter.

Detection is normally easy since the language of a copied assignment will generally differ in complexity from the candidate's own writing. It is also sometimes easy to 'Google' particular phrases to see whether they come from a website. Be aware that some candidates may 'borrow' assignments from older siblings or friends.

To help prevent plagiarism, some work on each assignment should be carried out in the classroom. For example, the work could be planned and each candidate's work monitored. If the first draft differs greatly from the plan, suspicion may be aroused. The writing of the first draft in the classroom might be the most secure form of supervision. It is important that each stage of the writing is monitored.

Assignment 1 may be the most prone to misuse of the internet due to the nature of the writing.

Generally Assignment 3 is the least prone. As such it may be useful to compare the style of Assignment 3 with that of Assignment 1 when checking for plagiarism.

Another indication may be a paragraph or section which sits oddly with the writing before and after it. Perhaps there is some uncharacteristically ambitious phrasing; a simple enquiry about the meaning of the phrase will settle doubts one way or the other.

The teacher's role in detecting plagiarism is crucial. If you have doubts about the authenticity of an assignment, it should not be submitted, even if this means an incomplete folder must be submitted. Cambridge's policy on dealing with malpractice can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook for Centres*.

## 1.2 Assessment: Mark Schemes

### 1.2.1 Band descriptions for Writing (Assignments 1–3)

#### Band 1 (36–40): Confident and stylistic completion of challenging tasks throughout the Portfolio.

- **W1:** Candidates describe and reflect effectively upon experience, give detail and analyse thoughtfully what is felt and imagined. Arguments are cogent and developed in mature, persuasive thought.
- **W2:** Facts, ideas and opinions are ordered logically, each stage in the argument or narrative carefully linked to the next. Paragraphing is a strength, and candidates are confident in experimenting where appropriate in the structure of expressive writing.
- **W3:** Candidates write with assurance, using a wide range of effective vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates vary their style with assurance to suit audience and context in all three assignments. They use well-constructed sentences.
- **W5:** Candidates write accurately. They use punctuation and grammatical structures to define shades of meaning. They spell simple, complex and technical words with precision.

#### Band 2 (31–35): Frequent merit and interest in the choice of content and the manner of writing.

- **W1:** Candidates describe and reflect upon experience, and analyse with occasional success what is felt and imagined. Some argument is well developed and interesting, although the explanation may not always be consistent.
- **W2:** Facts, ideas and opinions are often well ordered so that the construction of the writing is clear to the reader. Sentences within paragraphs are mostly well sequenced, although some paragraphs may finish less effectively than they begin.
- **W3:** Candidates write with some confidence, demonstrating an emergent range of varied vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates give evidence of understanding the need to write appropriately to audience and context even if there is not complete consistency in the three assignments. There is some fluency in the construction of sentences.
- **W5:** Candidates show some signs of understanding how punctuation and grammatical structures can be used to aid communication. Errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar are minor, and rare at the top of this band.

#### Band 3 (26–30): Competent writing with some development of ideas.

- **W1:** Candidates express clearly what is felt and imagined and supply some detail, explanation and exemplification for the benefit of the reader. Arguments are expressed in a competent series of relevant points and a clear attempt is made to develop some of them.
- **W2:** A clear attempt is made to present facts, ideas and opinions in an orderly way, although there may be some insecurity in the overall structure.
- **W3:** Candidates write competently, using appropriate if sometimes unadventurous vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates make a clear attempt in at least one assignment to write with a sense of audience and there may also be some evidence of adapting style to context. Sentences that mostly link ideas successfully
- **W5:** Candidates use punctuation and grammar competently although the range is not strong. There may be a number of minor errors especially at the bottom of this band and even occasional errors of sentence separation.

**Band 4 (21–25): Satisfactory content with brief development and acceptable expression.**

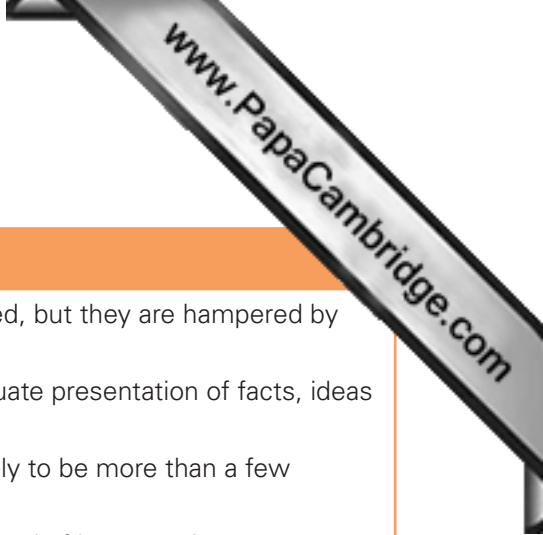
- **W1:** Candidates express with some clarity what is felt and imagined. Arguments are relevant to the topic and are developed partially with some brief effectiveness.
- **W2:** There is evidence of overall structure, but the writing may be presented more carefully in some sections than in others. There may be examples of repetition and the sequence of sentences within paragraphs may be insecure in places.
- **W3:** Candidates write with occasional competence, using a mixture of effective and straightforward vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates show occasional evidence of writing with some understanding of audience and context, but this is not sustained. Candidates use some complex and some simple sentences.
- **W5:** Candidates use a limited range of punctuation and grammatical structure with some care, although occasionally grammatical error will cause the reader some difficulty. There may be quite numerous errors, particularly of sentence separation and the misuse of commas.

**Band 5 (16–20): Simple writing, the meaning of which is not in doubt.**

- **W1:** Candidates express intelligibly what is felt and imagined. Arguments are expressed with variable relevance, logic and development.
- **W2:** Facts, ideas and opinions are presented in paragraphs which may be inconsistent. The overall structure is unsound in places.
- **W3:** Candidates use simple straightforward vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates make slight variations of style according to audience and context, although this does not seem deliberate. Simple sentences are correctly used and there may be an attempt to write complex sentences which have a slight lack of clarity.
- **W5:** Candidates show knowledge of simple punctuation and grammar, but the amount of error, especially of tense and the use of prepositions, is sometimes considerable. Sentence separation is often poor, but error does not prevent the reader from understanding what is written.

**Band 6 (11–15): Writing can be followed despite difficulties with expression.**

- **W1:** Candidates make a simple attempt to express what is felt and imagined. Arguments are expressed very simply and briefly.
- **W2:** Facts, ideas and opinions may appear in partially formed paragraphs of inappropriate length and some attempt is made to provide a beginning and an end.
- **W3:** Candidates use simple, mainly accurate vocabulary.
- **W4:** Candidates may show occasional, brief acknowledgement of the possibility of writing for different audiences and contexts, but overall there is little variation of style. Attempts to write complex sentences may involve repetition of conjunctions and some blurring.
- **W5:** Candidates occasionally use appropriate punctuation and can spell simple words, but the reader is not convinced that their understanding, especially of grammar, is adequate.



**Band 7 (6–10): Some of the writing can be followed.**

- **W1:** Candidates occasionally express what is felt, thought and imagined, but they are hampered by their command of language.
- **W2:** There may be some signs of an overall structure although inadequate presentation of facts, ideas and opinions creates blurring.
- **W3:** Candidates demonstrate a narrow vocabulary and there are unlikely to be more than a few accurate sentences.
- **W4:** Candidates may write appropriately on the whole but their command of language is not strong enough to acknowledge audience or context. There are unlikely to be more than a few accurate sentences.
- **W5:** Weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and grammar are persistent, but the reader is able to follow at least part of the writing.

**Band 8 (0–5): Writing does not communicate adequately.**

- **W1:** Very simple meanings are attempted, but most of the work is too inaccurate and blurred to make sense.
- **W2:** An absence of overall structure and paragraphing leads to confusion.
- **W3:** Very simple meanings are attempted, but the candidate's knowledge of vocabulary is too slight to make adequate sense.
- **W4:** There is insufficient evidence of audience, context or sentence structures to reward.
- **W5:** The amount and breadth of error prevents sufficient communication of meaning.

**Band 9 (0): Writing does not meet the above criteria.**

## 1.2.2 Band descriptions for Reading (for use with Assignment 3 only)

<b>Band 1 (9–10)</b>	Candidates analyse and evaluate several ideas and details from the text(s), and develop lines of thought. Their own ideas are closely related to the original text(s) and show a good understanding of the main arguments.
<b>Band 2 (7–8)</b>	Candidates respond in detail to ideas from the text(s), explaining them and expressing views on them with varying degrees of effectiveness. There is some reference to details in the original. Their own ideas are based on those of the original text(s).
<b>Band 3 (5–6)</b>	Candidates show some response to the ideas in the text(s), summarising them and giving simple views on them. Their own thinking is relevant, if not always tightly focused on the original text(s).
<b>Band 4 (3–4)</b>	Candidates give a response to the original text(s). Their ideas are relevant to the topic but make only occasional references to individual ideas or details in the original text(s).
<b>Band 5 (1–2)</b>	Candidates write about the topic but there is little evidence that they have read or understood the text(s).
<b>Band 6 (0)</b>	There is no discernible reference to the topic or to the text(s).

It is most important to base your marks for Reading on the Mark Scheme for Reading only. You will notice the use of ‘analyse and evaluate’ and ‘ideas and details’ in Band 1. ‘Ideas’ will also cover ‘opinions’. There is no place in this Mark Scheme for an analysis of a writer’s use of language and style, which is fully tested in Papers 1 and 2. It is also important to compare the description of Band 1 with that of Band 3, where ideas are summarised rather than evaluated.

## 1.2.3 Using the Mark Schemes

The Mark Schemes are used, first to assess individual assignments as they are completed giving three separate sets of marks. Second, when preparing the portfolios at the end of the course, all of the writing in the three assignments is reconsidered and given a single mark out of 40. The final mark for Writing is not an arithmetical calculation, but a judgement based on all of the available evidence in the portfolio.

The Mark Schemes are arranged in nine bands or levels for Writing and six bands or levels for Reading; if read from the bottom to the top, each describes a more assured achievement than the one before.

When marking candidates’ work, first read and annotate the work. Then make a ‘best fit’ judgement, where strengths and weaknesses are balanced with each other as to which **band** to place it in. Very often you may see qualities from more than one band, so always look at two bands at least and come to a decision between them.

Lastly, award a specific **mark** from your chosen band. If all the criteria in a band fit your judgement, award the highest mark and check the band above, just in case. If most but not all of the criteria fit your judgement, award a mark nearer the bottom and check the band below, just in case.

When you assess all of your own portfolios, place them in rank order, and award the marks accordingly, paying special attention to the borderlines of the bands. Ensure that portfolios that lie within the same band are appropriately differentiated.

## 1.2.4 Annotation

It is essential that there is proof of the teacher's judgement on every assignment. There should be a comment on the strengths and weaknesses at the end of each piece, and errors should be annotated in the body of the work or in the margin. This annotation is important to the moderator because it helps to explain the mark that you have given. In addition, the Individual Candidate Record Card (see p.49) has a space for a comment justifying the marks given for the complete portfolio.

## 1.3 Developing and assessing skills

### 1.3.1 Content

*W1: Articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined*

This objective gives learners freedom to write personally and express a maturity that goes beyond merely repeating anecdotes. Moderators often note that strong learners reflect at length on experiences that teach them about themselves and the world about them, while simpler writing merely repeats the details of what happened.

It is therefore suggested that much of learners' writing should connect with their own lives. In fiction, learners can speak through their characters and present a criticism of the world they encounter themselves. In non-fiction, learners should not regurgitate the contents of a book or a website but should *comment* on what they have read, making it clear to the reader how personal ideas about aspects of their lives are forming. The opportunity to set down original thoughts and ideas in writing is fundamental to the philosophy of the coursework component.

Learners learn to use complex ideas and to develop them at length and with subtlety. Not all assignments demand the same level of content. It may be more difficult to argue a case than to inform a reader. There are also different degrees of skill in creating a narrative that will engage a reader with its semblance of reality and its various twists and turns. In task setting it is important to match the demands of a task to the ability of a learner. At Band 3, learners will be able to present straightforward content with confidence, but they may struggle with a more complex task. On the other hand a learner seeking a mark in Band 1 must show assuredness in using content that is not simplistic.

### 1.3.2 Structure

*W2: Sequence facts, ideas and opinions*

This is very closely allied to content and it is sometimes difficult to separate the two. Every different genre has its own structure. For example there are different conventions for presenting a letter and a newspaper report. Essays need to show some progression of thought and it is important that paragraphs have convincing connectives. Successful writing has sound overall structure and the paragraphs are logically sequenced. Narratives go beyond simplistic beginnings, middles and ends. They show confidence in leading the reader into the main business of a story, developing ideas and creating tension, providing sustained climaxes and making sometimes unusual and entertaining endings. It is important that the different sections of a piece of writing are properly balanced in length and development.



### 1.3.3 Vocabulary

W3: *Use a range of appropriate vocabulary*

At lower levels, there may be little sign of a personal style. It may be a struggle to use enough varied words accurately, and style can be awkward and even clumsy or blurred. However, further up the scale, learners show that they have increasing ability to communicate because their vocabulary is wider and more precise. The range of vocabulary is seen to widen as learners use words to define meaning, to entertain, and to create variety. A Band 1 candidate uses language with assuredness. Learners also make different choices of language to fit different genres, and this is demonstrated in the three assignments in the portfolio.

### 1.3.4 Audience

W4: *Use register appropriate to audience and context*

Through this skill, the learner considers who is meant to read each piece of writing and assumes an appropriate form of address and tone. This affects the sentence structure and the language. For example there will be different degrees of formality, best exemplified in letter writing. The writing of the words of a speech or an article is made more effective by an awareness of audience, and this applies to fiction as well. The sense of audience will at its best be very evident and will add to the reading experience.

### 1.3.5 Accuracy

W5: *Make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar*

Using spellchecks, dictionaries or thesauri are areas worth developing with learners to improve their accuracy. Care should be taken when typing work. Typing mistakes should be treated as errors, whether these are spelling or punctuation mistakes. Punctuation errors are common, and it is important that mistakes in punctuation are annotated. In descriptive writing and narrative, the use of tense is a common error, either because a present or past tense is not sustained or because there are difficulties with the use of more complex tenses.



## Section 2: Planning coursework in your school

Before you start the course you will need to think out your strategy. This is especially important if there is more than one teaching set and there are perhaps several different teachers. Some schools enter as many as ten or eleven sets, and you will want to make it as easy as possible to standardise the work in order to achieve a reliable rank order of candidates before sending your sample to the Moderator.

### 2.1 Choosing the assignments

Some schools leave it to individual teachers to decide on their assignments. If so, it is wise to discuss what each teacher intends to set, since some assignments are more successful than others, and produce very different results with learners of varying ability. Though such a discussion there may be some beneficial sharing of ideas.

Some departments exercise an element of control by providing a list of topics for each assignment. Teachers and learners are free to choose from these lists.

Small departments of two or three teachers often decide on a limited choice, and Assignment 3 is frequently based on the same text given to all the learners.

Many schools allow a choice of topics for Assignment 1 (to reflect the interests of their learners) and a choice of titles for Assignment 2, even if the writing arises from the same in-class activity (such as studying mystery stories). They are more likely to restrict the choice of texts for Assignment 3, since it is not recommended to allow learners to decide on their own as some texts do not elicit good responses.

In general, even where there are many teaching sets, there is less likely to be a wide choice of articles for Assignment 3.

Meetings held to decide a policy for task setting should help to encourage teachers and to save time and effort later on in the course.

### 2.2 Planning the workload

If you were taking the examination option, you would have to set practice compositions and examples of Question 1, and these would have to be assessed and appropriate feedback given to learners.

In theory, coursework does not involve more work and time, but in practice:

- each assignment takes longer because of drafting and redrafting. One early draft is enough provided that effective amendments are made before the final version is completed
- after generic guidance on the first draft, the teacher should assess the finished piece of work applying the Mark Schemes according to best-fit judgements
- internal moderation must take place where there is more than one teacher/moderator in order to establish a reliable rank order.

Many schools confine themselves to the three required assignments. These are best planned during the five terms/semesters that precede the examination. You need to bear in mind the increasing maturity and improved skills of learners that should make successive pieces of writing more effective and interesting. Thus, you might expect a learner's best work to be completed nearer the end of the course than at the beginning.

## 2.3 Planning for a choice of assignments

It does not follow that each learner performs equally well on all three assignments. To avoid irregular performance and to help learners improve their writing skills, some schools set more than three. They might set more than one task for Assignment 1, for example, an informative account, the words of a campaigning speech and a film review; and for Assignment 2, some fiction and an autobiographical incident. This would give a wider, more educational experience of writing for different contexts, purposes and audiences. It would also enable a choice to be made of the best three pieces to make up the final portfolio.

A second important consideration is that each learner should attempt three different styles or genres of writing. Consistency over a variety of writing is a virtue and should contribute to the final mark.

## 2.4 Planning for assessment: standardisation meetings

Assessment is an ongoing process. It is important to hold standardisation meetings where all teachers agree on the quality of specimens of work throughout the course as work becomes available.

As a minimum each meeting should look at three pieces of work that illustrate each of three different mark bands. There should be a discussion of the quality of the work. Each example should be assigned to a mark band and lastly, a mark should be decided. Teachers should ensure that they give equal importance to each strand of the mark scheme (essentially, content, structure, style and accuracy). It is most important that there should be agreement on the rank order of the work considered at the meeting.

It is generally beneficial to hold similar meetings at intervals during the course, which will save time when internal moderation takes place.

## 2.5 Timetable

Early in the course, one teacher needs to take responsibility for administering the setting and assessing of coursework. Given that the final dates for the submission of marks to Cambridge are at the end of April or October, dates must be set for the completion of work within the school and for an internal moderation meeting if required. The teacher responsible should also check the paperwork and in particular, that the marks on the portfolios, the mark sheets, the Individual Candidate Record Card (see p.52), and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form (p.54) are the same.

## Section 3: Setting tasks

You have already considered the overall structure of the portfolio. Now it is time to look at the three separate assignments.

In the final portfolio we are looking for three pieces that show a clear difference from each other, for example in style/register, audience and genre. So it is important to ensure that the course caters for varied writing before it comes to the time to assemble the final portfolio.

### 3.1 Assignment 1

#### 3.1.1 Informative, analytical and/or argumentative writing

The types of writing covered in Assignment 1 may be writing to:

**inform, explain, describe**

or

**argue, persuade, advise**

or

**analyse, review, comment.**

This assignment can be anything that is non-narrative. It assesses only writing; there will be no credit given for the learner's use and understanding of any reading material.

Generally, argumentative and/or analytical tasks present greater challenges to learners than informative tasks. You should give an appropriate level of challenge according to your learners' varied abilities.

#### 3.1.2 Some suitable types of work for Assignment 1

##### (a) Argumentative work

###### International topics

Many learners engage well with a variety of international issues such as animal welfare, crime, conservation, drugs, globalisation, peace studies, the influence of television, smoking, world sport, and diet. Topics such as these can be more interesting for learners when they make some reference to the practice, laws and beliefs of the learner's own country and society. They are generally least successful when they are related to information copied or paraphrased from websites. A personal viewpoint is always more natural and more engaging for the reader. Learners need to be guided by teachers to a manageable assignment where the topic is sufficiently wide for students to have a lot to say.

