



GCSE English Language Model Answers:

English Language (8700) (NEW SPEC) Nov 2021

Paper 1

Q1.

1. The Master was slightly peculiar.
2. He has travelled abroad.
3. It was common for the Master to not respond to people talking to him.
4. The Master has a lot of hair.

Examiner report:

- Evidence is selected directly from the text, within the **specified lines**.
 - The points can be direct **quotes or paraphrases** from the text.
 - This question assesses the **first part of AO1**- identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.
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Q2. The writer uses **similes** in order to describe Ugwu's impression of the city. The simile "**side by side like polite well-dressed men**", creates a **vivid image** of the houses in the reader's head, as it creates a **comparison** between two imaginable scenarios. It allows the reader to really appreciate the uniformity of the houses and how Ugwu would "**never be able to describe**" them to his sister, which **further emphasises his awe**. Moreover, the writer uses the simile "the hedges separating them were trimmed so flat on top that they looked like tables wrapped with leaves" to describe the uniformity and tidiness of the hedges. This creates **vivid imagery** and the reader is thus able to imagine the scene clearly. The use of the word "**wrapped**" emphasises the **all-encompassing nature of the leaves** on the hedges, and **aids the reader in their imagining** of this. Therefore, the use of similes by the writer here contributes to the descriptive nature of the text, and creates a **more powerful image** in the reader's mind.

Furthermore, the writer uses **personification** in the phrase "**sat side by side like polite well-dressed men**" to describe the houses, which creates a vivid picture of the houses, and brings an otherwise dull scene to life. By using **personification** here, the writer is able to describe **how close together and unvaried the houses are; all uniformly painted the "colour of the sky"**. The **comparison** of the houses to 'polite well-dressed men', suggests that they looked inviting

and warm despite their uniformity. Thus, the writer is able to utilise personification to express Ugwu's wonder at the city, and in turn bring the scene to life to the reader.

Additionally, the writer uses hyperbole in the phrase "streets so smooth and tarred that he itched to lay his cheek down on them". The hyperbole here emphasises how in awe Ugwu is of the city and the streets, and how it is like nothing he has ever experienced before. The notion that Ugwu would be so eager to lie down on the streets is surprising to us, and this exaggeration makes his point about how smooth the streets are more powerful, and creates a vivid image.

Examiner report:

- This question assesses you on **AO2** - explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.
 - **Language techniques** such as similes, personification and hyperbole are recognised.
 - The **effects** of these techniques on the reader are analysed and explained.
 - Detailed **evidence** in the form of quotes is selected from the text.
 - Points are **fully expanded** and **linked back** to the question.
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Q3. One way in which the writer has structured the text to interest the reader is the use of short sentences with the effect of building tension. As Ugwu and his Aunt are entering the Master's compound, the writer uses short sentences such as "the lawn glistened" and "butterflies hovered overhead", in order to create tension within the narrative. Ugwu's previous state has been one of awe whilst journeying to the compound, however at this point the short sentences in the structure of the text imply nervousness and apprehension at what might be in wait. Thus, the use of short sentences contribute to a change in pace in the narrative and allow the writer to convey tension.

In addition, another structural element of the text which contributes to the reader's interest is the use of temporal references. When the narrative is building tension as Ugwu and his Aunt are entering the Master's compound, the focus shifts through the use of the temporal reference "a week ago". This allows the writer to shift the reader's focus to a scenario from a week ago, and momentarily relieve the tension that is building. This change in focus shifts the reader's attention to an event which happened previously, and adds further context to the current situation by explaining how Ugwu obtained the job.

A further structural feature of the text is a sustained perspective, which is used consciously by the writer to invoke the reader's interest. The perspective of the main character, Ugwu, is sustained throughout and thus we view the story through his eyes. The narrative focuses on Ugwu's perspective of the city, through language such as "he had never seen anything like the streets that appeared after they went past the university gates". Through this technique, the reader is able to build a rapport with Ugwu, and thus when the tension builds as he enters the

Master's compound, we share his feeling of unease. Structuring the narrative in this way allows the reader to follow Ugwu's journey alongside him, thus allowing the reader to feel a sense of closeness to Ugwu.

Examiner report:

- This question assesses you on **AO2** - explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.
- The answer shows a perceptive understanding of **structural features**, and a number of these are identified with **evidence** from the text.
- The **effects** of these structural features are adequately analysed and the points are **explained** fully.
- The answer uses sophisticated **subject specific language** to explain the points.

