



GCSE English Language Model Answers:

English Language (8700) (NEW SPEC) Nov 2022

Paper 2

Q1. True statements:

- The writer is surprised that she has a good night's sleep.
- The writer's mind is very active when she first gets into bed.
- The writer has used the script before.
- The writer has suffered from insomnia since she was a child.

Examiner report:

- The answer **selects** the correct statements from the specified lines in the text: lines 1-6.
 - This question assesses the **first part of AO1**- identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.
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Q2.

The writers of Source A and Source B have very different ways of attempting to sleep. Whilst Fern relies on traditional methods like 'saying the Multiplication table', reciting poetry and eating, Akbar tries 'every known cure going' in the modern era, including 'remedies from the herbal to the hard stuff', changes to their diet, a 'therapeutic electromagnetic mattress', 'hypnosis' and 'sleeping pills'. Both writers seem to try commonly-used remedies for sleeplessness, as Akbar 'had tried every known cure going- and there are plenty', whilst Fern tries 'the foolish things recommended in such cases', but these known cures do not work for either writer.

The differences between the methods that the writers try are likely to be due to their different situations and the remedies available to them. Whilst high-tech solutions like an 'electromagnetic mattress' are available to Akbar, Fern must try to sleep solely by trying to calm her mind with repetitive tasks and to address her bodily needs by eating. Akbar is also equipped with more knowledge about proven and scientific ways to cure sleep deprivation, including giving up coffee and sugar. In contrast, Fern seems to lack the knowledge and research that Akbar has access to, relying only on the 'foolish things recommended in such cases' which she clearly has little faith in. Despite the difference in expertise regarding appropriate solutions, Akbar is no more successful than Fern in using modern methods to try to sleep (until she tries Autogenic Training). This shows that sleeplessness is a difficult problem to solve and people have often tried to cure it over time with limited success.

Unlike Akbar, Fern does not turn to medical solutions like pills and ‘the hard stuff’. Although rudimentary remedies were likely to be available to her at the time, they were often dangerous, and Fern appears to suffer less than Akbar in terms of sleep- as soon as the mosquitoes can no longer disturb her, she falls asleep in a ‘blissful happiness’ under a mosquito net. It is therefore possible that Fern experiences sleeplessness only occasionally, so does not feel the need to go to the extreme of taking medication, whilst Akbar explains that her insomnia has ‘clung on from childhood’ and she was ‘in desperation’ to find a cure, so would be more likely to try anything.

Examiner report:

- This answer assesses **both parts of AO1** - identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas , and select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
 - The answer illustrates a detailed interpretation of both texts, and makes **inferences** about the characters from the texts. This is **signposted** to the examiner with phrases such as ‘ Joe and Marius differ...’.
 - The answer uses **textual detail** from **both** sources, in the form of quotations, which provide **evidence** for their point.
 - **Perceptive differences** about the motivations, power dynamics and emotions of the characters are identified and **explained** fully.
 - The student has **signposted to the examiner** by using phrases such as ‘in contrast’ and ‘on the other hand’ in order to highlight differences and **link** back to the question.
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Q3.

In this part of the source, the writer uses direct address to encourage the reader to empathise with her negative experience with mosquitoes at night. The repetition of ‘you’ at the beginning of sentences draws the reader in, engaging with them directly and encouraging them to recall her experiences as if they are their own. When listing past-tense verbs in long, complex sentences such as ‘you have lain on your side, lain on your back, lain on your face’, the writer mimics the feeling of tossing and turning in bed, unable to sleep for fear of the mosquitoes. The repetition of ‘lain’ in a rule-of-three structure gives the impression that the sleepless night is long and monotonous. Then, a sense of increasing desperation is built as the writer uses verbs like ‘doubled’ and ‘twisted’ to create an extended metaphor that compares the body to a piece of rope, drawn into ‘hard knots’ as tossing and turning in bed contorts the body and seems to cause extreme discomfort.

As well as describing the uncomfortable experience of being around mosquitoes at night, the writer uses language techniques to describe the mosquitoes themselves. When the writer uses the metaphor ‘war song’ to describe the sound of the mosquitoes, it makes it seem as if they are an organised military force, bent on harm and destruction. She contrasts this with the simile ‘as nervous as a cat’ to describe those who ‘have suffered’ the onslaught of the mosquitoes. This simile creates the image of people acting like timid cats and scurrying away from the

'never-ceasing' presence of the warlike mosquitoes. The indignity of this experience is expressed through the phrase 'pygmy-ness of your tormentors', which indicates the small size of the mosquitoes and suggests that humans should feel ashamed to fear them.