Such assignments may be written with an audience of educated adults or younger learners in mind.

A successful alternative to an essay is to write the words of a speech, which would provide opportunities for writing in rhetorical language and with a powerful sense of audience.

**Local topics**

Many learners like to engage with issues concerning:

- (a) their own country: its attractions; its status in the world, tourism; problems currently experienced (e.g. crime and violence); its sport; its government/president;
- (b) their immediate area: unusual and unique issues such as: building an urban highway through an area of a city; what to do about a row that has erupted about a shopkeeper who has sold cigarettes to under-aged children;
- (c) their school: reforms such as new buildings and facilities, uniform, the school day and homework, (in the form of an article or a letter to the Principal/head teacher).

**(b) Informative work (generally with elements of comment or argument)**

Remember that informative writing may not be as challenging as argumentative work, although the use of personal detail and comment on experience will give opportunities for assessment in Bands 1 and 2.

Examples of assignments (which could be written for an audience of peers or younger learners) are:

- (a) work experience (with evaluation of advantages and disadvantages)
- (b) accounts of school trips and adventure holidays (with evaluation of social and mind/body building opportunities)
- (c) reviews of school plays and functions such as concerts (which might work especially well from the point of view of a performer)
- (d) reviews of meals enjoyed in restaurants, written in an original style not imitated from a newspaper or magazine
- (e) accounts of hobbies and special interests (including their development to the time of writing)
- (f) commenting on and analysing moments from one's life and writing about the importance of relatives and aspects of home life (NB: not narrative accounts)
- (g) work based on research, e.g. about a country or a historical figure.

A potential advantage of such assignments is that they can express personal enthusiasm, originality and persuasiveness. A potential disadvantage is the risk that the style of personal informative pieces may be too similar to that of Assignment 2. This can be avoided by ensuring that Assignment 2 is not personal writing.

A disadvantage of a 'research' approach (for example, historical characters) is that it may seem to invite over-reliance on secondary resources, leading to writing which lacks personal interest and originality. Such pieces may not even look like English language tasks, but more like geography or history.

**(c) Work using media formats**

These may include: newspaper articles, interviews, reports, comment based on local events and personalities, imaginary events: brochures/leaflets/information handouts; an article for a named magazine; a programme for a school play (including articles about the play, profiles of the actors); creating and analysing one's own TV advertisement.

The audience should be defined at the time of writing.

For a number of reasons, it is often better to present leaflets on unfolded sheets of A4 paper. If they are handwritten it is better not to write in columns; if word-processed, two columns are preferable. This also applies to the other formats listed here.

It is not recommended to set literary criticism since the attempt to write in an appropriate style and the interruption by quotations to the argument is rarely successful as an English exercise. Analytical essays on texts, either literary or non-literary, can deflect attention from the assessment criteria for Writing on to those for Reading.

### 3.1.3 Examples of successful assignments

*Ghosts and things that go bump in the night*

*Food in the school cafeteria*

*Should teachers be role models?*

*Teaching the tango in school*

*An account of a horse rehabilitation Centre*

*The Christchurch earthquake*

*Subway construction in Cordoba*

*Dolls as stereotypes*

*Football and technology*

*Against intimate relationships in school*

*Reality is not what you see on television*

*Banning the internet*

*Should Shakespeare be taught in schools?*

*A visit to the art museum*

*Is it right for teenagers to fall in love?*

*How to be a librarian...an electrician...a gym teacher*

One school has a personal research project on the history of each learner's family, most of whom were immigrants at some time in the past. The results are fascinating to read and have obviously given enjoyment and pride to the learners.

### 3.1.4 Key messages for choosing Assignment 1

- The more learners have the chance to negotiate their choice of assignment and the more original it is, the better the outcome will tend to be.
- The more learners express their own opinions and comments the better the outcome will tend to be.

### 3.1.5 Assessed examples

The three examples that follow give some idea of the varied ways in which Assignment 1 can be approached. Each response is followed by comments on the quality of the writing and the reasons for placing it in a particular Mark Band.

First of all look at the **Mark Schemes** (pages 10–12 of this guide). They must be used to decide how to assess the writing.

## Assignment 1 – Example 1 [Extract]

### My Work Experience

I had no job on Monday morning. My dad, who owns an insurance company, offered me a job in his office and I had to accept. However that was not what I wanted; besides my dad turns into a different person when he is working. We don't get along well when he is like that. Well, I was working, printing balances and studying them with my dad, when a miracle happened. Chocho called to tell me about his farm which is a rose plantation. He was offering me to go there, not only to work but to learn. He told me that Nick was going too. His mom called my mom and told her all about it. She said that we were old enough to be along in a farm working. She told my morn that there they had a small house where we could sleep, a microwave too, where we could heat our food that we hat to cook. It seemed alright, so I accepted to go.

I was a bit scared because I had no idea what kind of work I had to do or if the food we were taking was sufficient or if the house was going to be ok. Well this was a totally new experience. I was in Cotacachi, a place I never knew, waiting for instructions from someone I've never met before, a stranger.

What I didn't know was that this was the beginning of one of my best experiences I'll ever have. I met Edgar (we called him Tiny Polski, because of the character in the novel called Mosquito Coast) he was the administrator of the farm San Nicolas and of the company Sisa Pacari which is the company that exports flowers. He was in charged of us too. He told us, the first day, to go with engineer Silvia. She sent me to the rose block number one. There I had to 'desyemar' which means to rip off some leaves that grow above the original leave. Here I met Luis and Gerom. Gerom is a 45 year old and he had worked there for more than twenty-five years. His parents worked there before.

He was very happy but at the same time he was sad because he had no luck in his life He will never have, as many people that work there, an opportunity to succeed. These are people with no education, therefore poor, besides the farm pays then a minimum amount of money, this is a way of keeping them working in the farm. I see this as exploitation. These people have no other choice but to work there or starve. Even though he was sad, he treated me so well he was the fist one to talk to me. He introduced me to all of his work colleagues.

In breakfasts and lunches we ate with all of the stuff on the farm. That was a good opportunity to get to know a different culture and to make some new friends. At dinner we had to cook for our selfs. We cooked, baked, fried and grilled, this was one of my favourites chapters of the experience.

Remember the small house I talked about? Well it was small and comfortable. It had a microwave, as Chocho's morn told us, it also had a kitchen, refrigerator, a dining room, a living room, two huge bedrooms, two bathrooms, a chimney which we fired everyday, to colour TV's with satellite channels, two levels (floors), a bar BQ and a terrace. The walls were covered with marble. It was full of luxuries... Just for us! {..... }



## Commentary

This lively and thoughtful piece of writing goes on to detail some activities that were carried out each day and finishes with a brief paragraph commenting on the people the candidate met and acknowledging the value of the experience. There is more information, but the quality of the writing remains consistent throughout.

The main function of this personal writing is to inform, explain and describe. It actually does all three of these and adds other purposes such as to comment and to explore. There is no defined audience, but the writing is engaging and keeps the interest of the reader.

This is not a straightforward piece to assess. The candidate has the advantage of a very interesting topic. Work experience in a rose plantation is, as he says, more fun than working for your father in an office. Just suppose that his friend had not rescued him! What gives the writing merit is the commentary on the people he has met, and their lives. It certainly lifts the content above the competence of Mark Band 3.

On the other hand there are plenty of errors, some of punctuation -- including sentence separation -- and some which are more careless and are due to a lack of proof reading. We certainly expect candidates to be responsible about this. The amount of error indicates Mark Band 3.

So let us make our assessment by using Mark Bands 2 and 3. For content, it is nearer 2, although there is no sign of any analysis. The content is not really challenging (especially in the first paragraph), but the interest of the reader is maintained. There are far more language errors than one would expect at anything but the lower end of 2. Appropriate and varied language is used; the language is simple when you look at it, but it is very comfortable to read and never strains meaning. If 'varied' means complex language, then it is not to be found here, except in the good reference to 'exploitation'. The address to the audience (readers or listeners?) is excellent (for this level) in places. The planning and the paragraphing are fine. The use of occasional short paragraphs (as of a media article) is appropriate in this case. The candidate is certainly in control of the writing and is quite assured.

If you read through the descriptions for Mark Band 3, you will probably agree that this piece of writing meets all of them (although the range of sentence structures is a little narrow in some parts of the writing) and exceeds the comment about competent writing. Mark Band 2 is something of a fit, with important reservations. So we could look at the top mark in Mark Band 3 and then just move into Mark Band 2, to award a mark of **31**.

## Assignment 1 – Example 2

**Write the uninterrupted speech you would like to have given at the end of the meeting to discuss the proposed pop festival in Upper Charnwood**

Good day ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jennifer Lim. I am one of the local senior citizens of Upper Charnwood. I have lived here for over fifteen years and I have never in my entire life been in favour of such a disruptive event as a 'pop festival', especially if it's taking place in our quiet, little town.

A number of years back, I moved out of the city in search of a lovely town to settle down in. Like many others, I hoped to escape the crowded and bustling ways of the city. I felt I needed to live somewhere quiet, somewhere not too isolated yet somewhere where I could spend many happy years living. To my delight, I found the town of Upper Charnwood, a peaceful town with exquisite serenity, uninterrupted by any corruption or pollution of any sort.

Now I find out that a pop festival is to take place here. I am absolutely appalled at the idea! Holding this 'pop festival' would only bring back what I and many others had come here to escape. It would take away the serenity and beauty of our town and would be a disturbance, a nuisance to the desired tranquillity of our homes. Imagine, over fifteen years of peace, serenity and solitude down the drain because of three nights of entertainment.

Furthermore, what about the possibility of violence erupting? With such a large number of people attending this festival, there is no doubt that riots will be caused. If the boisterousness of the fans is not kept under control things could get out of hand, people could be hurt and furthermore Upper Charnwood's residents are being put at risk. Frankly, I'm definitely not in favour of that and I'm sure most of you aren't either.

With our town so close by, it is a most unfortunate opportunity for young teens to get up to unnecessary mischief. I am almost definitely sure there would be more crime taking place. People can wander around at night being nuisances, getting drunk, littering our homes, breaking our windows and performing other disruptive or unmentionable acts. People are people, and adding in a few security guards or officers for three nights is not going to stop them from acting inhumanely for years to come! This 'pop festival' could affect our town long term. This festival is practically advertising our town and not for a good cause. People would be aware of Upper Charnwood and then our crime rate would increase. I really care about the safety of our town and I cannot just stand here and let this happen.



## Commentary

This piece of writing continues for one more side, discussing the problem of litter and making some practical alternative suggestions for the venue and arrangements for the festival. Nothing would be added to the quality of the writing by reprinting the rest of the work here.

This is entirely different from the first example, but it is equally valid as a submission for Assignment 1. The writer has a context, a persona and an audience, and the writing is presented as a formal speech. Unlike Example 1, the content is almost certainly imaginary, although it has an air of reality about it. The purpose of the writing is to argue, persuade and advise.

One needs to be objective when assessing. Because of its content, Example 1 might for most people be a more entertaining reading experience than Example 2. However, this example deals with somewhat more challenging content. It is not easy to invent a series of arguments, order them and then develop each one, sustaining the register throughout the speech. If this were real and you were a concerned resident, doubtless you would be very attentive and even impressed.

We should be looking at Mark Bands 1 and 2. The piece is consistent in its use of material and for the most part fits the descriptions in Mark Band 1. There is a strong sense of audience, both in the content and in the way that the speech is expressed. There are effects such as using unexpected expressions like 'down the drain' and rhetorical devices ('I'm sure most of you aren't either'). The work is fluent with varied sentence shapes. The beginning is effective in its use of sentences of increasing length to attract attention. The vocabulary is sufficiently wide-ranging and includes some complex vocabulary, e.g. 'boisterousness', 'serenity', 'solitude', 'unmentionable', 'disruptive' and 'tranquillity'. There are no errors and the expression is very assured. Probably the level of challenge is not particularly strong (for this candidate) and some of the expression is a little self-conscious.

The lack of error and the consistency of the delivery of the argument are what suggest a high mark, on the border of Mark Bands 1 and 2. A mark of **36** would be appropriate.

## Assignment 1 – Example 3

### Speech

The world is full of trash, nuclear waste, biological waste, plastics, metal and much more. I know... lots of this are overused, and every single Greenpeace member is always speaking about them, so you are probably tired of hearing about the whales dying because of oil spills.

Today I'm going to tell you about something that I heard much less that all those things, the electronic wastes. Yes, this is when you are playing 'Black Ops' in your computer, and suddenly you realise that 'Modern Warfare 3' will come out in stores in some week, but your actual computer cant stand the game, so you throw your computer and buy a new one. Yes...I know you would buy a new computer and put the old one in your closet along your play station 1 and 2, Xbox, Nintendo or whatever you liked some years ago, you are probably thinking, 'who would throw his computer to the trash?' well it happens a lot in the world, there is 50 million tons of this trash in the world, mainly in China, in some parts of the world, the water supplies are affected by the leathal chemicals that the trash contains.

This isn't only negative for the plannet that we all share, it is also bad for the persons that share it with us, the people who we call 'cartoneros' collect this trash informaly, risking their health.

Bad people leave there old computers around just everywhere, they are dangerous. They poison your kidneys, this is because of all the lead in computers and you might get poisoned. They put computers in landfills and this is toxic waste, it might leak out of the landfills and get in your water supply.

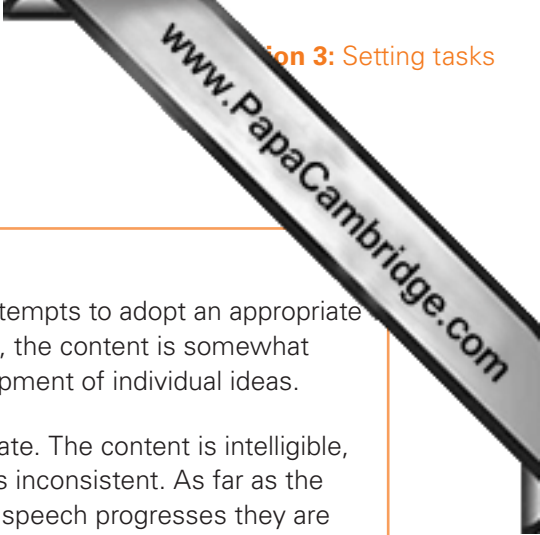
More and more E-waste hapens each year. People do not know what to do with them so it gets sent to China and other places and it gets processed more dangerously. And gets in the water supply.

Why destroy your old computer? If the bits still work you can use them again and if they are broken you can still recycle them so that is good, we shall all be safer. So remember next time your computer cant stand a new game, don't just throw it away.

There are some recycling centres, most of the ones are in the USA and Europe, but recently I discovered one of this ones in local, but when we recycle we have to protect the ones who realize that task and make sure they wear propper clothes to protect themselves.

So I was thinking that we can work with that recycling centre and put some recycling bins in the school, so every time you need to get rid of something electronic. You have to put it in the right bin.

So do it just for the planet.



## Commentary

This assignment is presented as the words of a speech, and the learner attempts to adopt an appropriate style. The work is relevant to the topic of e-waste throughout. Against this, the content is somewhat meagre and there are shortcomings in the overall structure and the development of individual ideas.

For content and structure the first two bullets of Mark Band 5 are appropriate. The content is intelligible, mostly relevant and with some logic. The development of the arguments is inconsistent. As far as the paragraphs are concerned, the second has some development, but as the speech progresses they are weaker and not particularly well ordered. However, the first two bullets of Mark Band 4 could also be said to be relevant, so for content and structure we would be looking at the borderline of these mark bands.

When it comes to style and accuracy, the writing is often very faulty. However, despite the constant errors, they 'do not prevent the reader from understanding what is written'. (Mark Band 5) Most of the language is simple and straightforward, and it is true that the amount of error is considerable. This piece shows little control of sentence construction or of the correct punctuation.

It would take too much space to list all the errors in this writing. If you read the work, you will come across errors of sentence separation, spelling mistakes, occasional misuse of words and grammar mistakes. There is an example of a sentence without an ending. The command of language suggests a mark in Band 5.

Putting these considerations together, there is a mixture of the descriptions in Mark Bands 4 and 5, and the teacher gave a borderline mark of **20**, which was fair.

## 3.2 Assignment 2

### 3.2.1 Descriptive and/or narrative writing

The types of writing covered in Assignment 2 are those which explore/imagine/entertain.

It is important that candidates write in a way that is immediately distinguishable from Assignment 1.

In the portfolio you could include a discursive piece about the value of work experience AND a story based on one particular day's work. You could include a first piece in which a candidate analyses the effects of a particular incident from their autobiography and a second in which an autobiographical incident is narrated; but the difference between the two should be immediately apparent. It is often the choice of language that makes this clear since the language of, for example, information is different from that of a description.

The best advice is to ensure that the genres and styles of writing are as different as possible.

### 3.2.2 Some suitable types of work for Assignment 2

#### (a) Fiction

Stories that:

- create suspense and atmosphere
- explore relationships and emotions
- are about adventure and achievement
- contain unexpected events or result in unusual outcomes
- invent contrasting characters facing critical situations in which right triumphs over wrong, fortune over misfortune, etc.
- are about confrontations and their outcomes
- are about journeys and what happens on the way

All offer possibilities for addressing specific readers and maintaining the reader's interest and engagement (e.g. by creating suspense, or by the careful choice of language) and adopting a distinctive voice for the narrator.

Skills required to write fiction:

- Structural (providing characters and details that later become significant; flashbacks; time lapses; different types of beginning and end).
- Descriptive/linguistic (providing pictures to clarify and words that define).
- Imaginative (providing storylines that are gripping but realistic; selecting essential details which are relevant to the aim of the story; creating interesting dialogue that fulfils a function).

A fiction-based assignment may usefully follow a study of the conventions of fiction: the ability to create characters, to manipulate plot and to use language to convey pictures, thoughts and feelings – these offer challenge at the highest level.

Teachers should beware that without preliminary teaching and discussion, learners may easily produce poor pieces of fiction for example: stories that include improbable and exaggerated events (including stories of gratuitous violence and visits to haunted houses); stories with nothing but events, understated as if they are scripts for documentary programmes; stories that are muddled with poor or illogical links between events and details in different parts of the narrative. Plots may be weak, with badly managed climaxes and insubstantial, ill-thought-out endings.

#### (b) Personal writing

Stories about (for example):

- an event concerning a relative
- the growth or failure of a relationship
- an event that is testing and stressful, but ends in success
- a visit to a challenging place, e.g. a surgery or a hospital
- an early memory from one's schooldays
- the holiday of a lifetime, or one that does not work out



- a serious disagreement
- moving to a new place
- events of importance, such as the birth of a sibling, an illness, or a special celebration.

An audience for the writing can be specific. Many candidates write for themselves, but they might think of relatives, peers or even teachers. They often write to clear their own minds or to communicate privately with others of their own choosing.