Q4. In this extract, the writer portrays Ugwu's state as being one of intense awe and excitement. As Ugwu enters the compound, the idyllic tone that previously characterised the text is continued. The writer uses nature-based imagery to describe the idyllic scene as they walk into the compound, detailing the 'sweet, heady' smell dissipating from the 'white flowers clustered on the bushes at the entrance'. The imagery used here allows the reader to imagine the scene by appealing to their different senses, and the picture built seems a very idyllic and inviting one. This nature-based imagery is further employed through the simile 'the bushes were shaped like slender hills', which further contributes to the construction of the inviting scene. The adjective 'slender' carries connotations of being delicate and pleasing to look at, and allows the reader to imagine how in awe Ugwu must be feeling. The metaphorical language in the 'the lawn glistened' allows the reader to imagine the scene, and how the sun must be beating down on a freshly cut lawn. In addition, the use of the word glistened implies that it is sparkling like a jewel, or something precious. The scene is a blissful one, and we get the sense throughout that Ugwu is awe struck and excited by it.

After travelling inside the garage, Ugwu's feelings of excitement continue to be portrayed by the writer. The simile 'a strip of metal ran around its blue body like a necklace' describes the car as an object of intense desire for Ugwu. The comparison of it with a necklace contributes to the idea that Ugwu views the car as being extremely valuable and like nothing he has ever seen before. The writer describes Ugwu as 'staring' at the car, which suggests he was in awe of it, and intensely excited by the prospect that he would be starting his new life in such a place of luxury, so intensely contrasting with his old life in poverty.

Just before the two enter the Master's room, however, we see slight apprehension creep into Ugwu's demeanour. We are presented with a contrast between the Master's 'cement wall' and the 'mud walls of his mother's hut' back home, which reminds us of how far Ugwu is from his home and what he is accustomed to. The writer portrays Ugwu's sense of uneasy homesickness here, and leaves the reader feeling sympathy and concern for him. Despite his

mother and aunty's huts being described rather unwelcomingly, through phrases such as the 'dim coolness', Ugwu momentarily wishes he could be back there anyway, which further emphasises how anxious he must be feeling.

Once Ugwu and his aunty enter the Master's room, the writer uses descriptive language with more negative connotations when compared to the language used to describe the entrance. The writer describes the 'plastic' flowers in a vase in the room, creating a direct juxtaposition with the 'sweet' real white flowers growing on the bushes outside, in order to convey Ugwu's growing disappointment to the reader. Additionally, Ugwu's impression of the room is that it had 'too much' space, sounding more disappointed than the awe-struck state he had been in before. This contrasts to earlier in the passage where he seemed in awe of the vast city, not being able to get enough of its endless treasures.

At the end of the passage, our impression of the Master through Ugwu's eyes does not live up to the impression the reader has so far been given. The writer's use of language implies that the Master is rude and obnoxious, and the use of the verb 'grunted' indicates to the reader that he is uninterested and distracted. Furthermore, the description of the Master sitting in his chair in a 'slanted' fashion carries the connotation that he is lazy, and does not care to greet his guests in a professional manner. The reader gets the sense that Ugwu is taken aback and unimpressed by this, contributing to his disappointed feeling, and increasing the reader's feelings of sympathy towards him.

Overall, I would agree with the statement, as throughout the text the writer creates the impression that Ugwu's sense of excitement is fading into one of disappointment and apprehension at what his new life might entail.

Examiner's report:

- This question assesses you on **AO4** - evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.
- The answer develops a **convincing and critical** response relevant to the statement in the question.
- The student shows perceptive understanding of the **writer's methods**, for example the use of similes and descriptive imagery.
- The student has **evaluated critically** and in detail the **effects** of the writer's use of language and their methods on the reader.
- A range of judicious **textual detail** from the source has been selected which adequately supports the points being made.
- **Keywords** from the question such as 'excitement' and 'disappointment' are used in order to **signpost** the answer to the examiner.
- A short **conclusion** is reached in order to signpost to the examiner what has already been argued throughout the answer.

Q5. a) Describe a place at sunset as suggested by this picture.

The ever-dwindling sun peeks through the many bodies on the street, casting long, warped shadows on the ground. It was that blindingly bright, late summer sun which cascaded so beautifully into the sea, such a bright shade of blue that it was almost translucent. The smell of the pearl-coloured sea foam filled the air, as it crashed into the sand, dragging it backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards. The rhythm was so constant it was mesmerising.

