

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

(9280/R) Reading
Report on the examination

NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT ON EXAMINATION: INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE 9280/R READING NOVEMBER 2019

General Comments

The overall performance in Reading was very encouraging with many students achieving high total marks and a small minority gaining full marks. As is always the case in this examination, the reading texts became progressively more challenging with performance being less strong in response to questions on Text 4 compared to Text 1. However, there was an increase in strong responses to questions asked about Texts 3 and 4 compared to previous series. Students appeared to find Text 4, entitled 'In Search of Olives', to be the most challenging in terms of identifying the correct information and wording clear and accurate responses.

Once again, performance was generally stronger on multiple choice questions rather than open response questions, though some students appeared to find multiple choice questions based on assessment objective four (R4) ('make deductions') such as 'Which statement best describes the whole text?' (Question 32) more challenging. As with previous series, open response questions which required students to show understanding of a specific phrase in context and come up with synonyms to explain it (R2) appeared to be the questions which students found most challenging. Performance was strongest in these questions when students were able to pinpoint the precise meaning of the phrase given in the question and not refer in their answer to a phrase/sentence either before or after it.

Regarding questions where students were asked to 'collate, organise and present relevant detail' (R3), the strongest responses demonstrated that students fully understood both the question and the relevant textual detail required.

Text 1

Students generally performed very well on all six questions set on Text 1 with virtually all students answering question 4 correctly.

Text 2

Question 7

This question was correctly answered by the vast majority of students.

Question 8

Virtually all students gained the full two marks on this open response question about Maz's grandfather.

Question 9

This question was well answered with the vast majority of students gaining the one mark available for this multiple choice question.

Question 10

Responses were strong in response to this question with virtually all students identifying and selecting the relevant detail about Maz's grandfather.

Question 11

This multiple choice question was well answered with the vast majority of students correctly identifying the information for two marks.

Question 12

Students appeared to find this question more challenging with around 15% of students managing to show an understanding of both ideas in the phrase 'like a huge, dripping tree' of the grandfather being both very big and that water was running off him.

Question 13

This question was well answered with the vast majority of students selecting both relevant bits of information to achieve the two marks available.

Question 14

This was a well-answered question with the vast majority of students choosing the correct answer about the main purpose of Text 2.

Text 3

Questions 15 and 16

Both of these multiple choice questions were well answered with over 90% of students providing the correct answers.

Question 17

This multiple choice question required students to identify the four correct statements in two paragraphs from a list of eight with just over three quarters of students correctly identifying all four.

Question 18

This question was well answered with the vast majority gaining four marks by listing what the writer describes about his visit to Smash's new office. Using the exact words from the text is encouraged in these sorts of questions though if students used the correct inference but not the exact words from the text, for example by saying 'the energy of the staff was incredible', a mark was also awarded.

Question 19

Students appeared to find this question challenging with only a minority gaining the full three marks available. While the idea of Jez having a 'heart of gold' was often well explained, not many students were able to find appropriate synonyms for 'grubby' or explain the idea of his goodness being hidden below.

Question 20

This was a fairly well-answered question with just over four fifths of students gaining all four marks. In some instances marks were unable to be awarded due to a lack of precision such as where responses stated 'he treated all workers equally' instead of 'as equals'. The same was true of responses which gave as an answer 'careful' instead of 'carefully'. Single word responses were acceptable if they captured positive qualities drawn from the text.

Question 21

This was well answered though in some instances responses were unable to be awarded a mark where 'he gave a little away' had been written instead of 'he gave little away'.

Text 4

Question 22

Some responses were unable to be awarded a mark due to not adhering to the past tense as expressed in the identified phrase 'stars glimmered in a black sky'. Various synonyms for 'glimmered' and 'black' were accepted with nearly two fifths of students managing to accurately explain both.

Question 23

The strongest responses to this question clearly identified and presented things which were annoying or unpleasant such as the frustration the writer felt towards the guide and many students used direct quotations from the text. It was heartening to see many students listing four things separately on the lines provided. Around three quarters of students correctly identified four things.

Question 24

The vast majority of students identified the two correct statements in response to this multiple choice question.

Question 25

Just over a fifth of students gained the two marks available for this question by fully explaining both ideas that the car was similar to her husband's and this made her feel closer to him.

Question 26

Students appeared to find this multiple choice question more challenging with around 70% gaining a mark for identifying the correct meaning of the sentence.

Question 27

Just over three fifths of students correctly identified the main point of paragraph 5.

Question 28

Just over three quarters of students answered this question correctly by listing three correct details about the animals.

Question 29

Four marks were awarded for details about the people in the town with a mark awarded for 'people were selling watermelons' but not 'watermelons were for sale'.

Question 30

Many students correctly identified two things which the guide does not allow the writer to do.

Question 31

Students appeared to find this question more challenging, with around 15% of responses correctly explaining both ideas that the car was 'negotiating' the traffic and that the traffic was 'messy'.

Question 32

Just over three fifths of students correctly identified that the whole text is an account of the positive and negative aspects of a journey.

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In line with OxfordAQA's Fair Assessment promise, the assessment design, marking and awarding of this examination focused on performance in the subject, rather than English language ability.



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