Skills required for personal writing:

- Writing selectively, since real life events include details that are not relevant to the point of the story (their inclusion can be mundane and slow up the action).
- Adding interest by describing, as if writing fiction.
- Presenting, not just narrating.
- Interweaving genuine thoughts and emotions.

### (c) Descriptive writing

Descriptions of (for example):

- busy places and atmospheres (markets, airports, train stations)
- quiet and beautiful places and atmospheres
- ugly places
- a moment when time stands still
- sound
- an event where there is a crowd
- a dreamscape
- a room where people are waiting
- hot places and cold places
- a sudden storm, hurricane, tornado, blizzard.

It is important to understand that descriptions are rarely static. To describe 'a clearing in the wood' is difficult to sustain. It is therefore wise to write descriptions that take place over a very brief period of time or which involve some movement such as approaching a market, visiting a stall and leaving the place behind. You can describe a scene at dawn or as night falls, or the same place in summer and in winter. Such descriptions should not be confused with narratives, which take place over longer periods of time and have specific structures that are different from those of descriptions.

Audience: likely to be public writing, i.e. the writer would want to convey and share the experience; most probably with any peer or adult reader. This has implications for the way in which the description is expressed.

Skills required for descriptive writing:

- Linguistic (creating pictures and feelings).
- Structural (creating and ordering enough material to sustain interest throughout writing of reasonable length).

Descriptive writing gives opportunities to create images and to use a wide range of language, some of it complex; it is an exercise in creating atmosphere. Some of the work could be experimental (e.g. in the way images and ideas are combined or words juxtaposed). Description gives opportunities to write in the present tense.

Ways to ensure that descriptive writing remains structured are (i) to structure the piece as if seeing from afar, walking towards, being in the middle, exploring further, going away; or (ii) structure as a contrast (e.g. everything is peaceful, the sudden chaos of the storm, the calm after the storm).

#### (d) Other forms:

**Letters** (mixing events and feelings) / **Diaries**, relating an event or series of events seen from different moments in time / **Poems**: a selection of the learner's poems with accounts of how they came to be written.

Audiences vary: letters to the recipient (strong sense of audience); diaries to oneself; poems to the general reader.

Skills required for other forms of writing:

- Letters and diaries: provide an appropriate voice that contributes to the communication of events and feelings; provide a coherent structure and development despite the conventions of each form.
- Poems: linguistic (words and images); concision (provide layers of meaning economically within a small space).

NB: For any poetry selection submitted for this assignment, accounts of how the poem came to be written must be added to each poem to give the candidate opportunities for the demonstration of skills that may not be apparent in the poems themselves.

Each form gives opportunities to write and to communicate in a specific way. If the content is challenging ('This is the most difficult letter I have ever had to write...') and the candidate uses the form to demonstrate assurance of style and register, structure of sentences and range of language, the writing is often of a high standard.

### 3.2.7 Examples of successful assignments

#### Fiction

*Catnapping*

*The story of a lighthouse keeper*

*Whisper in the bedroom*

*I can't understand humans (told by a tortoise)*

*The voice in my head*





*Just in the nick of time*

*The door in the wall*

*I am a pea*

### Personal writing

*A day with Grandfather*

*A day I will never forget*

*My new school*

*Filipino Christmas*

### Descriptions

*The stadium*

*The fish and chip shop*

*An untidy place*

*Storm ('This is nature's Blitzkrieg')*

*The circus*

*A person you are close to*

*Climbing in China*

*A scene before and after a disaster*

*A main road by day and by night*

## 3.2.8 Key messages for choosing Assignment 2

- Study examples of fiction before setting stories.
- Encourage stories about the whole range of human experience, the tragic and violent as well as good and happy events.
- Ensure that learners understand the difference between and function of description and narrative.
- Give learners opportunities to show the appropriate range of their vocabulary.
- Choose learners' own poetry wisely and add accounts of how the poems came to be written.

## 3.2.9 Assessed examples

Use the same assessment criteria as with Assignment 1 (see pages 8–10). Assess each piece yourself **before** reading the notes. First of all, decide on which Mark Band(s) the work falls into and then decide on a mark.

## Assignment 2 – Example 1

### Diary Entry of a Victim of Bullying

Dear Diary,

Today was one of those days! Again! Ooh God Diary help me! I've had enough!! I think I'm close to the edge!

Everyday, it gets worse! Something new happens to me! I am like a red flag, and THEM, a great big bull! They just come charging towards me for no reason! I can't tell mum and dad I'm being bullied, they won't know what to do! They will just go to the headmaster and make a HUGE commotion over me and then I'm FOR SURE going to get bullied more than ever!

Today they took my money and poured a big bucket of water over me! Then the usual beatings and name-calling! I had to walk home soaking wet and shivering from the cold! When I got home I had to put on a smiley face acting as if I was just mucking around with some friends at school! It's funny because little does MUM know I HAVE NO FRIENDS to mess around with! I have you Diary... .but you're a book! You just hear to listen to my problems!

What am I going to do??? How can I escape??? I need to break free but I don't know how!! I wish they'd just vanish! I wish this school year will hurry up and finish so they can fail and get kicked out the school! Because I don't know how much more I can take Diary... I hear about victims of bullying killing themselves everyday, I fear for my family that I might be one of them...

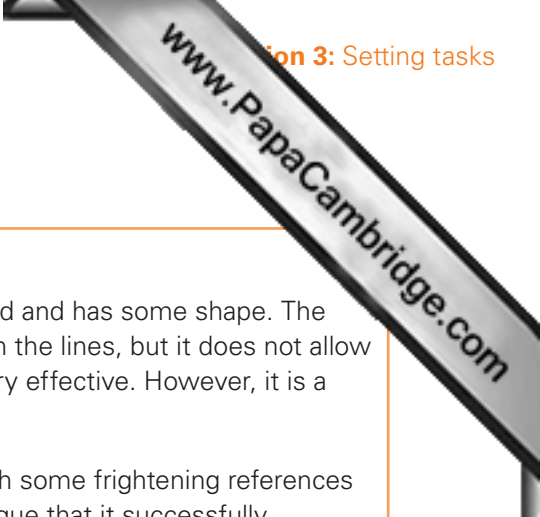
Every morning, from the time my alarm clock goes off my day becomes a living hell! I change my routes to school and back every week! Sometimes it takes me 1 hour to get home! But it's worth it! God knows what they would do to me AFTER school OUT of school! The thought petrifies me!

Everyday I come home my parents think I'm getting on well at school and I have many friends! I WISH! I've told my sister and she is SWORN to secrecy but I have a feeling that she is on the verge of telling mum and dad; I dread it! I really hope they don't find out because I can see what will happen and it will only make it worse. Why Diary?? Why me? Why do I have to suffer? I wish there was an ANTI-BULLY policy or something! At least it would keep me safe! Bullies SHOULD go to jail because they could cause someone to kill themselves! And you never know what that victim of bullying could have become! He or she could have become a doctor!

Someone that HEALS people and makes them better... but I guess we will never know...

Goodbye Diary

I hope this isn't the last time I'll see you.



## Commentary

The candidate was sensible to write just one diary entry. It is self-contained and has some shape. The dramatic monologue works well in that it allows for some reading between the lines, but it does not allow the candidate to use a very wide range of language and it is not always very effective. However, it is a realistic task, and one can imagine a good candidate doing it well.

This is a passable attempt to present the problems of a bullied learner, with some frightening references to suicide, but it does not go very deep. Against the criteria, you cannot argue that it successfully represents the mental and emotional confusion. There are elements of competence in the writing as a whole (Mark Band 3) but 'partial development with some brief effectiveness' fits better; it would be unfair to label it 'simple' work, more typical of Mark Band 5. There is certainly some clarity about what is felt, and the writing is relevant to the task, though the structure is not so well sustained at the end. There is some interesting detail in paragraph three, but most of the writing lacks specific detail. The work is mainly correct, lacking in commas and the occasional grammatical error, but there is nothing serious. Sentences are mainly short and the language is simple. It highlights the problem of using spoken English in writing. This candidate only reveals his potential for effective vocabulary in a few words such as 'commotion', 'vanish', 'petrifies', 'sworn' and 'verge'. The paragraphing is sound, but there is little development of ideas. New thoughts follow each other very frequently, and the idea of not telling anyone is a little repetitive. The use of the exclamation mark becomes ineffective.

This writing is a good fit to Mark Band 4. Since there is some strength in the victim's cry for help and since the work is mainly accurate, we look for a good mark in the Band, but the simplicity of the expression keeps it from the top. A mark of **24** would be appropriate.

## Assignment 2 – Example 2

### The Birth of My Sister

*"How many cares one loses when one decides not to be something, but to be someone." (Coco Chanel)*

It was a cold autumn night in October. I was at the Fairfax Hospital. It was dreary inside of the hospital and it smelled of sickness. I was waiting in the visitor's room with my father. We were going to see my mother and my newly born baby sister. I was excited, but scared at the same time. I was scared because I knew that the baby was not supposed to be born until December. I had memorized my mother's due date as soon as I was told that I was going to have a baby sister or brother. The nurse came out of my mother's room and told us that we could go in and see her and the baby. I held onto my father's hand more tightly. He gave me a reassuring pat on the back and stated that everything would be fine.

We walked into my mother's room and the first thing that I noticed was the tiny little bundle that my mother held in her arms. She gestured for me to come to her side. I went and she gathered me up in her arms, and said, "Look, this is your new baby sister. Isn't she beautiful?" All I could do was stare and stare and stare. I was mesmerized. She weighed only a pound. I had never seen such a tiny little baby in all of my life.

I picked up her tiny finger and I said, 'Hi, my name is Megha and I'm your sister.' I asked my mom what her name was and she said, "Her name is Shipra. Your father and I decided to name her after a goddess. Shipra means a person who is in a rush?" The nurse quickly took her away to the special room and bundled her up in cotton. I wanted to know where the nurse was taking my new baby sister. My mother told me, "She has to be put on a respirator machine because she cannot breathe on her own." I felt very frightened then and my mother tried to console me by telling me that everything would be all right.

Over the next couple of days, I lived my life in the hospital. The nurses would never let me go inside of the special room to see my baby sister, but I watched through the glass doors, as the doctors helped my sister to grow into a normal baby, who could live a normal life. A couple of weeks later, I was finally allowed to see my sister. She looked much more healthier than the first time I had seen her. She had roses in her cheeks and when she looked up at me, I just knew that she would be fine. I was so happy that the doctors were able to make my sister better. It was at that precise moment, in which I knew that I wanted to become a doctor, to help little, newborn, innocent babies, like my sister.

## Commentary

This is a neatly expressed piece with more than just the birth to concern the reader, and with plenty of genuine feeling. It is unadventurous as far as expression is concerned, but the work is competent. It is a good choice of assignment since the event is of major significance in the writer's life.

Despite the mainly short sentences, the story is competently written and there is some worthwhile development of ideas, particularly in the early part where the writer enters the hospital and waits to see her sister. The expression is clear, if simple, and there is some detail, carefully and relevantly chosen. The limitations of the language and the storyline prevent the piece from entering Mark Band 2. We are looking at Band 3.

If we look at the third bullet, we have doubts about marking this at the top of the Band because there are few examples of sentences that are more than simple. Near the end we are surprised to see one quite complex sentence, particularly when we re-read the beginning of the story. The language is appropriate but again simple. At her best the candidate uses words such as 'dreary', 'reassuring', 'bundle', 'gestured', 'mesmerized', 'respirator', 'console' and 'precise', and this is a better range than that of Example 1.

This piece has the competence and the comparative simplicity for a mark in Mark Band 3. The accuracy of the writing justifies a secure mark of **28** within this band.

## Assignment 2 – Example 3

### Sweet, Sweet Revenge

Mr Wobble dragged his heavy suitcase and his even heavier body into the classroom and stared at the unruly learners. He had had enough of their horrid behaviour. He had a Plan, and today he was going to carry it out. It was a wonderful Plan, the result of much contemplation, crafty in design, and guaranteed to work like a *dream*...

For twelve long, arduous years, Mr Wobble had taught high school English, trying to get bored, disruptive children to comprehend the finer points of the language, or to appreciate the great works of William Shakespeare. All to no avail, however. Class after class of rowdy teenagers had merely ignored his lessons, passing the time by mocking him, laughing, playing cruel tricks... well, no more would they ridicule him! Soon, they would all be whispering the name 'Wobble' with respect and fear!

A small, malevolent smile flickered across Mr Wobble's face and his little piggy eyes gleamed as he looked at each face in turn; there was Johnny Shire, class joker; Sean O'Leary, prankster extraordinaire; Rebecca Green, 'She of the Innocent Little Smiles'. Mr Wobble ticked each name on the register. Everyone was present, unfortunately. The day was off to a bad start, but it would soon improve drastically from Mr Wobble's point of view... yes indeed.

"Now, class, settle down!" Mr Wobble called out over the noise. The noise failed to subside. 'How utterly predictable,' Mr Wobble thought to himself. Normally, this would have aggrieved the man, but not today. No, today it didn't matter, for he would soon have his revenge. Sweet, sweet revenge...

"I SAID SETTLE DOWN!" Mr Wobble bellowed, all three chins wobbling violently. The classroom gradually descended into silence, and the teacher sat down at his desk. The wooden seat creaked in protest, its legs bowed under Mr Wobble's weight, and the learners snickered. They didn't even have the decency to do it behind their hands, Mr Wobble noted forlornly. That would soon change.

\*CRACK\*.

The view changed at a remarkable rate. One moment a sea of mocking, spotty faces, the next an expanse of white ceiling. The class erupted into peals of laughter as Mr Wobble struggled to his feet and examined the broken chair. That was the third one this week. Perhaps he should see the janitor about reinforcing a chair or two with metal, Mr Wobble mused as he exchanged the ruined chair for a fresh and hopefully more resilient one.

The large man started to teach the lesson, mainly to himself, biding his time as he waited for the right moment to set his plan into motion. The learners amused themselves, talking, passing notes and those horrid cartoon pictures of Mr Wobble. 'Wobble by name, wobble by nature!' they always said. Mr Wobble knew they did. *Everyone* knew what was said about poor old Mr Wobble, who kept a store of handy snacks in every available place....

The bell for recess rang out, interrupting Mr Wobble's private conversation with himself about grammar. Silently Mr Wobble observed as the adolescents surged out of the classroom. He remained seated, merely watching them until the very last one was out of the door. Then he moved, with surprising speed for one of his bulk. Jumping up, Mr Wobble closed the classroom door and drew all the curtains. Then, rubbing his hands with glee, he almost skipped over to his bulging suitcase. Heaving it up onto his desk, he opened it and began to unravel a mass of wires. He had to work quickly; recess would be over in twenty minutes...

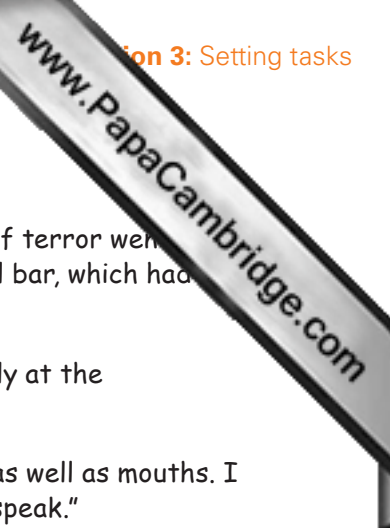
Screwdriver in hand, Mr Wobble travelled hastily up and down the rows of desks, trailing black cable and odd bits of metal behind him, humming to himself as he went. Now he would have his revenge. After fixing the wires into a strange, button-covered box on his desk, Mr Wobble returned the screwdriver to the now empty suitcase. Stepping back, the teacher observed the product of several hours on the internet and many evenings spent tinkering away in the garage,

"Ahh, the wonders of modern technology!" Mr Wobble marvelled at how easy it had all been; finding the plans on the World Wide Web, ordering the parts, piecing them together...

The bell for lessons rang out and, after a considerable period of time, the teacher heard his boisterous charges coming down the corridor. He merely waited, leaning calmly against his desk (which was fortunately much sturdier than the chair had been), hands folded over his huge belly. 'Jelly-belly' he thought despondently. They wouldn't say that again, either.

The first of the learners entered the class, laughing and joking. So busy with their private little chats that they didn't notice the teacher, or even the black cables which snaked across the floor. More entered and sat down, and then the noise suddenly died. Bewildered, the learners looked around as the last few class members filed in. This was wrong. Mr Wobble wasn't going ballistic, shouting at them for being late, wobbling all over the place as he did so. Instead, the teacher was leaning against his desk, smiling benignly at them. It was an eerie, uncanny smile, the sort that makes the recipient very nervous indeed. The sort that somehow never quite manages to reach the eyes. And there were a lot of funny black wires trailing from all the desks to a large box that Mr Wobble was now holding...

"Ah, class, so glad you could make it!" Mr Wobble's voice was calm and pleasant. Too calm. Hideously pleasant. 'I trust you all had an enjoyable recess? I do hope you did...' The fear was palpable as learners began to tremble nervously, wide staring eyes fixed on the teacher. On the black box in his hands. On the large black box with lots of menacing, red, numbered buttons. On the large black box which the teacher was slowly caressing. "Are you all comfortable?" A few nods. "Good!"



Mr Wobble pressed down one of the buttons. A big red flashing button. Cries of terror went up as the learners suddenly found themselves trapped in their seats by a metal bar, which had seemingly appeared out of nowhere. Mr Wobble grinned, his eyes gleaming.

"What are you doing? Are you totally nuts?" Johnny yelled at him, pulling fruitlessly at the restraining bar.

"Johnny, dear Johnny!" Mr Wobble almost sang, "The good Lord gave us hands as well as mouths. I suggest you put your hands to good use next time and raise one if you wish to speak."

The class went deadly silent. Johnny gaped in horror as Mr Wobble's hand moved over the black box... over the rows of red numbered buttons on the left. A button for every learner. He jabbed at one with a chubby finger, and Johnny gave a satisfying yelp of pain as a jolt of electricity was sent through him. Mr Wobble's eyes burned even brighter. His face creased into a smile and then he began to laugh a long, drawn out, evil laugh, chins, belly, and backside all wobbling madly.

"Ha. Ha-ha. Ha-ha-ha. Bwahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahah-" Mr Wobble's victorious cackle was rudely cut short by the bell. The bell? But the period had only just started!

Turning over, Mr Wobble groggily hit his alarm clock until it stopped ringing. Another dismal day had dawned.

### Commentary

This is a remarkably good story for this level (although it is on the long side), and the more you read it, the more you will find little details to impress and to amuse. Notice the italics for 'dream' at the end of paragraph one, a clever clue to the ending (which is handled well by there being two bells). The writer carefully gets round the problem of the all-too-visible wires as the learners return to the class. This is a good writer with her eye carefully on the detail of the story. There are no loose ends!

The story is challenging, because there is so much detail to keep under control. The main character is well presented and there is plenty of opportunity for analysis of the situations that the protagonists find themselves in. There is a strong sense of entertainment and much is done through the use of grammatical device and the choice of language to maintain the reader's attention. The reader is in no way hindered since everything is made clear and the writing is very fluent. There are virtually no errors and the structure and sequence of the writing are kept under excellent control. With these qualities sustained throughout, this piece does not belong in Mark Band 2, where they would be expected to appear less consistently.

