



A-level
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Language diversity and change

Insert

Texts for Section B

Text A

Text A is an article about the use of the full stop. The article was published on the website *The Conservative Woman* in 2020.

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Text B

Text B is an article about the use of the full stop. The article was published by *MailOnline* in 2020.

Now snowflakes are triggered by FULL STOPS: Sensitive readers find the humble dot ‘weird, mean or too blunt’

- The humble dot has been used to end sentences for the past 2,200 years
- But it has become a sign of aggression to a generation weaned on text messages
- Many have been stunned by the revelation and branded it ‘peak snowflakery’

by HOLLY BANCROFT FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

PUBLISHED: 23:57, 22 August 2020 | **UPDATED:** 09:22, 23 August 2020

Readers of a sensitive nature be warned – this story contains full stops.

The humble dot may have been used to end sentences for the past 2,200 years without any whiff of offence, but to a new generation weaned on text messages, it has become a sign of muted aggression.

Feverish debate broke out on social media last week after writer Rhiannon Cosslett tweeted: ‘Older people – do you realise that ending a sentence with a full stop comes across as sort of abrupt and unfriendly to younger people in an email/chat? Genuinely curious.’

Several **Twitter** expressed disbelief, and, despite her own use of a full stop, one even accused her of ‘peak snowflakery’.

According to experts, youngsters used to communicating electronically break up their thoughts by sending each one as a separate message, rather than using a full stop, which they use only to signal they are annoyed or irritated.

Linguist Dr Lauren Fonteyn said: ‘If you send a text message without a full stop, it’s already obvious that you’ve concluded the message. So if you add that additional marker for completion, they will read something into it and it tends to be a falling intonation or negative tone.’

Celia Klin, a professor of psychology at Binghamton University in New York, has published an academic paper into how US university students perceive the full stop.

She said: ‘Readers found responses without the period (full stop) to be more positive, more enthusiastic – and the version with the period to be less sincere, more abrupt, less positive.’

‘The types of conversations people often have digitally depend on the type of nuanced meaning that has traditionally been expressed with tone of voice, facial expressions, hand gestures and pauses. Without the ability to use these cues, people have created new ways to make their messages clear.’

The full stop derives from Greek punctuation introduced by Aristophanes of Byzantium in the 3rd Century BC.

END OF TEXTS

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