Section C – Comparing and contrasting texts

Text B

Text B is a transcription taken from the chat show *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross*, broadcast on BBC One in September 2007. Simon Pegg is an actor, writer and comedian and Jonathan Ross is the chat show host and comedian. It is a part of an eight minute segment in the show, which at the time had a wide audience of around seven million viewers.

Ross: you're very are you **gen**uinely nerdy or is it something that you've acquired over the years d'you think

Pegg: I'm I'm geeky not nerdy

Ross: is there what's the difference

Pegg: I think I was having this discussion the other day with with Jessica Stevenson who I did Spaced with and she

Ross: who is a brilliant comic actress

Pegg: amazing comic actress incredibly talented (1) err she was we were talkin' about the differences between geeks and nerds and I think err (1) a geek is like an enth an enthusiast someone (.) you're

Ross: // oh yeah

Pegg: a geek and ha - have admitted it so you're a big comic book fan you know your stuff whereas a nerd is someone who's a little bit more sort of you know just the spekky idiot

Ross: socially inept

Pegg: socially inept

Ross: socially inept is a nicer way of saying spekky idiot

Pegg: yeah

[*laughter from audience*] (2)

Ross: but but I always thought you had nerdish **qua**lities if we wanna pursue this line ah (1) err for example I hope this doesn't embarrass you but I warned Keira Knightly about you before the show

Pegg: yeah

Ross: I bumped into her in the and I said you wanna watch out because

Pegg: //   [unclear utterance]

Ross: he's one of those guys who's slightly obsessed about Star Wars

Pegg: right and she was

Ross: // and as you know Keira was err (.) what was Keira in Star Wars

Pegg: she was one of Padme's handmaidens (.) I **think** I dunno I

Ross: // yeah not not not a lot of people would have got that even Keira has forgotten what she played

Pegg: // but I don't even **like** but listen

Ross: in Star Wars you know she was one of Padme's handmaidens

Pegg: I wasn't even a fan of the Phanʔom Menace but I do know thaʔ that's that's that's a terrible thing I think

Ross: you you do the err the sound effects from err various Star Wars characters I believe

Pegg: don't try and lure me into some nerd trap

[*laughter from audience*] (3)

Ross: it's hardly quicksand Pegg

[*laughter from audience*] (3)

you can get ouʔ again quickly

TRANSCRIPTION KEY

(.)	micropause
(1/2/3)	pause in seconds
//	overlapping speech
bold text	stress/increased volume
ʔ	glottal stop used instead of 't' sound

Section C – Comparing and contrasting texts

Text C

Text C is an extract from Simon Pegg's autobiography *Nerd Do Well – A small boy's journey to becoming a big kid*. He is reflecting on how he first became interested in the Hollywood blockbuster films, Star Wars.

Despite the crowd-pleasing theatrics and the classic story implicit within the film, from the outside *Star Wars* probably looked to most like another highbrow, space-based nerd fest. The trailer was certainly very po-faced and portentous without any of John Williams's rousing score and only partially finished special effects. Nevertheless, the word of mouth generated by those early showings, and the infectious sense of well-being with which it filled its audiences, sent a positively virulent wave of elation through the populace, so that by the time the film reached other shores, it was supported by awesome box-office statistics and tales of audience hysteria. It was the marketing momentum every film-maker dreams about and it hit Britain like a tsunami.

The explosive impact of *Star Wars* was thus a combination of a number of factors, the coalescence of which created a blast wave that engulfed much of the globe. The holy grail for every film-maker is an effective marketing campaign. Rubbish films regularly do well with the force of aggressive exposure, and though they evaporate in the memory and contribute nothing to the medium of cinema or anyone's life, they make the requisite amount of cash to justify their being made in the first place and possibly again, at least for the people that put up the investment.

Studios are reluctant to get behind films that don't have obvious mainstream appeal because the risk of losing money is too great. But audiences are generally more sophisticated than they are given credit for and respond to smarter fare if they are exposed to it. Generally, though, we are given fireworks rather than theatre because ultimately the mainstream audience will avoid challenge if they can help it. Life's too short. Occasionally, a *Little Miss Sunshine* or *Napoleon Dynamite* will slip through the net and gather a head of steam through word of mouth. Strange to think that *Star Wars* once had more in common with these hopeful little indies than with the monuments to profitability it now stands beside.

For me, as a seven-year-old boy, the hype and the hysteria were only a small part of it. It was fun to be swept up in and be part of the thing that everyone was talking about, but its true effect on me went beyond the social and economic forces that brought it so keenly into my consciousness. I have no doubt my interest was nourished and maintained by all the toys and books and paraphernalia that accompanied the release and defined the very concept of merchandising thereafter, but my love of *Star Wars* was also incredibly personal. It inspired my imagination, increased my vocabulary, encouraged an interest in film production and music, it was in many ways my childhood muse.