Therefore we are looking at Mark Band 1. There is more quality, range of language and inventiveness here than in the speech about the pop festival (Assignment 1 – Example 2) so the mark ought to be higher. We can easily give the mark of **40** because the story fulfils all the criteria.

## 3.3 Assignment 3

### 3.3.1 Writing in response to text(s)

The purposes for writing covered in Assignment 3 are to:

**comment, evaluate, analyse** and to **argue and persuade**.

In Assignment 3, marks are given for the candidate's response to some reading material selected for study by the centre. A copy of the material(s) must be included in the sample sent to the External Moderator.

The syllabus requirement is that candidates will select, analyse and evaluate facts, opinions and arguments from a text or texts. The mark scheme for Band 1 for Reading clearly refers to candidates who 'analyse and evaluate several ideas and details from the text(s), and develop lines of thought'. In Band 2 'Candidates respond in detail to ideas from the text(s), explaining them and expressing views on them with varying degrees of effectiveness'. Candidates who summarise the ideas from the text or who paraphrase them should be given a mark in Band 3.

When you mark the final portfolio, you give an overall mark for the three pieces of writing out of 40, and **in addition** you give a mark out of 10 for the effectiveness of the reading in Assignment 3. Reading is **not** assessed in Assignments 1 and 2.

### 3.3.2 Choosing the text

Experience has shown that certain types of text are more successful in encouraging appropriate responses than others. The best practice is as follows:

- Choose an article that contains ideas and opinions that can be argued, evaluated and developed. For example, the article may use inconsistent arguments or confuse fact and opinion.
- Choose one article of no more than two sides of A4. If you choose too much reading material, it is difficult for candidates to select the best ideas to explore, and the result is that their responses are often too general and not specific enough.
- Avoid factual material, including newspaper reports, and lists of factual points from the internet (such as 'Ten ways to save the planet') as these have no arguments with which to engage.
- Avoid topics that are presented in such a way that it is not possible to disagree or to add much to what is well and properly expressed.
- Avoid whole stories and poems unless they contain very obvious ideas and opinions.



### 3.3.3 Examples of successful articles

*University: why bother?*

*Wearing fur*

*How much money do I need to be happy?*

*Why you can't sack boring teachers*

*Bringing up Chinese children*

*Too young to be a criminal*

*A strong attack of Facebook (by Janet Street Porter)*

*Stuff the Tigers by Jeremy Clarkson (against conservation)*

*Goal line technology (for football fans)*

*Airbrushing photos of celebrities*

*Underworked Americans (arguing that American work ethics are poor)*

*Sex bias in the Girl Guides.*

### 3.3.4 Comments on other types of text

#### (a) Advertising texts

Texts allow learners to discuss the ideas used by advertisers to sell to the public and they may compare and evaluate the methods used in two advertisements for the same product. Comments on the choice of language and the layout are not normally relevant. Advertisements containing an insignificant number of words should not be used for this assignment.

#### (b) The words of speeches

Because speeches are normally strongly persuasive, they are suitable for this assignment. However, they should contain specific ideas and opinions. If they are too general and rhetorical in tone, it is sometimes difficult for learners to grasp what is relevant to a good answer. An analysis of the rhetorical devices used in the text is not relevant to this assessment.

#### (c) Charitable appeals (e.g. leaflets)

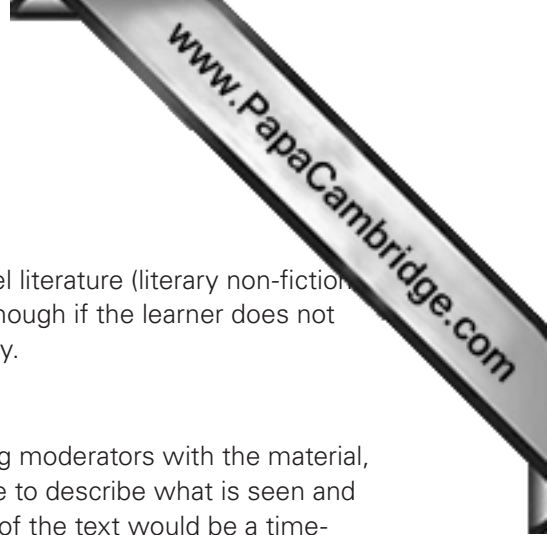
Learners may consider arguments backed by facts that are supposed to persuade people to contribute to a charity. They may compare two leaflets in aid of the same type of charity. An analysis of the language or the layout of the leaflet is not relevant to this assessment.

#### (d) Literary material

Literary texts are often not suitable. A short chapter or section of a novel or short story, a whole poem or a short scene from a play, *provided that they contain ideas, opinions and/or arguments* may be used. Literary criticism of the language or style is inappropriate for this assessment.

#### (e) Texts from websites

Most of the website material seen by moderators is weak and unchallenging, owing to a tendency to list or report information, often in a brief and simple form. Even when the source is a newspaper, the article is often edited and the paragraphs short and undeveloped. Texts should be chosen with care.



### (f) Travel literature

Town and city guides are unlikely to be challenging, but a great deal of travel literature (literary non-fiction) can be appropriate. Texts normally contain plenty of ideas and opinions, although if the learner does not know the place described in the text, it may cause some degree of difficulty.

### (g) The moving image

For the purposes of this assignment, owing to the complexities of supplying moderators with the material, such texts are not suitable. Since the test is of reading, learners would have to describe what is seen and relate the text to it in a form that could be read. Even then, the preparation of the text would be a time-consuming job.

## 3.3.5 Task setting

The typical response to an article is to reply to the writer in the form of a letter. The letter may also be addressed to the publisher of the article. A response could also be in the form of a debate speech or even a conversation with the writer.

Direct responses are suitable for most texts. For example a letter might be sent to a character in a literary text, or a protest could be made to an advertiser whose claims a learner thought were spurious. Lively writing, expressing strongly held personal views tends to give better results than formal writing. However, angry learners should avoid personal attacks on writers and confine themselves to the opinions and ideas that have been read.

It is incumbent on the teacher to use comments to indicate where and how the learner has shown understanding that merits credit. These should be specific to the chosen text as well as being criteria-based. Comments addressing the assessment of writing will be separate.

## 3.3.6 Key messages for Assignment 3

- Choose texts of a sensible length, that have plenty of ideas and opinions with which learners can engage.
- Do not teach to the text. Learners should express their own opinions, not those learned by the class.
- Make sure that learners do not turn the exercise even partly into an analysis of style and language.
- When assessing the reading, use the Mark Scheme and make sure that you understand the difference between the bands.

## Assignment 3 – Example 1

### [Reading text – an article]

Dear sir

I just read your article on the opinions of the U.S. state to ban violent video games, I the pop culture column for the Entertainment Weekly. , and I couldn't be more agreed.

According to certain people, violent video games should be banned; they feel that violent video games are the source of today's violence among children. I strongly disagree with them. Video games, like movies, music and any other form of art, are there to entertain people and to enjoy, not restrict. What most people fail to realize is that the video game industry, like the film industry, they have a strict code of parental guidelines already in place. What I fail to understand is that some parents believe its okay to give their children 18+ rated games even though they are well under that age, and say these games are the sources of violence between children. If parents would not let a 10-year-old watch 18+ rated horrors movies, then why would parents let a 10-year-old play Gears of War, or Grand Theft Auto with its gang, crime and sexual content?

Video games that have violence in them such as Call of Duty, might be banned for showing mature content. Video games sold in the United States reach retail sales of twenty one billion dollars a year. If they are banned, the economy can lose a tremendous amount of profit, and not to mention almost every mature adult around the world would be extremely furious.

When people say that video games are very influential on the youth of today, they are probably right. However, the youth of today probably shouldn't be plying violent video games to start with, just as they shouldn't be watching violent movies. Violent video games have an age rating on them for a reason. If parents want buy their under aged children violent video games, then they should not complain that the video games are causing their children to become violent. Before complaining, they should actually pay attention to the age ranting.

Video games bring many benefits such as increasing self-esteem and encouraging teamwork, therefore they should not be banned. When kids play a video games which supports multi players, they have to work as a team. By working as a team, kids learn to help each other when they are in need. Beating a video game can be a very difficult task that requires lots of concentration, practice and skill. To beat the video game one must practice to succeed which, like teamwork, is another lesson that will be useful thought life.

Video games provide entertainment for everyone. If video games are banned, then people will find a way to get them. Teens can get anything they want, even if they are not allowed to, they will always find a way. If video games are banned it would cause more trouble because people would make an underground video game market similar to the drug market. This would cause more people to go to jail and jails will become overcrowded.

Some video games are violent, but that does not mean it should be banned because video games bring many benefits, such as encouraging teamwork, increasing self-esteem, reducing pain and they are beneficial to the economy, also if video games were banned complications will arise. There are many other solutions to this conflict such as establishing a stronger rating system, which is another reason why video games should not be banned.

### Commentary – Reading

The article set by the school was an attack by a well-known writer on plans by a U.S. state to ban the sale of violent video games to anyone under 18. The writer argued that the state should not interfere with the role of parents. He stated that it was not yet known whether there was a connection between games and violent behaviour, and that violence was inherent in society, probably as a result of the rich and poor divide and the U.S. gun laws. He thought that the existing rating system was sufficient.

In this response there was very little engagement with the text. The candidate did not notice that the ban was age-related. This would have affected the focus of the argument. He took up the point about parental responsibility and developed this with some effectiveness. He also commented relevantly on the rating of videos. However, most of the response was taken up with points that bore no relation to the reading, and instead of engaging with the theme of videos and violence, this became a defence of video games in general. While the point about teamwork was no doubt true, it probably referred to a different type of game from the violent ones. There was therefore a careless misunderstanding, and reference to only two points in the passage, which was mostly used irrelevantly as a stimulus for the candidate's own views. The best fit was with Band 4 in the Mark Scheme, and the candidate's teacher decided on a mark of **3** for reading.

### Commentary – Writing

In places, the writing was clear and the sentence structures ambitious enough to suggest Band 3. The spelling was generally correct and the candidate used commas throughout the letter. There were some errors of sentence separation and some other, varied mistakes. There was a problem in the choice of language where key words were repeated unnecessarily. The obvious example was '(violent) video games'. The other weakness was the structure of the argument. In particular, having argued for parental control, the candidate returned to the point at some length near the end. There were also repeated references to entertainment and rating. Finally there were several places where the style was insecure. While there were many features of Band 3 writing, the final mark was **25**.

## Assignment 3 – Example 2

### [Reading text: travel writing extracts]

In Kate Pullinger's "Hitchhiking through the Yukon"; Pullinger uses normal language that anyone would use in a conversation between 2 people, which gives the feeling that Pullinger is really talking to the reader in the first person, which then makes the reader interested in them and able to humanly identify with them.

Pullinger also uses statistics to show that the Yukon is "Exceptionally under populated, with less than 25,000 people in an area as large as France". And that how cold it is, the temperature being 20 degrees Celsius.

An interesting thing about the way the text is written is how it pays much more attention to the people of the Yukon than that of the scenery. Throughout her extract, Pullinger is very observant of the people she Hitch Hikes with, and meticulously writes about them in detail. More than half of the extract is about the people she hitch hikes with, about their personalities and other details. Whilst some people may claim that there was not enough writing on the scenery, that was not what the point of the text, which has the title "Hitch Hiking Through the Yukon".

However, unlike Kate Pullinger, in Michael Asher's extract "A Desert Dies", he uses very descriptive words to paint, weave, and materialize the situation in the reader's mind about his experiences in first person, with the aid of a lot of metaphors, comparisons, adjectives and

symbolism to help aid and "weave" his story, in an Arabic sense. Such examples are, "A savage sand storm punched into us with hammer force", "Disappearing into a veil of dust" and "The golden beams of the dwindling sun spread out... like the arms of a giant star fish". Unlike Pullinger, Asher uses no statistics to describe how large the area he is in, or just how inhospitable the desert's "maw" really is, he uses adjectives to do so. This is evident when he writes "The night grew colder and the wind more icy". And another interesting fact related to the lack of statistics is that Asher is traveling in an un-developed part of the world, where the lack of statistics would add to the atmosphere of how un-developed the area is.

Kate Pullinger is quite a pleasant woman to be with, she's very laid back and is trusting enough to hitch hike in a desolate (people wise) countryside, where it's very cold and very large. She's also very open and speaks her mind about things, she readily engages in conversations with people, which is evident when she hitch hikes with people, although she does need someone else to start the conversation first, because with the first person she hitch hikes with, the lady she travels with is gruff and doesn't speak at all, whilst with the second hitch hiker, they both start chatting almost immediately.

But Michael Asher is another story over a wide chasm. Michael Asher is almost the opposite of Kate Pullinger. Asher is a very brave and adventurous man for going out into the desert and living with the tribes people and traveling with them. He doesn't talk about himself much and his companions much in his extract, and he seems to blend into the local background very well. Asher is also a very good writer and a very descriptive man, this is very evident from all the metaphors, comparisons, adjectives, and symbolisms et al.

The fairly obvious purpose of Kate Pullinger's extract is to attract a myriad of nature lovers, scenery lovers and back packers to the Yukon and to tell them that it would be safe to hitch hike there, due to the fact that she meticulously writes about the people she hitch hikes with, so the people coming to the Yukon wouldn't be afraid to hitch hike. Sublimely, they'll be expecting the kind of people that Pullinger writes in her extract because when reading her extract, it feels as if she is really talking to you.

The purpose of Michael Asher's extract is a bit vague, but is still discernable. Asher's purpose for writing the text could have been a by-product of his adventures in the desert, just purely for entertainment, or to try to lure hardy adventurers to the desert. We'll never really know, but the most plausible purpose is the first one, where it's a by-product of his adventures. No one sane would go out into the desert just to write a descriptive piece of travel writing, unless they wanted to experience life in the desert and write about it afterwards.

### Commentary – Reading

This is a good task, in which the candidate compares facts and opinions from the two extracts. The extracts are analysed and there is plenty of evaluation, encouraged by the comparison. The candidate thinks for himself throughout the piece, and the task focuses his mind securely on the task.

The thought is complex and the candidate deals with both fact and opinion. He develops his own views on the personalities of the writers as they are revealed in the extracts. He shows clearly how situations and experiences are conveyed by language. While references to the use of language and statistics are not to be encouraged, here they are related to the ideas in the extracts.

The variety of the ideas in this writing and the quality of the analysis and evaluation make a good fit with the Band 1 description. 'With occasional success' (Band 2) would be a little hard on this original and lively work. For reading a mark of **9** is appropriate.

### Commentary – Writing

Assignment 3 plays an equal part in the portfolio when we give a mark for writing out of 40. We can award a mark of **33** for this piece assessed according to the writing criteria (pages 10–12). There is frequent merit in the manner of writing and the choice of content, but there are also a number of minor errors and some awkwardness of phrasing, which have to be taken into consideration. The expression is rather loose, for example at the beginning and end of paragraph seven. Nevertheless, the use of language is often varied and effective.

## Assignment 3 – Example 3

(The assignment was originally twice the length; the following sections demonstrate the quality of the writing as a whole.)

### [Reading text: poem]

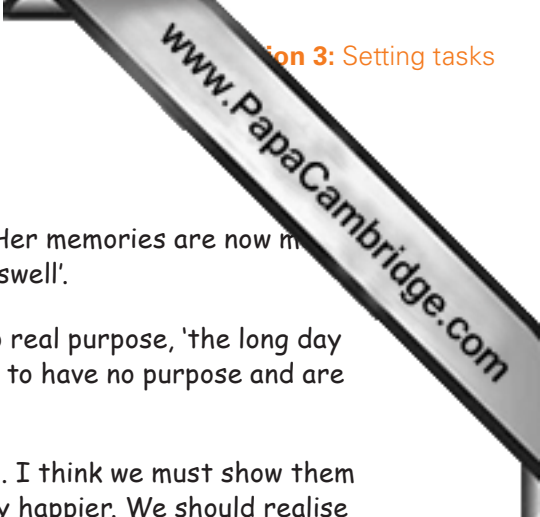
The poem 'A Crabbit Old Woman' is about an old woman who is staying in a nursing home. The old woman is the persona of this poem. She is hopeless and unable to do anything for herself. Lying in her bed she remembers how she used to be when she was young: 'I remember the joys, I remember the pain.' All these memories of her past keep her alive.

'I think of the years, all too few - gone too fast.'

This illustrates the theme of the poem. It describes the transience of life, meaning that life passes by and nothing can last for ever. The message that is seen throughout the poem is that we should see people for who they really are on the inside and not how they look on the outside. In the poem the old lady asks the nurses to 'look closer' and see beyond the wrinkles.

The repetition of the question, at the beginning of the poem, 'What do you see nurses, what do you see?' suggests in a demanding tone that there is more behind the wrinkles. Phyllis McCormack wants to show the contrast between the passive appearance of the old woman, who is 'uncertain of habit' and 'with faraway eyes' and the active inside.

The visual imagery of the old woman gives us a clear picture of how she and the nurses view her. As the old woman says, 'she dribbles her food' and 'makes no reply'. By using the description of her deteriorating body, the poet emphasises that all her energy and physical strength is gone. There is also a derogatory reference to her body as 'carcase' illustrating the disrespect the nurses have for her and her own view of her body. This comes in contrast with the 'young girl' who lives inside



her. Her soul has not grown old, only her body has outlived its use. Her memories are now more important and are so powerful that they make her 'battered heart swell'.

The poet emphasises that life is a routine, purely functional with no real purpose, 'the long day to fill'. The long vowel sounds used reflect the long days which seem to have no purpose and are simply filled with routine activities like 'bathing and feeding'.

After reading this poem I feel more responsible towards old people. I think we must show them more respect and give them more attention, making them in this way happier. We should realise that they are human beings, not 'carcasses' and they have the right as well as all the other people to be happy.

### Commentary – Reading

This is a good choice of a poem that is particularly strong in ideas and opinions and where the choice of language firmly supports the theme. It is appropriate for this assignment that candidates should be asked to define, interpret, evaluate and comment on the content.

This candidate selects ideas and opinions from the poem and defines the main argument. In interpreting the theme, she makes it at least inferentially clear that she supports what the poem says, and to that extent, it is an evaluation. Her reaction to what she has read, in the final paragraph, is not very strong. She comments on the language of the poem to show how the theme is conveyed. She takes care to explain ideas from the poem, which she clearly understands. For example, she develops the idea of the transience of life, explains it and justifies it. The whole of that paragraph evaluates the material in terms of how we should behave. She makes something of the use of the word 'carcase' which she repeats in her closing paragraph of personal reaction. This writing shows engagement with the text throughout, unlike **Example 1** where the text is misused as a stimulus for the candidate's own ideas.

This response fits Mark Band 2 well. Compared with the travel writing piece (**Example 2**), this candidate does not develop her ideas beyond straightforward interpretation and the strong feeling that the poem has made an important impression on her. You might also think that the text is not so challenging. Nevertheless, the focus on the task is excellent. A mark of **7** would be appropriate.