However, the writer also suggests that resistance is futile, as attempts to ignore the mosquitoes by looking 'fiercely up to the ceiling' and folding 'arms resolutely over your chest' will only result in an "owdacious" bite'. Coupled with this pun on 'audacious', the image of someone lying in bed and vainly trying to defy mosquito bites by crossing their arms in a childlike manner lends a humorous tone to the text, and entertains the reader. The hyperbolic verbs 'flying' and 'bewailing' in response to a mosquito bite further create a humorous image of an adult leaping onto the floor in a childlike way after being bitten, whilst 'bewailing the day you were born' hyperbolically suggests that mosquito bites can make people wail like cats and regret their very existence.

Examiner report:

- In this question you will be marked 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.
 - **A range of language techniques** are identified, such as metaphor and onomatopoeia.
 - Supporting **evidence** from the text is selected and presented in the form of quotations from the **specified lines** of text.
 - The **effects** of each language technique are **perceptively analysed** using a range of sophisticated subject **vocabulary**.
 - Different parts of the answer are clearly **signposted to the examiner** using connectives such as 'the writer uses language techniques to' and 'encourage the reader to...', and a sentence at the end **links** back to the question.
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Q4.

Whilst Akbar takes quite a serious tone in describing her long-standing insomnia, Fern uses a more entertaining and humorous tone to describe a less serious anecdotal experience in a diary-like manner. Akbar explains that she has experienced 'insomnia that clung on from childhood and progressively beat me down'. The long-term impact of her severe condition is highlighted by the use of emotive and medical language to describe her 'sore eyes, itchy skin...hysteria' and her feeling that her 'life was unravelling'. Her listing of medical problems and her explanation that her 'immune system was shot' leads the reader to understand that Akbar's insomnia had a serious impact on her life, and led her to feel like she was weighed down with a condition that 'clung' to her and started to pull her life apart through a kind of 'unravelling' over time. The idea that sleeplessness 'beat [her] down' and the 'sore', 'itchy' feeling in her eyes

emphasises the painful and abrasive discomfort that she felt, leading the reader to feel sympathetic towards her.

In a similar way, Fern lists the negative effects that sleeplessness can have on the body. The triplet 'bleary-eyed, spotted, dismal wretch!' creates an image of someone who has been worn down by sleeplessness, in a similar way to how Akbar has been 'progressively beat...down'. Like Akbar, she also notes the mental effects of sleeplessness, and evokes the idea of hysteria when she suggests that a sleepless person might be 'laughing hysterically' as they play tricks on their family, and 'laugh hysterically' when killing mosquitoes.

However, it is clear that unlike Akbar, Fern is not seriously affected by insomnia, and her sleeplessness is a temporary issue rather than a lifelong challenge. Fern's description of the 'bit of cold chicken' suggests that she is recalling a specific occasion and that her sleeplessness is an isolated experience rather than an ongoing condition. Although Fern clearly has experienced trouble sleeping, her light-hearted tone, created through the use of humorous exclamations like 'Four o'clock! Gracious!' and hyperbole like 'tomorrow (should you survive to see it)', further suggests that her sleeplessness is far less serious than Akbar's, and she does not suffer from chronic insomnia. It also seems as if the 'mosquitoes' that she describes at length are the chief cause of her sleeplessness, as with a mosquito net, she is able to 'fall asleep' in 'blissful happiness'.

Fern uses a diary-like style and writes in a chronological order to express her feelings about her short-term issues with sleeplessness. Her consistent use of second person makes it seem as if the reader is living through Fern's own personal anecdote, drawing them in and encouraging them to recall their own experiences as she supposes that 'You know what it is to lie awake at night'. This makes the text feel more personal than Akbar's, as Akbar uses first person to explain her experiences to the reader over a long period of time. Rather than elucidating events in a chronological order, Akbar uses flashbacks to demonstrate the long-standing nature of her condition. She begins by explaining her 'good night's sleep last night' and then evokes memories of when she 'was ten' and her experiences when trying to find solutions to her insomnia.

Overall, whilst both writers experience similar physical and mental effects of sleeplessness, Akbar's experience is far more serious, and the extent of her long-standing problem is expressed in a sombre tone. In contrast, Fern's humorous anecdote, presented in the second-person and in a diary-like form, demonstrates her feelings about sleeplessness in a more light-hearted and entertaining way. It is clear that unlike Akbar, Fern does not experience chronic insomnia, and is able to joke about the negative effects of a sleepless night- an experience that she assumes the reader will be familiar with.