Concurrently, on the promenade, commuters mixed with visitors, one uttering annoyed tutting sounds, the other excitedly laughing. The click-clack sound of high heels could be heard echoing on the concrete; their wearers droning down mobile phones to equally boring colleagues. In stark contrast was the squealing laughter of a group of youthful women- a hen party- tottering down the pavement teetering on their too-high heels. The sun illuminated their smiling faces as they hobbled down the promenade towards the town.

Nearby, cars zipped past, like migrating birds heading for home. The sun reflected off their glistening bodies, bouncing onto the nearby flats, full of families, children, husbands and wives arriving home from their days at work and school. The happy screeches of the children that danced out of the windows of the flats, flung open wide in an attempt to bat away the stifling summer air, could still be heard over the screeching engines of the cars rushing by.

Examiner report:

- This will be marked on **AO5** - content and organisation- and **AO6**- technical accuracy.
- **AO5:** The answer's communication is **convincing and compelling**, and the tone, style and register are suitable to the **purpose** of a **description**.
- There is use of **extensive and ambitious vocabulary** such as 'concurrently' and 'cascaded'.
- The answer employs a varied use of different **language techniques**, such as similes in 'like migrating birds', and repetition in 'backwards and forwards'.
- **Senses** are described with 'smell' and 'hear'.
- A variety of **structural features** are used, including listing, and varied sentence length.
- The **paragraphs are fluently linked** with seamlessly integrated **connectives**.
- **AO6:** The answer uses a **wide range of punctuation** including commas and semicolons, and there is a **high level** of accuracy with **spelling**.
- Complex and compound sentences show secure control of **complex grammatical structures**.

b) Write a story about a new beginning.

Spring. The time of new life; fields full of baby lambs, a new season, daffodils blooming in the fields as the sun melts away the winter frost. A fresh start for so many.

As lambs tentatively took their first steps into a new world, Sophie nervously packed her daffodil-coloured suitcase. She felt as shaky as a baby lamb as she folded shirt after shirt, jumper after jumper, and more pairs of shoes than she knew she had. She wondered how on earth it was all going to fit, and more pertinently, how she was going to carry it on the bus ride across London to the airport.

Sighing, Sophie gazed around her tiny flat. It looked so bare and sad, a shadow of what it had once been. The place looked almost sterile now; it had been stripped of any personal touch and the little furniture that was left looked sad and dejected. The settee was sneering at her from the corner, as if even it had never wanted her there, and the kettle would no longer be welcoming any friendly visitors in from the cold. The ghost of long-gone happiness dwindled in the air, and she could almost hear the laughter of her and Mark on Christmas day. She could smell the Christmas pudding and copious amounts of mulled wine they had consumed, while howling with laughter over Mark's new Christmas jumper. What fun they had! How different she felt in this moment.

Sophie looked at her watch with a sharp intake of breath. She didn't have long to make the arduous trip across London to Gatwick Airport, and if she wasn't careful her flight - paid for by the dregs of her bank account - would leave without her. With some force, she launched her body on top of the suitcase, jamming the spilling out clothes in as she struggled to drag the zip round.

"Do I even need half of this stuff?" She mumbled to herself as she grappled with the unruly zip.

It shut, but not before Sophie had beads of sweat dripping down her face, her curly blonde hair sticking to her face in the most annoying way. *Get me out of here*, she thought.

Out on the street, the cars were rushing by, the wind smacking Sophie in the face like a ton of bricks. She dragged her suitcase along the busy pavement to the bus stop, trying to dodge the commuters and tourists that littered it, out of breath already by the time she got there. She flopped onto the bench at the bus stop, letting out a long breath. Not once did she turn to look back at her flat, subconsciously closing that chapter in her life.

She was going to Australia.

Examiner report:

- This will be marked on **AO5** - content and organisation- and **AO6**- technical accuracy.
 - AO5: The answer's communication is **convincing and compelling**, and the tone, style and register are suitable to the **purpose** of a **story**.
 - There is use of **extensive and ambitious vocabulary** such as 'pertinently' and 'arduous'.
 - The answer employs a varied use of different **language techniques**, such as alliteration in 'tentatively took', and an extended metaphor in the comparison between Sophie and the baby lamb.
 - A variety of **structural features** are used, including varied sentence length and type, and a focus shift when the student shifts the reader's focus to last Christmas.
 - The **paragraphs are fluently linked** with seamlessly integrated **connectives**.
 - AO6: The answer uses a wide range of **punctuation** including semicolons, and exclamation marks, and there is a high level of accuracy with **spelling**. **Dialogue** is also used to reflect the purpose of a **story**.
 - Complex and compound sentences show secure control of **complex grammatical structures**.
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