### Commentary – Writing

This writing is clear and fluent. There are no errors and the sentences are well constructed. The language is occasionally effective, and always appropriate. The complexity of the language varies from comparatively straightforward at the beginning to a much stronger style three paragraphs from the end. This writing fits elements of Mark Bands 1 and 2, and, from the evidence here, a mark of **35** is appropriate.





## Section 4: Managing the administration of coursework

### 4.1 Checklist

- Each centre appoints an Internal Moderator to be responsible for administration where there is more than one teacher/moderator.
- During the course, teachers annotate and assess assignments regularly and keep records.
- At the end of the course, teachers finalise the overall marks for each portfolio and place the candidates in rank order.
- An Individual Candidate Record Card is completed for each candidate and fixed to the front of the portfolio.
- The Internal Moderator holds a meeting at which the marking of all teachers is checked and any adjustments made.
- The final marks for the centre are entered on the Coursework Assessment Summary form, where all adjustments are shown.
- The final marks are also entered on the Mark Sheet MS1 or the electronic equivalent.
- The Internal Moderator checks that the marks on the MS1 (or the electronic equivalent), the Coursework Assessment Summary form and the Individual Candidate Record Card are the same.
- In accordance with instructions received from Cambridge, a sample is prepared for the External Moderator, and this is sent to Cambridge.

### 4.2 Marking drafts

You are allowed to advise candidates to revise, edit and to correct their work, but **you must under no circumstance indicate and correct errors on their behalf**. The advice must not constitute the correction.

A comment at the end of the work such as, 'You should check your punctuation, especially your use of full stops' is allowable. An annotation where a full stop has been omitted is not.

It is good practice to discuss with candidates such issues as structure, balance, and beginnings and endings with a view to improving first drafts. Your aim is for the candidate to learn to criticise work and to make changes for the better.

The External Moderator will expect to see amendments to a first draft in the candidate's own writing in addition to a teacher's comment at the end of the work.

### 4.3 Marking final drafts of assignments

Teachers are reminded that final drafts of all assignments should be annotated with comments related to the Mark Schemes and that errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and also inaccurate or inappropriate expression should be clearly shown.

At the end of the course, you should re-assess the writing of each candidate as a whole, using the Mark Scheme. The final mark for writing will be related to the marks of individual assignments but may not be an exact arithmetical average of the three marks.

The marks for writing relate objectively to the Mark Schemes and no account is taken of the stage in the course when they were produced.

### 4.4 The internal moderation meeting

This meeting is essential if there are two or more teaching sets entering candidates from the centre and they have a different teacher/moderator.

The function of the meeting is to establish a single, reliable rank order for all the candidates in the centre, and it must be held when all the folders are complete and just before the marks are submitted to Cambridge.

While it is possible for all the teachers to meet for this purpose, it is expensive on staff time, and the process takes longer because different teachers have to see large numbers of portfolios and agree on the marks, which can take a great deal of discussion. The centre may therefore choose two teachers who are known to be reliable assessors, to meet to assess the marking of each teaching group in turn.

They must first of all agree on the marking of each other's candidates. They then examine a sample from each of the other sets in turn. There should be ten portfolios in each sample, covering the range from the highest to the lowest mark. The marks may be approved, or judged to be consistently severe or generous, in which case the marks should be amended appropriately. It may be decided that marks only need to be amended in a particular range of the marking, for example the bottom third.

If the moderating teachers are not sure how to adjust marks, they may call for more folders from a teaching group. Where the marking is inconsistent, they should try to work out why this has occurred and ask the teacher concerned to submit a new rank order. Where marking is inconsistent, it is usually because one of the criteria in the Mark Schemes has been considered more important than the rest. Another common issue is when an unduly large number of candidates have been given the same mark and it is impossible to agree that the work is of the same quality. This can usually be resolved by asking the teacher to redistribute the candidates over a three, or even four-mark range.

When the process is at an end, the Internal Moderator should make sure that all the amendments to the marks are recorded on the Coursework Assessment Summary form and that these are the final marks to be submitted to Cambridge and to be recorded on the individual portfolios and the mark sheets.

## 4.5 External moderation

It is a requirement that each Centre must send a sample of their portfolios to Cambridge for external moderation. The candidates included in this sample will be selected by Cambridge. Details of this can be found on our samples database.

To access the samples database, your Examination Officer should go to [www.cie.org.uk/samples](http://www.cie.org.uk/samples), download the database from the 'Extra Guidance' panel, select 'Enable macros', and enter your Centre number and syllabus number.

The sample should include a copy of all articles used for Assignment 3 and the first draft of **one** assignment.

Each portfolio should be securely fixed together, for example with a staple, and there should be an Individual Candidate Record Card, filled in with all the details, on the front.

Portfolios **should not be** enclosed in individual plastic packets or sent in heavy folders.

The sample should be accompanied by the Moderator's copy of the Mark Sheet (MS1), the centre's Coursework Assessment Summary form and the Individual Candidate Record Card(s).

Your External Moderator will seek to approve your marks. Where they are amended, this will be to bring your marking into line with all centres entering the component.

**Please check all details, deadlines and arrangements in the *Cambridge Administration Guide* and in the *Cambridge Handbook for Centres*.**

## 4.6 Documentation

Please find on the following pages the Individual Candidate Record Card and the Coursework Assessment Summary Form taken from the syllabus. The syllabus provides comprehensive advice about completing these forms.



## Example Individual Candidate Record Card

### Cambridge IGCSE® First Language English

Please follow these instructions carefully before completing the PDF *Individual Candidate Record Cards* provided below.

1. This form is an interactive PDF and may be completed in one of three ways:
  - on-screen and then printed out
  - on-screen and then printed out; add any internally moderated marks by hand
  - printed out and completed on paper by hand.

**Cambridge recommends that, wherever possible, this form is completed on-screen. The form will add up the candidates' marks for you and eliminate the risk of calculation error.**

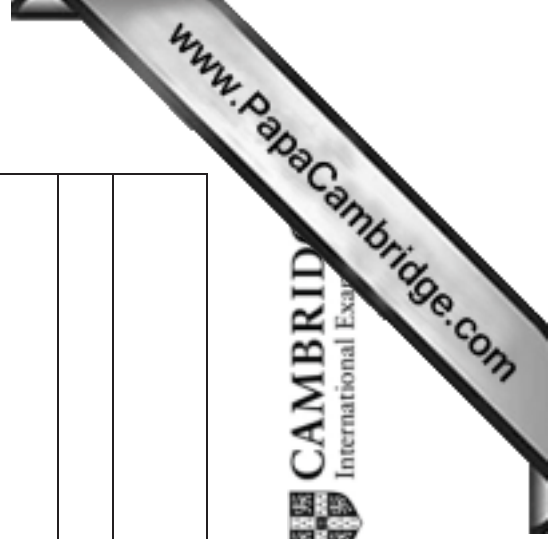
2. Additional copies of this form can be downloaded from the samples database [www.cie.org.uk/samples](http://www.cie.org.uk/samples).

3. To help you fill in the candidate names and numbers on this form, you may wish to ask your exams officer to follow the step-by-step guide that is available on the *Coursework Assessment Summary Form*.

4. Completing the *Individual Candidate Record Card*:

- Complete the information at the top of the form
- Mark the Coursework assignment for each candidate according to the mark scheme devised by the Centre for the Coursework unit. This should be developed using criteria in line with that listed in the Syllabus booklet
- Enter the marks and total marks in the appropriate spaces. Complete any other sections of the form as required
- It is essential that the marks of candidates from different teaching groups within each centre are moderated internally
- Include the details of the teaching group or set for each candidate. The initials of the teacher may be used to show which group or set
- Enter a description of each of the three coursework tasks (individual activity, pair-based activity and group activity) and the mark for each task in the appropriate spaces.
- If you are completing the form on paper by hand, add up the marks and write the total in the 'Total Mark' column. If you are completing the form on screen, the marks will be added up for you and the total will automatically appear in the 'Total Mark' column.
- Transfer marks to the *Coursework Assessment Summary Form* in line with the instructions given on that document.

5. **Please keep a copy of the *Individual Candidate Record Card (s)* for your records.**



Individual Candidate Record Card Cambridge IGCSE Coursework Portfolio Please select Syllabus and Component below					

Please read the previous printed instructions and the General Coursework Regulations before completing this form.

Centre Number	Centre Name	Exam Series	Year	
Candidate Number	Candidate Name	Teaching Group/Set		

Assignments 1 (informative/ analytical/ argumentative) and 2 (descriptive/ narrative)	
Date of completion	Full title of assignment  First draft included* Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)

Assignment 3 (response to text)**	
Date of completion	Full title of assignment  Brief description of stimulus text(s)  First draft included* Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)

\* A first draft must be included for one of the three assignments  
 \*\*A copy of all texts used for Assignment 3 must be included in the sample sent to the moderator.

Teacher's comments on overall Coursework Portfolio:	Mark for writing (out of 40)
	Mark for reading (out of 10) (Assignment 3 only)
	Total mark (out of 50): to be transferred to Coursework Assessment Summary Form
	0

## Example Coursework Assessment Summary Form

### Cambridge IGCSE® First Language English

Please follow these instructions carefully before completing the PDF Individual Candidate Record Cards provided below.

1. This form is an interactive PDF and may be completed in one of three ways:
  - on-screen and then printed out
  - on-screen and then printed out; add any internally moderated marks by hand
  - printed out and completed on paper by hand.

**Cambridge recommends that, wherever possible, this form is completed on-screen. The form will add up the candidates' marks for you and eliminate the risk of calculation error.**

2. Additional copies of this form can be downloaded from the samples database [www.cie.org.uk/samples](http://www.cie.org.uk/samples).

3. To help you fill in the candidate names and numbers on this form, you may wish to ask your exams officer to follow the step-by-step guide that is available on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form.

4. Completing the Individual Candidate Record Card:

- Complete the information at the top of the form
- Mark the Coursework assignment for each candidate according to the mark scheme devised by the Centre for the Coursework unit. This should be developed using criteria in line with that listed in the Syllabus booklet
- Enter the marks and total marks in the appropriate spaces. Complete any other sections of the form as required
- It is essential that the marks of candidates from different teaching groups within each centre are moderated internally
- Include the details of the teaching group or set for each candidate. The initials of the teacher may be used to show which group or set
- Enter a description of each of the three coursework tasks (individual activity, pair-based activity and group activity) and the mark for each task in the appropriate spaces.
- If you are completing the form on paper by hand, add up the marks and write the total in the 'Total Mark' column. If you are completing the form on screen, the marks will be added up for you and the total will automatically appear in the 'Total Mark' column.
- Transfer marks to the Coursework Assessment Summary Form in line with the instructions given on that document.

5. Please keep a copy of the Individual Candidate Record Card (s) for your records.







## Section 5: How to submit your work for accreditation

### 5.1 The Coursework Training Handbook

If teachers are seeking accreditation by using this training handbook, they are required to work through the whole training handbook, carrying out the accreditation task at the end. The completed accreditation forms, detailing your marks and comments, should then be sent to Cambridge for assessment. You will find the address overleaf.

Applications for accreditation via this training handbook may be submitted to Cambridge at any time during the year. The accreditation process takes from four to six weeks from the time your forms are received by Cambridge. Application for accreditation must be made well in advance of the examination series for which it is required.

Where the assessment of the accreditation submission meets the required standards, accreditation will be given and a Coursework Accreditation Certificate issued.

Where accreditation is not awarded, the teacher will receive a report that provides guidance on areas of the assessment that need to be revised. Teachers are expected to re-assess the exemplar work in line with the guidance provided by Cambridge and re-submit their application.

You will need to give an overall mark out of 40 for writing (not an arithmetical average of three marks) and a mark out of 10 for reading (Assignment 3 only).

**Important:** If several colleagues from your centre are seeking accreditation at the same time, you should work **separately** and send the marks that you have personally decided. This will allow the person approving your application to give the most helpful advice possible.

Set your standards by the nine examples given earlier in this handbook. First decide on a Mark Bank and then on a mark within the band.

### 5.2 Accreditation fees

An accreditation fee per teacher is charged for each submission of training materials or each CV sent to Cambridge for accreditation. The accreditation fee also covers the cost of returning accreditation decisions by courier to centres.

Your centre will be invoiced for accreditation fees. You can find details of the fees for accreditation in the *Cambridge Administrative Guide*. For applications received from individuals not attached to a centre, Cambridge will accept cheques and VISA and Mastercard credit cards (not American Express™).

### 5.3 Sending details of accredited teachers to Cambridge

Details of accredited teachers must be submitted to Cambridge prior to each examination series using the Teacher Assessment Form 1 which can be downloaded from the Exams Officers section of the Cambridge website.

The dates for the submission of this form will be detailed in the *Cambridge Administrative Guide*.



## 5.4 Assessment form

If you are seeking accreditation by using this Coursework Training Handbook, please copy and complete the forms on pages 53–56, giving your personal details, a declaration of the authenticity of your work and your marks and comments, and send or fax it to:

IGCSE Accreditation Coordinator (EDM)  
Cambridge International Examinations  
Cambridge Assessment DC10  
Hill Farm Road  
Whittlesford  
Cambridge  
CB22 4FZ  
United Kingdom

You should show separate marks for each assignment as well as your final marks. This, together with your comments on the quality of each assignment allows specific feedback to be given.

Please allow between four and six weeks for the moderator to assess the work that has been submitted and for Cambridge to inform you of the outcome.

You will be informed of the moderator's decision regarding the outcome by post. This will take the form of a certificate when accreditation is awarded, or in cases where it can not be awarded, a letter informing you of this. A moderator's report may also be enclosed giving guidance where accreditation is withheld and feedback where it is awarded.

If accreditation is not awarded, this does not mean that a teacher cannot continue to teach the course, but it restricts their ability to moderate Coursework. You may re-submit work for accreditation as many times as you wish. There is, however, a charge each time for doing so.

### Further help

We hope that this handbook provides a thorough introduction to the requirements and criteria for the setting and assessment of coursework in IGCSE First Language English. However, if you have any further questions or difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact Cambridge and we will do our best to help.

The address to which queries should be sent is:

Customer Services  
Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU  
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 1223 553554  
Fax: +44 1223 553558  
E-mail: [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)



## Cambridge IGCSE® coursework assessor accreditation Cover Sheet

### Cambridge IGCSE First Language English 0500/0522

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS.

<b>Centre number</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Centre name</b>	<input type="text"/>					
<b>Teacher's name</b>	<input type="text"/>					
<b>Contact email</b>	<input type="text"/>					

### Declaration of authenticity

I have read and understood the training materials and certify that the evidence submitted with this form is my own original work.

**Signed**

**Date**

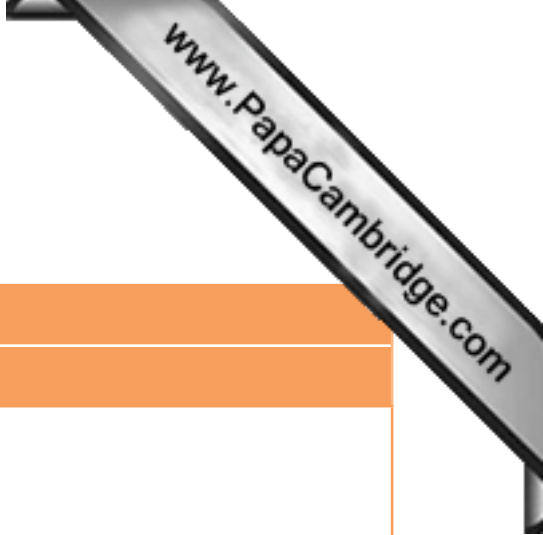
(DD/MM/YY)

**Name**

### Return this form to

IGCSE Accreditation Coordinator  
 Cambridge International Examinations  
 Cambridge Assessment DC10  
 Hill Farm Road  
 Whittlesford  
 Cambridge  
 CB22 4FZ  
 United Kingdom

Save a copy of all completed forms for your own records. Scanned versions of completed forms can be emailed to info@cie.org.uk. Please put 'IGCSE Teacher Accreditation' in the subject line of your email.



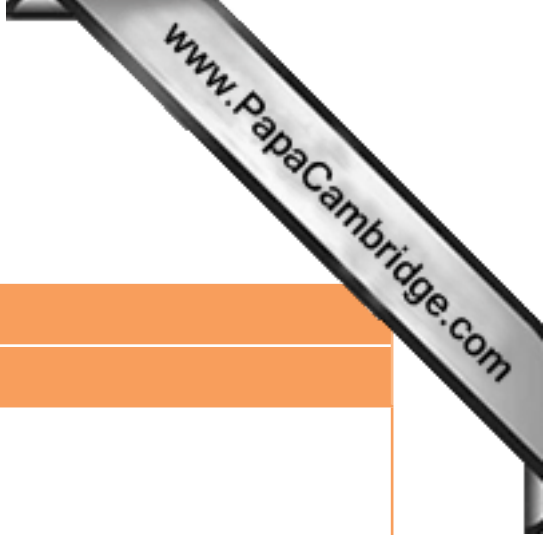
## Accreditation mark sheet

Candidate A: Marks and comments				
Assignment 1				
			Mark	
Assignment 2				
			Mark	
Assignment 3				
		Mark: writing	Mark: reading	
Final comments with overall mark for writing				
			Mark: writing	Mark



## Accreditation mark sheet (continued)

Candidate B: Marks and comments			
Assignment 1			
			Mark
Assignment 2			
			Mark
Assignment 3			
		Mark: writing	Mark: reading
Final comments with overall mark for writing			
		Mark: writing	Mark



## Accreditation mark sheet (continued)

Candidate C: Marks and comments			
Assignment 1			
			Mark
Assignment 2			
			Mark
Assignment 3			
		Mark: writing	Mark: reading
Final comments with overall mark for writing			
		Mark: Writing	Mark

## Section 6: Accreditation portfolios

### 6.1 Portfolio 1: Candidate A

Individual Record Card

Assignment 1 Answer	My Abseiling Adventure
Assignment 2 DRAFT Answer	Full-Proof Dating
Assignment 2 Answer	Fool-Proof Dating
Assignment 3 Article	'That surly driver could kill you!'
Assignment 3 Answer	Dear Greg Kelebonye

### 6.2 Portfolio 2: Candidate B

Individual Record Card

Assignment 1 Answer	Don't get me started on football
Assignment 2 DRAFT Answer	Paradise
Assignment 2 Answer	Paradise
Assignment 3 Article	'Life is supposed to be hard, even if you got three A stars'
Assignment 3 Answer	Dear Liz Jones

### 6.3 Portfolio 3: Candidate C

Individual Record Card

Assignment 1 Answer	Should the Argentine Football association change the number of teams that play in the first division just because River Plate were relegated last year?
Assignment 2 Answer	Castle School
Assignment 3 Article	'You can't ban boredom...it's a life skill'
Assignment 3 DRAFT Answer	Dear Mr Mitchell
Assignment 3 Answer	Dear Mr Mitchell

## 6.1 Portfolio 1, Candidate A

### Individual Record Card



Individual Candidate Record Card Cambridge IGCSE Coursework Portfolio Please select Syllabus and Component below					

Please read the previous printed instructions and the General Coursework Regulations before completing this form.