Examiner's report:

- This answer assesses **AO3** - compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.

- Compares ideas and perspectives in a **perceptive way** by **analysing** how the writers use methods to portray feelings and perspectives. For example, stream-of-consciousness and flashbacks.
 - A range of supporting **evidence** is selected from **both** texts.
 - Shows a **detailed and perceptive** understanding of the different ideas and perspectives in both texts.
 - The answer is clearly **signposted** to the reader through phrases such as 'whilst both writers', and 'in a similar way'.
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Q5.

9 Slumber Street,
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17/11/2023

Gillian Keegan MP,
10 Downing Street,
London,
SW1A 2AA

Dear Ms Keegan,

I am writing to you regarding a problem that has affected education for many years, and continues to present issues in schools up and down the country. I am referring to the tiredness caused by standard school times that are plainly unsuitable for catering to the biological needs of teenagers.

Scientists have repeatedly proven that unlike adults and younger children, teenagers have a unique 'biological clock' that leads them to be more attentive, more socially aware and better able to process information later in the day. Currently, bleary-eyed teenagers are finding it incredibly difficult to arise at 8:00 and attempt to absorb and retain information when they start their lessons at 9:00. Far from being due to laziness or lack of effort, a measured lack of attention in morning lessons is due to a delay in the release of melatonin (a hormone regulating tiredness and sleep) at night.

A recent study has shown that when GCSE examinations are scheduled in the afternoon, students perform 15% better on average than when exams are sat in the morning. The implications of this are clear: teenagers' brains are wired to be able to focus and attain their maximum potential later in the day. Additionally, in a survey of over 3500 parents across the UK, 68% reported that their teenagers were more polite and willing to socialise with their families in

the evening than in the morning. Of course, these statistics are likely to be impacted by factors such as mealtimes, as fats and sugars are crucial for brain function. However, the overwhelming scientific evidence still stands- if we want our teenagers to achieve their maximum potential and attain qualifications that will be crucial to their future success, we need to change standard high school opening times.

In light of this, I propose a shift in school start times to later in the morning, or even to the early afternoon. This adjustment could be as simple as moving the start time from 9:00 to 10:00 or 10:30. Such a change would better align with teenagers' natural sleep cycles, leading to increased alertness and engagement in their studies. If this were implemented, it is likely that GCSE results would improve over time, and teenagers would be more inclined to pursue higher education. Additionally, this shift may reduce the number of late arrivals and absenteeism, as students would have more time to prepare in the morning. This would help students to feel more confident in their abilities to organise themselves and improve their mental health, as they will be able to get more sleep, which is vital for hormone regulation and the daily regeneration of the body.

In the long-term, such a simple change could lead to great economic benefits and improved standards of living across the country, as teenagers will gain confidence in their own abilities and will be able to pursue ambitious careers. Several schools in other countries have experimented with later start times, with promising results. Not only have academic performances improved, but there has also been a notable decrease in disciplinary issues and an improvement in students' overall mental health.

Implementing this change would require careful planning and consideration, especially regarding changes to transportation schedules, accommodating for the demands and preferences of teachers and appropriately timing after-school activities. However, the potential benefits for our students' academic performance, health and well-being far outweigh the efforts that will need to be expended on logistical considerations.

I urge you to consider this proposal seriously and to discuss its feasibility with school boards and stakeholders across the UK. Thank you for your time and attention regarding this matter. I look forward to your response and I hope that you will take action to create a positive change in our educational system.

Yours sincerely,

Ariadne Bedford

Examiner's report:

- In this answer, you will be marked on **AO5**: content and organisation, and **AO6**: technical accuracy.

- **AO5:** the student has employed **convincing and compelling communication** through a range of language techniques such as direct address and rule of three. These have the effect of encouraging the education minister to engage with the proposal.
 - **AO5:** the answer's **tone, style and register** are accurately matched to the purpose and audience of a member of parliament. The answer uses a formal register and polite greeting and sign-off to reflect this.
 - The answer uses **sophisticated vocabulary** such as 'accommodating' and 'absenteeism'.
 - **AO6:** the student has employed **varied structural techniques** such as focus shifts, and orders points logically to help the reader understand the argument.
 - **AO6:** Paragraphs are **fluently linked**, with phrases such as 'In light of this'.
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