Indicative Content - *Please note:* indicative content *indicates* possible points candidates might make, but this is not an exhaustive account. **Any valid response should be rewarded.**

Question	Guidance	Mark	Text features	
3	**Using appropriate linguistic concepts and methods, analyse the ways in which language is used in these two texts. In your answer you should:** **• explore connections and variations between the texts** **• consider how contextual factors contribute to the construction of meaning.** **A03** Clear contrast between what seems to be genuinely spontaneous elements to conversation in Text A, within basic adjacency pair format, and continuous piece of discursive writing which is at times quite highbrow, but has some spoken touches ('don't', 'won't' etc) Audience for Text A programme is mainstream, hence humour, shorter turns, little depth to responses, whereas Text B has an audience that is prepared to accept some challenging lexis. **A04** Direct references to concept of the nerd in both pieces suggest that the Pegg/Ross conversation has some of the same degree of planning as the	36	*Phonetics, phonology and prosodics*	
			Text B	**Text C**
			• Elision of words and emphatic stress (e.g. li'wbi') governed by needs of comedy – fast delivery. • Ross and Pegg both use glottal stop ('we were talkin', suggesting that convergence/accommodation a rapport between them and possibly a general air of informality.	• Standard English with no attempt at phonetic spellings.
			Lexis and semantics	
			Text B	**Text C**
			• Little low frequency Latinate lexis: 'socially inept' breaks pattern, following slang phrase 'spekky idiot' – arguably shows Ross attempting to diverge from the established register for comic effect. • Empty modifiers ('incredibly talented', 'brilliant') typical of talk show discourse/register. • Fields enhance comedy (e.g. 'spekky idiot', 'nerdy', 'nerd trap'). • Figurative language used playfully (e.g. 'nerd trap'; 'quicksand').	• Mixed register in terms of vocabulary, with some low frequency Latinate lexis condensed in certain sequences, sometimes also used as a contrast: e.g. 'space-based nerd fest' is followed by 'portentous', 'virulent', 'populace' – suggests a well-educated readership; register shift creates comic effect. • More colloquial modifiers used at times which make no attempt to disguise opinion (e.g. 'Rubbish films'). • Figurative language mostly common idioms (e.g. 'slip through the net'; 'the holy grail') lowers formality and increases colloquial quality.

Question	Guidance	Mark	Text features	
3	biography. However, Ross is perhaps taking Pegg off his prepared material in order to get a level of entertainment, although it may be a prepared routine to an extent, whereas any biographical writing like this is carefully worked through (despite the apparent ease of the register at times). Ross interrupts Pegg, as befits his role as the interviewer. The written text allows the writer to keep total control at all times.

There is a visual dimension to the written text, in the paragraphing, but essentially the mode is written with colloquial features and controlled, whereas the Jonathan Ross show, being a visual medium, allows for a more chaotic structure, since the audience can make sense of their interaction by watching them. There is some evidence of Ross threatening Pegg's face at times (e.g. he does not ask Pegg outright whether he is a nerd, saying 'if we wanna pursue this line' which is his agenda rather than Pegg's, the use of 'we' is arguably a face saving strategy. In the written text the audience are not imposed upon in being part of this one sided discourse (although this may be part of Pegg's charm offensive). | 36 | *Grammar and morphology* | |
			Text B	**Text C**
			• More coordinate clauses – higher than subordinate clauses indicates both that this is speech and also the aim to make the register accessible. • Interrogative mood used by Ross – part of schema of this kind of discourse.	• Roughly every other sentence contains some subordination – can be done in writing and chimes in with other features; suggests fewer allowances are being made for a mainstream audience. • Declarative throughout, suits informative purpose of biography.
			Discourse	
			Text B	**Text C**
			• Interview-guest format. P and R both with equal length turns, suggesting equality of status. Ross is also entertainer. • R frames questions in adjacency pair Q and A format but the roles are sometimes reversed. • Topics controlled by R – agenda setter (e.g. 'are you genuinely nerdy' is a clear shift of topic). • Generally cooperative dialogue, suggests that both participants are comfortable with each other. • High number of non-fluency features, including fillers and plenty of false starts *suggests genuine interchange here* (exception is 'geek'/'nerd' definition).	• End of a chapter. Discourse structure is done by paragraphing, with some sense of chronology, but mostly divided into topics (marketing; independent films and similarities with Star Wars; effect on Pegg as a boy). • Declarative mood, with adverbials as discourse markers typical of the essay or piece of discursive writing ('Nevertheless', 'Generally, though'), indicate the twists and turns of his discussion. • Continuous stream of writing, typical of this form/genre. • Reader is implied at certain points ('Strange to think') which adds to levels of engagement. • Written mode – polished prose but with spoken feel.