Centre Number	Centre Name	Exam Series	November	Year	Teaching Group/Set
Candidate Number	Candidate Name				

Assignments 1 (informative/ analytical/ argumentative) and 2 (descriptive/ narrative)			
Date of completion	Full title of assignment		
06/06/14	First Dates		
12/03/14	A time I will always vividly remember		
Assignment 3 (response to text)**			
Date of completion	Full title of assignment	Brief description of stimulus text(s)	First draft included*
12/09/14	'That Surly Driver could Kill You' (letter to the Editor)	Newspaper Article from 'MMEGI'	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)
* A first draft must be included for one of the three assignments. **A copy of all texts used for Assignment 3 must be included in the sample sent to the moderator.			
Teacher's comments on overall Coursework Portfolio:		Mark for writing (out of 40)	
		Mark for reading (out of 10) (Assignment 3 only)	
		Total mark (out of 50): to be transferred to Coursework Assessment Summary Form	0







Portfolio 1, Candidate A  
Assignment 1 Task

– ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENT

EXPRESSIVE WRITING:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Write an essay of about 600 words on ONE of the following topics:

1. A time I will always remember vividly
2. An occasion or celebration in my culture which I hope will always be celebrated as it is now.

Remember that this is an expressive piece which should include vivid imagery and description. Choose your adjectives carefully. Try to include details like sights, sounds, tastes and smells, so that you paint a word picture for the reader.

Remember that your language grade will also depend heavily on the following:

- Spelling
- Punctuation, including apostrophes
- Correct tenses
- Appropriate paragraphing
- Suitable word choices
- Varied sentence structures

You must, therefore, edit your work as carefully as you can in order to avoid losing marks unnecessarily.

Please attach this sheet to your assignment when you submit it.

## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

## Assignment 1 Answer

**My Abseiling Adventure**

When something unexpected comes heading in my direction, dark clouds tend to hover above my head. It had only been two days since our departure from Turing School, and even though we had gone through many obstacles, this was the one task I could not defend myself against. Its large jaws stayed wide open, as if waiting for me to fall into its trap. It was not been my first time Abseiling, and I can only – vaguely remember my first few times. The first time I went on a wild adventure and came across Abseiling when I was in Grade 5, during Forest Primary Schools annual school camp. I remember stalling, trying to avoid being anchored by a small rope from an extensive high cliff and possibly falling. I was also uncertain of whether I should cry or be brave because I had calculated how I was going to handle the situation. This only lead to the sound of laughter and a cry all let out within one sound. My second experience was more of an exciting and a thrilling because this time around I managed to come out of it with no screams or injuries I may have felt over-confident on my next tackle with the beast. Unaware of ho swoon that encounter may be, because even though my first and second Abseiling trips had appeared to be fun and more of an experience but adventure. This time, my third time, was different...

I was left felling embarrassed and vulnerable, even though I am more than proud of myself for concurring my fear of going Abseiling, Taking note from our first hike during our stay at Outward Bound Camp, I was determined to make sure that I kept up with the group. Still I made sure I took the time to take in the beautiful scenery as our climb took its course. I listened to the winds sounds, like music, a whistle strong enough to shake the trees from their muscular roots, yet soft enough to stroke my hair gently, blowing it in a swift movement. The scent of the blooming flowers tickled the inside of my nose, sending an electrical current of thrill all around my body. Forgetting my surroundings and where my journey was heading, the long walk up the hill in the silence, from what I can recall, gave me the chance to reflect on the many things that I had achieved during my stay there and how those skills were going to benefit me when I returned home. As I gathered my thoughts, before I knew it, I noticed that the rest of the group was moving on higher grounds and I was falling behind.

When we finally caught up with the group, my happiness was instantly eradicated for there it was, waiting. Unable to control myself, showers of salty water began to flood my cheeks as my fears took over and got the better of me. This unforgettable emotion of fear came over me when tears fled by face, to attempt shielding me away from the possible pain I was to come across. I was more than horrified and felt that the entire situation was as equivalent as pushing me off a plane without any armament. It was much unexpected and I had not been given the chance to mentally prepare myself. Nobody said a word as they were amazed on how I had taken the surprise of Abseiling.

I sat on a rock as far away from the edge as possible. As I watched members of my group go up to the cliff and disappear down the side of it within seconds. Every time a new person went over the cliff, a new set of tears spilled out of my eyes. I was terrified. I didn't way a work until I heard a familiar voice calling my name. I was exhausted from all the crying and I didn't have energy to fight. A final tear ran down my cheeks as I realized what he was about to make me do. I knew I had to face it. I took every step with great care listening to the encouraging words of my friends.

Before I knew it, my feet were on solid ground again and was surrounded by cheers.

I realize now that even if I am scared to do something, in the m everything will play out he way it should be. Even if it means going through a few obstacles before I am fully satisfied with the final result. I should be able to achieve whatever it is that I set to, with no fear but only faith in myself. Now, I can not wait to try Abseiling again.

Portfolio 1, Candidate A  
Assignment 2 Task

– ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENT  
INFORMATIVE WRITING

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE SUBMITTED: \_\_\_\_\_

Task:



You are to prepare a magazine article aimed at young teenagers, on the topic of first dates.

You should include advice on how to approach someone for date and what to do if they reject you. You should also talk about where to go, how to arrange transport, what to wear, and who should pay for what. Advice on how to behave should also form part of your article. Make sure to make your article interesting and genuinely helpful!

Your article can be aimed specifically at boys or girls, or be a general article applicable to both.

You will need to give your article a title, and you should use subheadings for different sections of your article.

Length: 500 – 800 words

## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

## Assignment 2 DRAFT Answer

**Full-Proof Dating**

As they say in baseball, metaphor goes, 'three strikes and you're out' on a first date you only have limited bases of opportunities and three strikes is well over the budget for a misinterpreted first impression. The first date is always the easiest stage in the dating scene, and still both boy and girl relish on making inaccurate approaches in any hits to a second date. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the rules of the game look rather murky to say the least and traditions have evolved, increasing the chances that 1 out of 25 young adults are clueless on the Full-Prof-Dating guidelines. Why let past first date disasters spoil the night when there are more possible for a prosperous relationship unfolding. Read more and have a guide to guide map on how to be a full-proof-date.

Stage 1: The Approach

Have no fear when it comes to asking a girl/boy on a date, the worst thing that could happen is them missing on a great opportunity. If you're really shy person, perhaps you might want to try being friends, talk through facebook or any other social networks that involve instant messaging. This will help build your confidence in later on having to physically talk to your admirer; a friendship foundation would start to take form. Next thing to do would be to pop the question, not to ask him/her to marry you, although suggest a date. It does not matter whether you blatantly pop the bomb or hint that you just so happened to have two tickets to a football match/Sleepless in Seattle movie, and you were wondering if he would care to join you. Bare in mind that if you're the girl asking then, most guys are not Twilight saga fans and so the tool is to find something you are defiantly sure he will be interested in and can't resist from temptation.

Stage 2: The Strategy

The most embarrassing case scenario would be having your date never pitch because of TRANSPORT. As soon as the date has been made official, plan ahead and think of transport, and arrange how the both of you will get to the location and find a way home from the location. The best way to go about this is to also have the parents involved, as scary as it sounds, mum and dad know best and if it's meant to be, will make sure the date goes on. Another suggestion could be to have a lunch date instead of the usual, a day activity always is fun and shows an outgoing personality. It would be very convenient because even when the date is over, public transportation is safe during these hours. Not only that, something like a brunch has calm energy and a 'floating on clouds' feeling it gives off, looking over a beautiful landscape. Romantic, right?

Stage 3: Metamorphoses

From old dating tricks to a new and better way of handling dates. Nothing wrong with the way you are, only that now we are allowing you to be able to shine even brighter than before. To make a memorable first impression, you need to turn from your cocooned and constricted ideas and metamorphosis them into a morning star. The key is to not over do anything, from hair to clothes, shoes, and especially make-up for the girls. Try not to intimidate your date by extra extravagant attire, appeal to a more in style casual look, having in mind that originality and normality will be highly appreciated. For a young man, there's no need to try any harder than a simple tee/shirt or shirt and a good pair of jeans, and for the young lady, a sweater or a cardigan over a floral top and skinny jeans or a long colorful dress to show a gentle-hearted side. Most importantly, before you do put on your outfit, make sure to have taken a long shower or bath, with an essence-soap preferably. That way when you give your date a hug, she/he will complement you on how great you smell.

With the above stages complete and done to satisfaction, it by then shows that 90% of the work has already been done and now you have many more points and percentage possibilities to have an astounding date.

#### Stage 4: the Finale

Past half of the work has been done and now the date will be the final date stage to a well protected from failure date.

The key again is to stay calm and not to over think things by over estimating the possibilities yet to come from the date. For the boys, be a real gentleman, hold her hand, complement her, etc. and for the girls, be nice, don't bad mouth people, be playful. If the date continues like this, a kiss might be the last point needed for a good days end.

## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

## Assignment 2 Answer

**Fool-Proof Dating**

Even a 7th grade knows how to get around my dating recovery free-tips. Now in the 21st century, traditions have evolved and blatantly said, everybody has been fooled by the tricks of dating. As they say in baseball, 'three strikes and you're out'. This is translated to dating, in 'dummy terms' means, on a first date you only limited bases of opportunities before reaching the final base. The first date is always the most crucial stage and still neither the Sheppard (the male) nor sheep (the female) understand the base requirements.

The rules of the game look rather murky (to say the least) in the minds of young adults and this is where my guideline is put to good use. Forget about all the past disastrous dates you've caused, know the Fool-Proof-dating map by heart and never make the mistake ever again.

First base: The Approach

Ladies, have no fear when it comes to asking the lucky chap on a date. The worst that could happen is him missing out on a great opportunity, so for the approach, I say make the first move. Why? Because just like us girls, boys can not read minds which is why, if he is not getting the message then it's more the reason to send it to him. This applies to all girls, even the shy girls. In that scenario though, try being friends first.

- (a) Talk through social networks that involve instant messaging such as Facebook. It is free and a safer choice than giving him your cellular number.

This will help build your confidence when in conversation, while both physically being present at the date. A friendship foundation would start to take form.

- (b) Next, would be to pop the question. Not to ask him to marry you, but rather suggest a date.

Blatantly dropping the bomb on him is for the risk takers. A hint here and there to see which buttons will open up to this date is always the safer option. By this I mean you need to dangle a few ticket suggestions in his mind. That you just happened to get two tickets to a football match or X-men movie, see if he takes the bait. If he doesn't, try restaurant vouchers, boys are never picky when it gets down to food.

- (c) Bare in mind that you are the girl asking, most boys do not support Twilight saga movement and so the tool is to find something you are certain he will be interested in and can not resist from temptation.

Second base: The plot

- 1 Tell your parents
- 2 Transport arrangements in order
- 3 have your lunch money savings on stand-by
- 4 make sure everything has been agreed on

The most embarrassing case scenario would be having your date never pitch because of these circumstances. The strategy is to plan ahead. And if you truly are not a complete fool at dating, perhaps ask your mom if she could take you. Beware though, she might flip out her camera at any moment '...this is Molly's first boyfriend', just stay alert. Mum and Dad know best and will be on top of things so, do not be scared to ask for advice as well.

Think long and hard about the designated location to be reached, and if you must, dream of one to. Instead of the usual night life gallivants, try a lunch day. A day activity always gives of an unlimited supply of positive and calm energy vibes in the atmosphere. This could be a picnic or an intimate 'brunch', also known as lunch. Anything that will make the both of you feel as if you could be 'floating on clouds'. It is even a safer option during the day in the possible case that the date turns in to a fiasco, there will be a man routes to hide in.

### Third base: Last preparations

See over here, nothing wrong with the way you re at the moment but there is always room for a bigger and 'fresher' you. To make a memorable first impression, turn out your sluggish cocoon and be open-minded for a metamorphosis change into a rising star.

Note: Just because you may have the award winning attire for the date, it does not excuse you for not being clean.

Indulge yourself in a shower or bath with essence soap, preferably. That way not only will your fragrance smell as amazing as your now smooth and clean skin, your date will instantly detect your alluring sent and will be tempted to stick closer to you with no fear of an nauseating armpit smell.

Ladies do not over do it. From the hair, dress/skirt, shoes and especially make-up, keep it natural and appealing. The key is to add a signature piece such as a n infinity scarf, this is because that one items will stand out and be an indirect way of showing your personality through fashion. The infinity scarf would be in preference to a loving and warm hearted person. It is something you can not directly say but can see through their actions. Originality and normality are highly appreciated on first dates, that way your date will not have to make any ridiculous excuses to end the date early. Instead you will find the reward of a second date and this time the bill on him.

For the young men, trying out one of the latest trends would be trembling on thin ice and so there is no need to try any harder than a tee or shirt paired with a well fitted set of jeans. If you are really out to serenade the young lady with your style, try a slightly tight golf shirt with a pair of kaki chino pants. This will create a 'preppy' look like Steve Urkel, only a more modern version.

### Home base: The Finale

At this stage you would not have had the time to role-play the actual date in your mind given that you were preoccupied with the preparations before it. When you do come to realize this, do not panic! This is because it will work in your favour. By not having plotted the afternoon in any way leaves you and your date to not have to deal with the pressure of meeting up to your non realistic and fictitious expectations. So, 'fools', sit back and enjoy the date. And a kiss will be the last point needed for a good days end.

## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

## Assignment 3 Task

ENGLISH COURSEWORKASSIGNMENT THREE (RESPONSE TO TEXT)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Read the attached article, "That Surly Driver Could Kill You", which appeared in the Mmegi newspaper on 26 August 2010.

Your task is to write a reply to Greg Kelebonye, responding to and agreeing or disagreeing with the points made in his article.

Your letter should be between 500 and 800 words long. You may, if you choose to, write two shorter letters, one from a reader who agrees with him, and one from a reader who objects to what he says in his article. In this case, the two together should comprise a minimum of 500 words. (Give your one or two characters the kinds of names people use when writing to magazines, such as "Concerned Driver" or "Outraged Citizen".)

Please remember that you will be awarded a mark out of 40 for the structure of your argument, and the quality of your writing, so pay attention to spelling, punctuation, word choices and paragraphing. Also remember to use discourse markers like "In the first place, ...".

In this assignment you will also be given a mark out of 10 for reading, based on the extent to which you engage with and show understanding of the ideas in the passage. This means that you need to begin by highlighting and annotating the article, which should be attached to your finished work as part of your drafting process.

**NB:** In your letter you must quote and engage with ideas and opinions which were expressed in the article. You will extend these with your own ideas and opinions, but you must begin with points made by the journalist.



## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

### Assignment 3 Article

# That surly driver could kill you!

**Owing to a combination of inadequate roads, bad manners and life in the fast lane, road accident fatalities have risen from 9.9 to 26.4 per 100,000 population between 1981 and 2009, writes GREG KELEBONYE**

It is not that difficult to get a driver's licence in Botswana. You simply need to pass the theory test, the parking test, the road test and you are set.

After all, you can turn a steering wheel and tell the accelerator from the brake pedal. Plus, the roads in this country are generally good; even better, if you are driving in the city. You do not have to dredge your brains to figure out what you are expected to do because the roads have clear line markings, traffic lights and signs with pictures on them telling you if, say, you are passing a school.

All you need to do is stay in between the lines and make sure you do not roll your car into the lane of the driver behind you or put it on the back seat of the car in front. You need not worry about any distraction, save for the blurring radio of the loony in the car with the heavily tinted windows in the other lane. Driving has never been this pleasant. Right?

WRONG! Picture this: according to the Motor Vehicle Accident website, since 1981, fatalities due to road traffic accidents have risen from 9.9 to 26.4 per 100,000 population. That is 940 casualties in 1981 to 7,979 casualties in 2009! Back then, vehicles were a great deal slower and you had to crank anything from the gas pedal to the gear lever before the vehicle could take off. Most were jalopies that had either been bought at a post-colonial auction or from some farm in South Africa or Zimbabwe.

Later models followed. They were a little faster than their pacesetters, but they were nothing compared to the flashy vehicles that roam our roads today. Many of these Asian imports are so fast you would still be looking at the spot you thought the vehicle was at the last second when it is already half a kilometre away. Woe unto the jalopy or utility vehicle driver who happens to occupy the spot in front of that fast car at a robot.

"We in Botswana must pass as one of the top countries when it comes to driver impatience," observes Motlokwa, a professional driver. Is it too much to ask that you should appreciate the potential weaknesses of the driver and the vehicle in front of you? Honking your horn does not only disturb other road users; it makes you look ridiculous if not altogether crazy."

Motlokwa says the advent of newer, faster vehicles has made life on the road a living hell for drivers with less advanced technology. "It is strange that a person will honk at you to take off at a robot when the light has not turned green. Such people watch the robot in the opposite direction and honk as soon as it turns amber," he says, adding that many of them cause accidents in their impatience. This group, Motlokwa says, includes drunks, taxi drivers and speed maniacs who always feel they have to test their vehicle for speed. Imagine if the fellow is driving a vehicle that has the latest technology.

A travelling entertainment centre reads: "How do you even begin to reason with a chubby fellow who has been darting his gaze between the robot and the blue film that he is watching on his TV/radio monitor and pressing steering and dashboard control to tune his 12 speaker radio?," queries elderly Vicky Mabote.

"The guy is probably drunk or angry, and you would rather allow him to overtake you right in the middle of the robot than argue with him." Anger, Mabote enunciates, is what defines Botswana drivers. "You could

bet there was a law in Botswana that said you should not drive unless you are angry. And you must be angry with anyone and anything on the road, including stationary vehicles." Such anger, he says, goes with selfishness and impatience.

"Soon we will come to a point where anybody who indicates to show that he or she wants to change lanes or to overtake is regarded as a fool. Try and indicate that you want to change lanes and the guy in the other lane suddenly swerves his vehicle onto your lane. Try and overtake one of those fast cars with your old truck and you ask yourself what you did to the guy in the flashy car as he takes off like he's been stung."

Unfortunately, such careless behaviour is present even in residential neighbourhoods. So each time you turn your head or look in your rear view mirror and discover someone staring at you, you could be looking into the predatory eyes of a road maniac. "It is important, therefore, that when we are on the road, we should know that many of the people you are sharing the road with may want to kill you," Mabote warns. It is especially important to have your senses on alert if you are driving in Gaborone and its suburbs. The same goes for Francistown. Life on these cities roads can be cruelly hectic, especially during the rush hour or on Friday and Saturday evenings when the predominantly young drivers go on weekend jaunts. The congestion encourages a certain do-or-die recklessness in which impatient drivers not only pass on solid lines and run through red lights but do so at dangerously high speeds. The result: fatal and/or spectacularly bloody accidents! Decapitated human bodies, skewered or incinerated metal and gaze-at-me-if-you-want vehicles have become a common sight on Botswana's roads.

Whatever went wrong with our people's driving! "I would say it is a combination of factors," says Bruce Paledi of the Traffic Department of Botswana Police Service (BPS). "First, we have over 320,000 registered vehicles on our roads, a great majority of which are in Gaborone and its environs. The carrying capacity of the roads is so low that people become impatient as they try to make up for lost time." In fact, such is the impatience on the roads that it must be the major contributor to the 12,000 'minor' accidents registered by Paledi's division since January 2010. "Over 80 percent of these are accidents where someone rams into the back of another driver, which is typical of careless and negligent driving," he says.

There is then the behaviour that propels drivers to just speed faster than their brains can work. "You would be shocked to see two vehicles coming from opposite directions moving at 200km/hour," Paledi continues. "Other than a thin barrier line, nothing separates the two vehicles. A little lapse in concentration or a small swerve outside your lane will result in a horrific accident. A lot of the people involved in this type of behaviour are people aged 18 to 45 years. It might have something to do with the fact that many of these are unemployed, many find themselves grappling with HIV. There is much stress and much anger generally, and when all these factors combine, they manifest in this type of behaviour." So stressed up and angry are these people that you should be prepared to write off your vehicle if you lend it to one of them. Predictably, the alcohol link is always there.

"Especially at weekends," Paledi notes. "Most accidents we attend to happen because people have been drinking and driving. Over 30 percent of the cases are over the drinking limit while 70 percent are borderline cases. Our sobriety patrols have produced such statistics."

So what do the antics of a bad driver do to you? Far from sticking your middle finger in retaliation, they should propel you to be a more considerate driver, which must surely be a better management of energy.

*'That surly driver could kill you!'*, Mmegi online (Botswana), 24 August 2010. Issue: Vol.27 No.126



## Portfolio 1, Candidate A

### Assignment 3 Answer

PO Box 35245  
Gaborone

30<sup>th</sup> August, 2010

Greg Kelebonye of Mmegi Newspaper  
Private Bag 2964  
Gaborone

Dear Greg Kelebonye

I have had the honour of reading the Mmegi Newspaper, and have had the pleasure to read an article written by Greg Kelebonye, 'That Surly Driver Could Kill'. It was an article based on how roads in Botswana have become dangerous because of the many developments that have been made to roads and the cars that roam them. This is not the only problem, but the attitudes and reactions of the people driving these cars as well affects and causes a lot more mayhem to the streets.

From what I have read, I too agree, on how advanced technology has allowed cars to be extremely complex and able to exceed to higher speeds that old model cars (jalopies) are not able to obtain. More disappointing news is that this is making the roads and streets of, Gaborone and Francistown (as the capital cities of the country), have a shocking high increase in road accident fatalities, since 1981. The 'flashy cars' have added a great load of pressure on people, which is a worrying matter now because the cars on the road have now rapidly increased causing more congestion, disturbance and competition amongst each other on whose car is the best and fastest. It is disgraceful how Batswana look down on antiques and do not respect how their sports cars and Range Rover models evolved and were designed because and through 'jalopies'. They feel superior to the smaller, low priced and old cars that still dare to step on their new ad urban turf.

I also agree on how bad driving is also caused by 'selfishness and impatience'. The way Batswana patrol the highways to get to a destination before the leading vehicle, becomes into a priority for them to overtake any car that stands in their way. In their eyes it is dramatically made out to be a matter of life and death, if the person ahead of them does not scoot over. Politeness towards one another is slowly deteriorating and moving in the direction of selfishness. Reputation is the highlight on the highways to ensure that even throughout the chaos, your presence has been well noted to the other travellers. These road rebels do not care to think of the opposite driver's situation or to sympathize with them on their disability of being a learner and unable to drive the specific way they wish all would do. Instead the maniacs honk their horns to the fearful beginner, disturbing his/her concentration and that of he surrounding people, leading to a choir f horns blowing all around the area. As you mentioned, of these could, 'drunks, taxi drivers, and speed maniacs', who are well and known for infamous characteristics. They rage in mixed emotions seeking for victims who will unknowingly fall into their traps and head into a horrific meeting with another car. It is only the more attentive who will have the pleasure of being in this rarely found, minor accident.

Friday and Saturday evenings are truly the most likely times to come across an accident. This is when teenagers and young adults have the freedom and opportunity to go jollying with their parent's cars, as a matter of fact, mostly under the influence of alcohol. As you said in your article, 'Predictably the alcohol link is always there', which is sad to know that the future may be setting to many more tragedies in the world. Furthermore, the stress level and anger built up in us as humans can turn us into 'careless and negligent' monsters that drive. It has all reached out of control whereby we now push out frustrations onto others and do not see the wrong in it.

I have managed to agree with many of the points you have made. However, there were a few in which I looked further into and would care to differ on. One of these was how I felt that there was an over exaggeration of some views on the causes of this madness, and how it may become offensive to most Batswana people and especially to those who drive. An example of this is how harshly exaggerated the anger of people on the roads has been said. It is as though ALL Batswana drivers act in this ill mannered behaviour and as understood, at all times. This is as well as the way the eyes of the drivers have been described to have an intensified dislike or hatred, said through the eyes. In a way saying that they are predators lurking at their pray and plotting to either stir them into an accident, even for whatever small fault they can find.

In my view this is also expressing that Batswana are wild and violent when let loose on the road, and are deadly liabilities to the road and others, meaning that they affect the Botswana population because of the continuous accidents. This gives us as the readers the feeling that the intentions of Batswana drivers is to 'kill' the innocent, and so I do not agree with this statement because Batswana, as angry as they rarely do get, in being an overall view of who they become when driving, are not as violent as described in this article. The people and residents of Botswana, are known to be very peaceful and warm-hearted, making such circumstances highly impossible. Another point I have come to disagree on, is from the unfairly imposed statement made by Vicky Marole, on how she believes that all people do not indicate and if you are one of the 'few' who do, you will be seen as a 'fool' by the public. However, I see it the other way around, that if you do not indicate and miss direct other cars, YOU are the one who should be seen as the fool.

The point which I may disagree on is how you mentioned that residential neighborhoods too have bad driving. I see it that the residential neighborhoods have the best controlled and maintained car craziness, making it the most suitable and safest places to drive around in the city.

I also find the irrelevant comment on how people battling HIV/AIDS or conditions alike to it, are the main people who cause more car accidents. The reason also being because of how the; stress, anger and other emotions that they may be feeling are now released on the road to affect the lives of others. I find it not to be an appropriate reason to plaster the blame on them as the main road offenders.

It is hard to believe that the Botswana roads will ever recover from the driving madness present today. Until we (as the public) speak out and make our concerns heard, bombarding into cars will never stop. The increasing traffic light zones will cause more battle fields waiting for 'bloody and fatal accidents' to happen. The goal now is to encourage the community to find a more appropriate and safer way of channelling their energy into good, from bad and to try work and cooperate with each other.

Concerned pedestrian.

## 6.2 Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Individual Record Card

Individual Candidate Record Card Cambridge IGCSE Coursework Portfolio									
Please select Syllabus and Component below									
Centre Number	Centre Name	Exam Series	November	Year	Teaching Group/Set				
Please read the previous printed instructions and the General Coursework Regulations before completing this form.									
Candidate B									
Candidate Name									
Assignments 1 (informative/ analytical/ argumentative) and 2 (descriptive/ narrative)									
Date of completion	Full title of assignment	First draft included*							
12/09/14	Don't get me started on football	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)							
10/10/14	Paradise - creative story	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)							
Assignment 3 (response to text)**									
Date of completion	Full title of assignment	Brief description of stimulus text(s)	First draft included*						
20/10/14	Dear Liz Jones	'Life is supposed to be hard, even if you get three A-stars'	yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (please tick as appropriate)						
* A first draft must be included for one of the three assignments. **A copy of all texts used for Assignment 3 must be included in the sample sent to the moderator.									
Teacher's comments on overall Coursework Portfolio:									
					Mark for writing (out of 40)				
					Mark for reading (out of 10) (Assignment 3 only)				
					Total mark (out of 50):	0			
					to be transferred to Coursework Assessment Summary Form				



## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment 1 Task

Write a lively magazine article on a topical issue that irritates you intensely under the heading 'Don't get me started on...'



## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment 1 Answer

#### **Don't get me started on football**

Isn't it strange that among all the useful things to do in the world, people seem to choose watching football? Did you know that most people are unable to name a politician, artist or scientist while young school kids aspire to play for the England national team. Footballers not only earn a lot of money but also capture the interest of the whole industry revolving around the game!

When you come to think of it, footballers are just glorified time-wasters! Despite the unaccounted and unjustified acclaim of 'talent', I fail to comprehend why a bunch of people who are spending their working lives running after a ball are entitled to millions of pounds. At the end of the day, it does all come to money because in a time of recession, we should be wiser in how we choose to spend our money.

Don't get me wrong; football is a very fun game to watch and play. However, I don't like the fact that it's become so many people's focus and life! It's just a game, and this plain fact seems to escape people. Why should a footballer earn so much more than a life saving surgeon – surely he or she should be recognised far more than the credit an artistically inconsistent performance is given by a show maker in ninety minutes!

Furthermore, a footballers underserved fame becomes even more obvious during a recession when many people reflect on excess and waste. For example, compared to other sports, why is it that footballer's earn the most? With sums of over £100,000 a week, why are the likes of Ronaldo or Rooney dominating our airwaves and attention?

When I watch a game of football I enjoy it for what it is but I nevertheless see it for what it is as well. Football can be as dangerous and unhealthy as boxing and American Football. Indeed, scientists studying the negative effects of contact sports present a very strong case that it can lead to brain injuries and illnesses associated with long-term damage. One case saw an American footballer exhibit the depression and memory lapses associated with oncoming Alzheimer's.

Clearly then, footballers are risking future damage to their brain. This case isn't isolated to American Football. Boxing is an infamous case with Muhammad Ali suffering Alzheimer's disease as a result of consecutive boxing games. Although there is recognition of this fact, the whole sporting industry tends to keep the debate of violence and damage as silent as possible.

Think about it. Can you buy into the idea of your child being banged on the head and knocked out and potentially getting brain damaged for millions of pounds a year? And should your child be famous for kicking a ball about? My point is that they shouldn't. They should aspire to do more than kick a ball about, and they should be more modest in their working vocations. Let's face it, the most famous and rich footballers don't have degrees from Cambridge or Oxford. The question that is begged to being answered then is why is it so famous and popular? Why does it seem to demand so much of our time? My position is that the whole industry is over-blown. People are spending unnecessary time and money on something that is simply not worth it.



## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment Task 2

Write about a memorable visit to a memorable place. The writing can slant either towards the personal experience or 'the sense of place', but you should try to encompass both to some extent.



## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment 2 DRAFT Answer

#### Paradise

Everyone regards paradise to be the most exhilarating experience in the world. My story is about how Paris changed my life. Most people regard the Eiffel Tower to be an amazing spectacle to watch and my time there was certainly wonderful.

As I peered around me, the stunning lights were stinging my eye balls; they coloured the area like a rainbow. Walking past around, I could feel the fresh air waving eh smell of the delicious French pastry right into my nostrils; tempting me to buy the succulent food already making my mouth water. I could feel the echoing voices of the frenchies running in one ear and coming out exactly like musical notes in cartoons.

Next thing I know, I am in a wild environment and look and see high tall right voices screaming at me like they are wanting my help. Lights are beaming in every little dark corner; lighting everyone up like fire rushing to burn down a building. Having kids and adults running about, rushing past as if it was the end of the world. As I queued up, I felt I couldn't wait any longer; the queues were so long they weren't even moving.

Finally, I reached Space Mountain, sat down all alone until this boy sat next to me; I am not going to lie, he was quite good looking. His face looked so smooth – tanned golden brown and clean. It looked like cotton. He looked at me with his piercing mixed grey and green eyes that made my body shiver and made me remember where I was.

I turned my face quickly before he started to think anything. Oh no! the ride started to move as everyone was settling down in their seat. Why did this handsome boy have to come and sit nest to me? Now, I would have to find a way to not scream. The train is going up slowly and slowly; the same pace of a snail. I felt alright till it got to the top. As I looked down, my heart dropped out of my chest! All of a sudden, the train speeded down: round, up, sideways and through the air, as it it was superman saving eh workd. People were screaming like they were getting strangled and murdered. I was screaming so load and hard, mu guts were coming out of my throat. The rides carried on and on and on like a clock ticking in someone's head – nonstop.

The rid finally stopped. I leaped out the ride and turned around an saw that handsome boy again; knowing I looked a mess I started walking so fast I nearly tripped. I turned around and saw him hive me a cheeky smile, so I smiled back at him and he started walking my way. I didn't want him to come my way. The close he got, the more my heart was pumping – my palms were sweating and my ear drums were filled with the thump of my heart; all in slow motion.

I started walking away but I couldn't; my legs felt so heavy I was going too slow but the boy was coming so fast! I started to fade away; everything around me was fading. Then, everything went dark. Opened my eyes and realised it was all a dream...

## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

## Assignment 2 Answer

**Paradise**

Everyone regards paradise to be the most exhilarating experience in the world. My story is about how Paris changed my life. Most people regard the Eiffel Tower to be an amazing spectacle to watch and my time there was certainly wonderful.

As I peered around me, the stunning lights were stinging my eye balls; they coloured the area like a rainbow. Walking past around, I could feel the fresh air waving the smell of the delicious French pastry right into my nostrils; tempting me to buy the succulent food already making my mouth water. I could feel the echoing voices of the frenchies running in one ear and coming out exactly like musical notes in cartoons.

Next thing I know, I am in a wild environment and look and see high tall right voices screaming at me like they are wanting my help. Lights are beaming in every little dark corner; lighting everyone up like fire rushing to burn down a building. Having kids and adults running about, rushing past as if it was the end of the world. As I queued up, I felt I couldn't wait any longer; the queues were so long they weren't even moving.

Finally, I reached Space Mountain, sat down all alone until this boy sat next to me; I am not going to lie, he was quite good looking. His face looked so smooth – tanned golden brown and clean. It looked like cotton. He looked at me with his piercing mixed grey and green eyes that made my body shiver and made me remember where I was.

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## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment 3 Task

Read the article by Liz Jones.

Write a letter in reply to her views.

## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

## Assignment 3 Article

**Life is supposed to be hard, even if you got three A stars**

I was talking at a debate at the Latitude Festival in Suffolk a few weeks ago. I was struggling, alongside old hands such as Tory MP David Davis and gay-rights campaigner Peter Tatchell, who had crib sheets and, regardless of the topic, just boomed out opinions as if on a soapbox.

Also, a rock band was playing in a nearby tent and, being deaf, I found it hard to hear the questions from the Left-wing, combative audience.

One young woman addressed a question to me: 'I've got a degree, but I'm finding it very hard to save for a deposit and buy a house. What does Liz Jones, with all her money and success, suggest I do?'

I couldn't hear the question, so David Davis butted in instead. So here, belatedly, is my answer, because this is what I did.

'Get a job washing up in a restaurant. Rent a bedsit with no kitchen facilities, and babysit four nights a week for the owner of the house, even though you can't stand children, so you can pay the rent.

'Share a bedroom during uni, as I did with my friend Karen, and get a job at night (I cycled every night from South London to the offices of The Times). Rent a house in Brixton's most dangerous road, and take in a lodger. Buy your first house with your sister, in a slum-clearance area with a prostitute living next door. Get an interest-only mortgage, as I am doing now, and hope you die young.'

Young people who this week opened their A-level results may think they have it harder than every generation that preceded them, but is this true? Is there really any excuse for being bored and therefore destroying your own street?

When I was a teenager we didn't have the internet, iPods or hundreds of TV channels. The highlight of my Sunday was Songs Of Praise. There has never been a better time to be engaged and well-informed than today. The difference is the sense of entitlement among young people.

I have a friend, a single mother, who doesn't have a job but nevertheless has been paying for her teenage daughter to have driving lessons.

This young woman has just passed her test at the fifth attempt. My parents didn't buy me driving lessons – I passed my test in 1984, only when I had a job and could pay for the lessons myself.

This friend moaned, too, about her other daughter, in her early 20s, who is finding it hard to pay for childcare. 'Why doesn't the Government pay for the nursery? She can't afford it.' I pointed out it was her daughter's choice to have a baby in the first place. I don't ask taxpayers to fund my hobbies.

EVERYONE, especially today's teenagers, has been fooled into thinking they can have exactly the life they want. You can't. Life is hard and often boring. You have to get up at the crack of dawn and end each day so exhausted you can hardly move. Anything less and you're just not trying.

Looking at the footage of the riots, I couldn't help but notice how expensively dressed all the teenagers were and think how lucky they were to have computers and iPhones. Even my cleaner has a BlackBerry.

Watching teenagers open their A-level results on the news on Thursday evening, they all seemed to be acting out the plot of American high-school TV drama Glee: hugging and kissing and extroverting all over the damn shop. I don't remember hugging anyone in school.

My worst experience of teenagers, though, was waiting to board a flight from Nairobi to Heathrow last week. The queue was populated entirely by young, blonde-haired, shiny, tanned, happy, smiling teens returning from gap years or 'volunteering'. They all had slogans on their T-shirts such as Classrooms For Kenya or Home Not Harm.

Travelling with me was an aid worker; we had come from a refugee camp where Somalis had fled the famine and the fighting in their country.

'I can't stand these kids,' said my companion. 'It's all about enhancing their own confidence, sticking something on a CV, having glamorous photos to post on Facebook – not helping people.'

'We wouldn't let them anywhere near the famine, let alone anywhere that might be dangerous. It's patronising to think that a child can help or advise these people on how to live their difficult and complicated lives.'

She would far rather kids volunteer to work in the office of an NGO or work for free in a charity shop. That would tell her the teenager cares about the problem and is not looking for adventure at someone else's expense.

*'Life is supposed to be hard, even if you got three A-stars'*, Liz Jones, Daily Mail online, 20 August 2011

## Portfolio 2, Candidate B

### Assignment 3 Answer

Dear Liz jones,

My name is Jay and I am 16 years old. I am a mature learner and am currently at Johnbury comprehensive School. I live in Barking Essex, in Gascoigne. I am writing to you to let you know that I have recently read your report and that I totally disagree with what you have said about young teenagers or 'kids', like you said. I am absolutely gutted with the words that you have used. You describe young teenagers as 'having glamorous photos to post on 'Facebook'. It's not our fault if life is changing and if people are making new websites to make themselves money. Is it our fault if people want to be creating new things for young people?

You advise us to 'rent a house in Brixton's most dangerous roads'. If that was an unpleasant experience for you, surely you cannot be telling other teenagers to do that. Just because you don't like kids, this does not mean you can give them bad advice and make them suffer through dangerous things when there are other opportunities of doing things in a different way and safer way in life. Living in a dangerous area could make things worse. For example, when you get your house robbed for the new things you bought, having spent ages saving up to buy them, this will put you down and give you the feeling that you should give up.

There is nothing wrong with paying for your daughter's driving lessons. You say: 'I have a friend, a single mother, who doesn't have a job but nevertheless has been paying for her teenage daughter to have driving lessons'. You say: 'my parents didn't buy me driving lessons – I passed my test in 1984, only when I had a job and could pay for the lessons myself'. Are you trying to insinuate that the mother is mad or stupid for paying her daughter's driving lessons? Maybe it pleases her to pay for her daughter's driving lessons. Maybe her wanted to pay so that her daughter can be ready at an early age so that she doesn't have to use public transport all the time. Making a general sweeping statement about someone's decision isn't really fair, is it?