There are a total of 36 marks available for Question **3**.

Decide on a mark for AO1 out of 12, and then a separate mark for AO3 out of 12, and a separate mark for AO4 out of 12. Add the three marks together to reach a total out of 36 marks. It is possible that candidates may achieve different levels for each AO: allocate the mark according to the level of competency demonstrated for each AO individually.

Level	AO1	Mark	AO3	Mark	AO4	Mark
6	• Candidates apply a range of appropriate methods in an assured and systematic way, using appropriate terminology and writing in a secure academic register. • They deftly establish and explore patterns of language use and can closely analyse incisively chosen evidence.	11–12	• Candidates make discerning points about the possible effect of contextual factors on particular features of language, both in terms of production and reception. • They perceptively evaluate their points, suggesting alternatives for how context might account for variations in language use.	11–12	• Candidates selectively and methodically apply confident knowledge of appropriate linguistic concepts across both texts. • Candidates compare particular linguistic features in the two texts, making illuminating connections between them which clearly establish some of the varied ways that language is used.	11–12
5	• Candidates apply a range of appropriate methods to the texts in a systematic way, using appropriate terminology and coherent written expression. • They establish patterns of language use and can analyse well-chosen evidence in some depth.	9–10	• Candidates make strong and helpful points about relevant contextual factors, showing how context might affect language use, both in terms of production and reception. • They show that they can weigh up how contextual factors might account for variations in language use.	9–10	• Candidates methodically apply sound knowledge of appropriate linguistic concepts across both texts. • Candidates compare linguistic features in the two texts, making helpful connections between them which show some of the ways that language varies.	9–10

Level	AO1	Mark	AO3	Mark	AO4	Mark
4	• Candidates apply some appropriate methods in a sound way, using mostly appropriate terminology and coherent if uneconomical writing. • Analysis is characterised by either a fairly limited number of well-developed points, with relevant evidence, or a larger number of valid supported points that lack depth.	7–8	• Candidates make some valid points about context, showing how contextual factors can affect language production and reception • They come to some sound conclusions about how contextual factors could cause variations in language.	7–8	• Candidates apply accurate knowledge of linguistic concepts to language features in a way that is mostly appropriate, across both texts. • They make some comparisons of linguistic features in the two texts, making some connections between them which show ways in which language use varies.	7–8
3	• Candidates attempt to apply linguistic methods with some success, and terminology is at times appropriate; written expression contains some errors. • Analysis is uneven and is characterised by either scattered points that are supported with evidence or points which may have validity but are unsupported.	5–6	• Candidates make a few successful attempts at showing how basic contextual factors affect the way language is produced and received. • Conclusions drawn tend to be assertive and simplistic rather than weighed in the balance and are sometimes unconvincing; there may be an elementary sense of how context affects language variation.	5–6	• Candidates have a loose grasp of linguistic concepts and attempt to apply them to both texts, although sometimes unconvincingly. • They will make more general connections and will attempt to compare particular features but with only partial success.	5–6

Level	AO1	Mark	AO3	Mark	AO4	Mark
2	• Candidates make a vague attempt to apply linguistic methods to the texts and some terms are used, with occasional appropriateness; writing is likely to contain errors which sometimes obscure meaning. • One or two simple points are made, with little or tenuous evidence; assertive rather than analytical.	3–4	• Candidates can comment on context, although this is unlikely to be show proper grasp of production and reception and so is of very limited use. • Evaluation of points is not happening in this level because there is no real exploration of language, but there may be one or two generalisations made about the effects of context on the language.	3–4	• Where linguistic concepts are in evidence for each text, understanding is shallow and knowledge of them is likely to be muddled. • Some loose connections between the texts are established in one or two places in the answer. These connections are likely to be simple matching or contrasting of features with very little demonstration of how language varies.	3–4
1	• Candidates struggle to apply the linguistic methods; terminology, if present, is inappropriate and accuracy of written expression is very limited. • There may be the odd point made but there is no analysis with evidence.	1–2	• One or at the most two references are made to the context with no link to language production or reception. • Little or no attempt to draw conclusions about the effect of context on different uses of language.	1–2	• Any knowledge of linguistic concepts is likely to be mostly inaccurate with perhaps a very vague sense of understanding both texts being present. • The notion of comparison is essentially lost in this level. There may be one or two connections here and there but these do not help with notions of the varieties of language use.	1–2
0	• No response or no response worthy of any credit.	0	• No response or no response worthy of any credit.	0	• No response or no response worthy of any credit.	0