Watching teenagers 'hugging and kissing and extroverting all over the damn shop' and 'acting out the plot of American high – school TV drama Glee' Like you said, makes teenagers look very materialistic. In reality, it's not just about 'acting'; it's about been happy and been proud of yourself – making yourself happy because you have achieved top grades and you want to be excited and joyful. 'Hugging and kissing' is a way that you can show you're happy; show your LOVE! You probably didn't hug or kiss anyone because maybe you're not used to expressing yourself in a tactile way. That doesn't mean that if teenagers do this, they are automatically labelled as spoiled! Everyone knows that life is hard; no one said life was easy but because life is hard does not mean you shouldn't show that you are happy. It definitely doesn't mean you need to be moody or ungrateful for the rest of your life.

In reality the times are changing. Today's tomorrow will eventually be tomorrow's yesterday. We can't spend our lives living in the past and complaining about how the younger generation are different. Live and learn; you need to accept that and move on.

## 6.3 Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Individual Record Card

Individual Candidate Record Card Cambridge IGCSE Coursework Portfolio						
Please select Syllabus and Component below.						
Centre Number	Exam Series	November	Year	Teaching Group/Set		
Candidate C						
Candidate Name	Centre Name					
Please read the previous printed instructions and the General Coursework Regulations before completing this form.						
<b>Assignments 1 (informative/ analytical/ argumentative) and 2 (descriptive/ narrative)</b>						
Date of completion	Full title of assignment	First draft included*				
10/09/14	Letter to David Mitchell or Christine Gilbert	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(please tick as appropriate)		
12/08/14	Novel Chapter One	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(please tick as appropriate)		
<b>Assignment 3 (response to text)**</b>						
Date of completion	Full title of assignment	Brief description of stimulus text(s)	First draft included*			
10/09/14	Letter to David Mitchell or Christine Gilbert	Article in the Observer (2009) Newspaper about boring teachers	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>	(please tick as appropriate)	
* A first draft must be included for one of the three assignments. **A copy of all texts used for Assignment 3 must be included in the sample sent to the moderator.						
<b>Teacher's comments on overall Coursework Portfolio:</b>						
Mark for writing (out of 40)						
Mark for reading (out of 10) (Assignment 3 only)						
Total mark (out of 50): to be transferred to Coursework Assessment Summary Form		0				



## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 1 Task

Write a speech to a distinguished and expert audience on a subject you feel strongly on.







## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 1 Answer

#### ***Should the Argentine Football association change the number of teams that play in the first division just because River Plate were relegated last year?***

When River Plate get relegated, a lot of problems were generated because it was the first time in River's history. Because of this, Julio Grondona came up with the idea of a new football tournament that could keep River playing in division A.

By being a River fan, everyone that supports River have to be in disagreement with Grondona's new idea. River Plate needs to be able to get promoted without assistance because it is a team with a lot of history and no matter how bad it is to be demoted, River has to climb to the first division with the strength and hope of the fans and players.

This proposal for football tournament would consist of 40 teams instead of 20. It's aim is to join division A and B, so everyone can say that River were never relegated to the second division and it's history would be perfect.

It is obvious that someone payed to help River, to make it stay in the first division. This person doesn't understand that River has to be fair and has to stay where it is because it had a bad campaing...The consequence of having a bad campaing is to be remoted, no matter the incredible history River has.

Since that match, a lot of fans were uncomfortable with that loss because there were a lot of disadvantages to River without intention. For example, the referee Sergio Pezzotta missed a lot of fouls that could have help River score a goal and not be in this position. Lso the first problem River had, when it played against Boca, Patricio Loustau committed three fatal errors in that match that made River loose in a superclasic. This two important thigs made River unable to go back to the safe position it was before, so everyone blamed the referee Loustau and made him be in trouble with his career. In the background, Loustau was forced to manage the match because there was no referee. He didn't wabt ti, but he was forced to and finally hed did a bad management.

The incident in the match River – Belgrano was a bigger hit against River, because both teams were playing for the promotion. It was a 'knock-out' not only because of the management errors, also because of the player's nerves. The second match of the Promotion., River had a penalty and Mariano Pavone missed it because of his nerves, with pressure because of thinking he had in his hands that goal to sabe River. Before this Belgrano scored a goal because Nunes defence was ervous and committed a mistake that enden with the match ball in Guillermo Farre's foot to score the goal that fusilated river.

All this thigs made the fans believe that River didn't have to be remoted because of all these errors, so they payed for River to be kept in the first division.

Everyone has to stop saying that River is in second fivision unfairly, because putting the last referees errors a side, River had a horrible campaign, drawing almost every match. Also, the mistakes by the referees can occur in every match. Not only pezzotta committed errors, also the players did, so River is fairly in the B division.

Doing this tournament benefits Cristina Kirchner against Grupo Clarin, to make them loose money. River is in B division, and Clarin televises the matchs. Because of all the followers and fans River has, a lot of people would watch Clarin's campaign and they would win a lot of money. So the AFA made this to avoid Clarin winning money and to make win money to the actual government. This can be taken by an excuse like me, or a lot of people, because taking this away River would be in the first division and no one can say that River was in the second division.



Stop saying that River doesn't deserve to be in a lower division because like every team, when they have a very bad campaign, they drop a division. So stop saying that the 40 team tournament has to be applied because River will be always in the A division. It doesn't matter that it is a very honourable club, with a lot of history and glory as every team that has a low average number of points have to play off against top teams in the second division and if it loses, it is relegated to the lower division. River has to do everything it can to ascend and recover his good campaign. It doesn't need Grondona's help, because River's new reinforcements can help and one day or another it would give that important step to be where it had been all its history



## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 2 Task

Write the opening chapter of a novel set in a school.

## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

## Assignment 2 Answer

**Castle School**

Carl was a twelve year old learner that studied at Castle school, a very old and strange school that was extremely strict in terms of dressing up, and has lots of homework. Carl was taken there because his father died a few years before, and his mother had a lot of work to maintain both. He was angry, sad and disappointed with this unfair mother's opinion, but he was forced to accept.

Carl was a black colored person, very uncommon in Castle school because they had problems with black learners. He had bright green eyes, a bit mouth, an unormal nose and his hair was very short because in that school, the learners were forced to cut their long and beautiful hair in that horrible way. He liked sports, like rugby, but in that school there were no sports, onluy play with a heavy ball passing it hands to hands in a bored way. He hated class because he was a very distract boy, so he was always punished.

The bell rang, that meant Spanish class. Everyone was excited because a new teacher entered the school. In the hall, everyone shared top secret information about eh school, and one piece of information was the name of the new teacher: Mr Fletcher. He was a black short hair, black eyes, normal shaped body and a very kind person. When the class started, Carl saw a very friendly image on him, not like the other catastrophic teachers. He was special. During the class they became distanced friends and meanwhile they time passed, they became good friends. And Fletcher told Carl that he could help him with everything: any problem with his life, problems with any class.

The bell rang bellowed out it's rude tone. That meant Chemistry class. This class was boring, and also with Mr Kane, that was a very non-knowledge teacher. The only thing he could teach was the stories about war and how he killed people with bombs and wapons, this stuff was really unvelievable and excessively boring. The learners entered into the class and Mr Kane was preparing a dangerous and silly experiment. He said that the learners were going to learn how to create an explosive reaction. Mr Kane took one boul, a small one this time; two colorfull and bright pots with unreal liquids and a spoon. He poured both substances and started to mix them up. Then he ran out like he was escaping from jail and jumped to the floor. Everyone did the same. Immediately a big band was heared. It was the sound of a fueled car exploting. And when it finished the boul disappeared and there was a big black hole that replaced it. So everyone learned hot blow up a 3Kg candado and a 0.5 meter of mass in a door. Finally, the bell rang for brake.

The hall was the place were everyone talked, played or rest during the brakes. It was an enormous but close place. There was one big door that you out and breath some relaxtant air after the heavy classes, but the happy time and the enjoying brakes always have a disappointing endup: the next bell.

In the third period, Carl had Biology class: a boring, uncomfortably class, plus the teacher Mrs Jolly, who was a horrible and disguisting teacher. And the worst of all was that the pupils where going to have a heavy theoretical class. They all sitted. Mrs Jolly took from her grey desck alot of enormous workpapers with letter that looked like little particles. Everyone was quiet: perhaps sleeping, looking at the wall (because there where no windows in that dark and spooky class). Suddenly Carl's face changed from sleepy to thoughtfull. He wasn't thinking in the silly worksheet, he smeled a strange bloody smell. Although it was the biology class, where poor innocent animals where sacrificed, this smell was human blood smell. Carl started to look around, but he saw nothing, only pupils slepping or playing cards. Carl was a very interested boy, so he kept looking to see what was really happening. Suddenly, behind an old desk, there was a hidden door, with a padlock in it. Carl thought that the blood smell came from there because the nearer you get closer, the stronger the smell was.

The day finished like a normal day of school, but Carl kept thinking about what was beside that forced door.



The next day, Carl went to talk with his new kind friend Mr Fletcher. They talked for a while of what was happening, but Mr Fletcher didn't know how to destroy that small, strong door. So, Carl was alone in this one, and he started thinking of what he's learned till the actual days in school. For a long while, nothing happened at all, but all of a sudden a bright light reflected on Carl's mind, he remembered about Mr Kane's class. The Dangerous bomb that he had learned to make. Carl went back for help to Mr Fletcher and asked him if he could infiltrate without being noticed to the old chemistry class and fetch two strange elements: sodium and molten iron.

Mr Fletcher came back in a relaxed way, because there were no teachers in the morning, only him because he liked to sleep in the class. Carl rapidly grabbed the things and begged Fletcher to stay outside of the biology room for security. Fletcher agreed and he followed Carl to the mysterious class. Carl, silent and alerted, entered the room and placed the two elements one beside the other. He tried a straight thread to the solid element and hid behind an enormous placard. He forced the thread and the sodium into the aqueous reactive iron. A bit of explosion was heard from outside the building. Carl checked if the door was opened and he achieved the goal. He entered and followed a compressed, long passage which took him to a big room. Lots of beds full of dry blood. There were fingers and parts of bodies all over the place. Machines, damaging instruments were on metal tables. It was a punishment room. Suddenly, steps were following Carl's walk....

## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 3 Task

Write a letter to David Mitchell in response to his views, as expressed in his article.



## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 3 Article

#### **You can't ban boredom...it's a life skill**

So much that is worth doing involves working, practising, trying until you are more bored and dispirited than you can believe

Christine Gilbert, the chief inspector of schools, has got it in for boring teachers. She's announced a "crackdown" on them. Not incompetent teachers or corrupt teachers. Not drunken teachers, teachers who put a video on for most lessons or teachers who they say once touched Benson on the bottom. No, she is cracking down on the ones who fail to convince the random bunch of kids in front of them that physics isn't just some dry and counterintuitive rules, but a veritable party in their brains.

Well, if my experience of school is anything to go by, she may have to root out half the profession. School is mostly boring and the lessons are the most boring bit. Some teachers are born boring, some achieve boringness, some have boringness thrust upon them by the national curriculum. And although most of them aren't dull people, and may be fascinating in private, plenty still give boring lessons.

One of the reasons for this may be that they're bored themselves. If quadratic equations are uninteresting the first time, how mind-numbing must they become in 20 years? And these are 20 groundhog years where every September the drug-addled, knife-wielding teens in front of you seem to have forgotten everything again.

There's not much we can do about that except say: "If you don't fancy doing exactly the same thing every year, don't become a teacher." But I think it's unfair of the chief inspector of schools to act all disappointed when people who do fancy that don't always scintillate for Britain. Surely we can't start hounding the tedious out of their jobs? And may I say how grateful I am to my employers here at the Observer for this opportunity.

And how is Christine Gilbert planning to find out who the dreariest educators are? She certainly mustn't take the pupils' word for it - that would be putting the lunatics in charge of the asylum. Perhaps she'll ask the boring teachers to own up? But the most mind-numbing people are usually completely unaware of it and often consider themselves quite the life and soul, in contrast to everyone they meet who, they seem to find, either slinks away, nods off or begins quietly to weep.

I'd certainly hate it if this crackdown ended up benefiting the kind of smug, preening, self-styled 'popular' teacher, who encourages pupils to use his first name and talks about "how inspiring the kids are" in order to get off with people at parties. You know the type: disingenuous, needy and often, in extremis, suddenly cruel. Give me a mouldy-armpitted nerd with halitosis and a voice like distant drilling any day of the week.

But I imagine the plan is even more hopeless than that - they're going to try and make boring lessons more interesting. Any scheme to do this at a national level is likely to be as effective as attempting to thread 20,000 needles by chucking the cotton at them from 100 yards away. It ignores the fact that some of the things that children really ought to learn are boring. Information is not interesting in direct proportion to how important it is. But are teachers to be penalised for that? Are we going to phase out maths in favour of more media studies and dance?

That would seem unwise, particularly in the light of a report published last week saying that innumeracy is costing the taxpayer £2.4bn a year. Of course that figure could be wrong. But there's no doubt that maths is really important and, to many pupils, particularly those who have no aptitude for it, considerably less

interesting than staring into space. There's a limited amount teachers can do about that. In the end, either have to gird their brains and get to grips with it or severely risk having a shit career.

That's the sad reality: every time a teacher petulantly repeats the cliché: "I'm not here for my own good, you know", they are, salary aside, completely correct. If you don't listen at school, you're screwed. If you're at a school where no one does so you can't, you're screwed. If you're brought up in denial of these things, you've barely got a hope.

And even if school could be turned into a nonstop, multimedia thrillfest, which managed also to instil a decent working knowledge of everything from the periodic table to Magna Carta, it would be a totally inappropriate preparation for life. Nothing ever got achieved without a bit of boredom; so much that is worth doing involves working, practising, trying until you are more bored and dispirited than you can believe and then carrying on for as long again.

You've got to push for the double geography burn - and no one's going to put on a video. Learning to cope with feeling bored, to fight it, to drive through it, rather than to see it as other people's fault, is a vital skill, perhaps the most vital. Another word for it is concentration. A decent attention span can achieve so much more than mere talent. Teenagers who leave school without realising that have really been let down.

There are people who boast that they "get bored very easily". They're implying that their minds are too active and creative to be tied down for long by one task, career or even group of friends. Most things, they're suggesting, are beneath their contempt. But getting bored easily is the mark of the moron, the person who can stick at nothing and anything really worthwhile, anyone but a superhuman has to stick at. School is where this wearying truth must make itself known.

Fortunately, this crackdown will come to nothing. It's just a soundbite that will make teachers even glummer and give affirmation to children who don't pay attention. They'd better enjoy it while it lasts.

*'You can't ban boredom...it's a life skill', David Mitchell, The Observer, 11 January 2009*



## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 3 DRAFT Answer

Dear Mr Mitchell,

I read an article from you saying that you are against Christine Gilbert's idea. I know you are giving your own opinion, but think it twice. Does a boring teacher attract you when he/she is giving a lesson? I'm at school now, and I have boring teachers, like always. In those subjects where I am bored, I really don't learn. It's so hard to focus that I fall asleep or think of another thing. So I am writing you to confirm you I'm in disagreement with your idea.

It's true that many teachers are boring and if Christine Gilbert's idea wants to be applied, a lot of teachers would be fired, but think it carefully. These teachers are not teaching anything, so they don't deserve to be paid for doing nothing. If new funny teachers are employed, they could make another future for the kids. Also, I agree in the question of how can Christine realize of the boring teachers. Yes, if she asks to the children, they will choose the most funny and lazy teachers possible to have fun every class. This is easy to do. You test the teachers in different classes, and the one with more exotic, interesting and funny ways of teaching is the chosen one.

You are also saying that calling the teachers by their first name is wrong. It can be a sign of bad respect, but if the teacher doesn't mind, there is no problem and children feel more secure. This makes them be more focused at class because they feel relaxed and that they have a good relationship with the teacher, so they participate more in class.

What you say about the fun lessons is wrong. Not all of them are funny. With videos the children don't learn in difference with a teacher that makes them think in a more interactive way. They won't have a sxxx career if they learn. They would have it if they are bored and don't learn.

You are also saying in this letter that 'nothing ever got achieved without a bit of boredom'. That's true but some children don't learn with a very boring teacher. Perhaps, a more active one would make the kind of learners be able to learn.

My conclusion in all this things I wrote is that no one can face boredom whoever he is. Some learners don't get bored because they like the subjects. The ones that most like the subject do good and teachers can make them like it.

Yours sincerely,

## Portfolio 3, Candidate C

### Assignment 3 Answer

Dear Mr Mitchell;

I read an article that you wrote saying that you are against Christine Gilbert's idea. I know you are giving your own opinion, but think it twice. Does a boring teacher attract you when he/she is giving a lesson? I'm at school now, and I have boring teachers. In those subjects where I am bored, I really don't learn. It's so hard to focus that I fall asleep or think of another thing. So I am writing you to affirm you I'm in disagreement with your purpose,

It's true that many teachers are boring and if Christine Gilbert's idea wants to be applied, a lot of teachers would be fired, but think it carefully: Those teachers are not teaching anything, they are only replying words that they learned to a bunch of disorientated learners. So they don't deserve to be paid for doing anything. If new funny teachers are employed, they could make another future for these kids.

I'm also agree in the question of how can Christine can recognize the boring teachers. Yes, if she asks to the children, they will choose the most funny and lazy teacher possible to have fun every class. To avoid this, you can call a specialized person that can see if the teacher's methods are interesting and keep the learners focused on class.

You also wrote that calling the teachers by their first name is wrong. It can be a signal of bad respect, but if the teacher doesn't mind, there is no problem and children feel more secure. This makes them be more focused in the class because they feel relaxed and think they have a good relationship with the teacher, so they participate more.

What you say about the fun lessons is right. Not all of them are interesting. With videos, the children don't learn in difference with a teacher that makes them think in a more interactive way. But you are trying to include boring teachers. This would be the same, because both kind of teachers won't teach and the learners would have a bad career.

You are also saying in the letter that: 'Nothing ever got achieved without a bit of boredom'. That's true, but some children don't learn with a very boring teacher. Perhaps a more active one would make this kind of learners be able to learn.

Finally, the title of your letter is: 'You can't kill boredom....it's a life skill'. This is true: you can't ban boredom, because you are always going to find something boring, but a life skill is different. Boredom can be avoid, different to a life skill. Boredom is something that no one wants, so it can't be said that is a life skill because to obtain a skill you have to want it and develop it. Boredom can't be a life skill because it has no purpose. Yes, is something that you have to face a lot of times in everybody's lives, but a life skill is different. Is something for your own, a psycho-social thing. Being bored only affects our courage to do things.

Summarizing this letter, I am saying that no one can face boredom, whoever he is. Some learners don't get bored because they like the subjects. The ones that don't like the subject good and interesting teachers can make them like it. So if you want a good future for these learners, get rid of boring teachers and bring interesting ones.

Yours sincerely

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