



GCSE English Language Model Answers:

English Language (8700) (NEW SPEC) Nov 2019

Paper 1

Q1.

- It is snowing
- Zoe is on a mountain
- The air is icy
- To the west Zoe can see the Pyrenees

Examiner's report:

- Information is **correct**, the student has read the source carefully.
- Only information from within the **specified lines** has been used in the answer.
- The first part of **AO1** is covered here: identifying explicit and implicit information from the text

Q2. Language is used in this extract to emphasise the close relationship between Zoe's feelings of 'an arrest of life', a moment of clarity and quietness, with the landscape. This is first exemplified in the simile 'moments in life that come as clear and as pure as ice', equating the snowy landscape to an intense internal experience within Zoe. Furthermore ice and cold often carry negative connotations, here the author describes them as 'clear' and 'pure' to suggest that they hold different meanings for Zoe. It seems she takes comfort in the clarity that ice and the cold brings to her and as a reflection of her life.

This is furthered through the use of repeated alliteration, 'snow and silent. Snow and silence'. By highlighting the landscape and cold weather with the repeated 's' sound, it becomes as present in the text as Zoe's feelings of moving from the natural to spiritual world. The repetition of the 's' sound creates a whispering tone that adds to the quietness of the scene. This continues the implication that Zoe feels peace and clarity when alone in nature.

The all encompassing nature of the landscape is emphasised even further through the personification of the mountain, that 'breathed back at her'. Personification here adds a sense of real identity within the landscape of the extract, giving the mountain a character that not only shares the feelings of Zoe, but is capable of reflecting them 'back at her'. It's clear that Zoe's

sense of a positive connection with nature is created in the beginning of the extract through this personification.

This feeling of connection is continued through the simile that describes her skis, 'like weird talons', and the personal pronoun used, 'I am alive. I am an eagle'. Here the author associates Zoe with an eagle through both the suggestion that she has 'talons' and by presenting it as indisputable as the fact that she is 'alive'. The personal pronoun 'I' appears here, creating a sense of immediacy between the inner thoughts of Zoe and the reader only when she is truly alone in the snow. This draws nature and Zoe into a closer relationship in the text, emphasising the sense of belonging she feels to the landscape and the creatures that inhabit it.

The adjectives 'brilliant red and gold' used to describe the skis/talons conjure a sense of almost royalty and create a vivid image in the reader's mind. The stark contrast of the colours with the surrounding ice and snow draws the reader's attention to the feelings of freedom and power that Zoe feels as a result of her connection with nature.

Examiner's report:

- This answer **covers both parts of AO1** - identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas , and select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
- A **clear focus** is maintained on **language features** throughout; the student has read the question carefully, and doesn't focus on structural techniques.
- The **effect** of the language, specifically how it relates to Zoe's feelings, is clearly stated throughout and explanations are extended with confidence.
- **Short concise quotes** which demonstrate these language techniques have been **integrated** well into sentences.

Q3. **Sentence structure** is employed to interest the reader and increase the tension of the extract, through the use of short sentences like 'It made her smile. Then her smile iced over'. These sentences impactfully deliver key parts of the action, but only **focus** on her 'smile' and we do not immediately know why it has 'iced over'. This technique **encourages the reader to continue reading to find out more information, and increases the pace of events** by quickly moving the reader on to the next sentence.

The **pace of the text** is also varied throughout to consistently interest the reader and keep them reading, starting off with **shorter paragraphs** to break up the action into sections, giving more distinction to the events. However, in the final part of the text the **paragraph is the biggest yet**. This increases the **pace** of events in the text by giving the reader no break between sentences for relief as was given earlier in the text. The **main event of the avalanche is right at the end of the extract**, in a technique known as burying the lead, in order to create interest in the reader to continue reading and find out what else might come next.

Repeated dialogue is used to create tension in the later part of the extract. Jake shouts 'Get to the side! To the side!' and 'get into the trees! Hang on to a tree!'. The exclamation marks add to the sense of urgency in the end of the text, and the lack of information about why he is asking her to move encourages the reader to read on and find out more detail. The repetition of the location he wants Zoe to move to 'the side' or 'a tree' emphasises the panic he feels, intriguing the reader as to what has created the panic and why she needs to move with such urgency.

Examiner's report:

- A variety of **structural techniques**, like **sentence and paragraph structure, pacing and punctuation**, are all identified correctly and analysed thoroughly.
 - The student has extended their explanation through a **wide variety of quotes** from the text.
 - A detailed explanation of how each of the techniques **affect** the reader is made, showing perceptive understanding of the text.
 - 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.
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Q4. Throughout the rest of the extract Zoe is in a trance like state taking in the nature around her. This is shown through the adjective 'beautiful' that she uses to describe the grey smoke, and the metaphor 'unfurling in silky banners', which adds to the positive depiction of the landscape instead of any sense of danger or impending doom. Simple sentences, such as 'It was beautiful. It made her smile.' reflect her feelings of peace at the beginning of this section of lines. There is nothing else on her mind except the joy nature brings her at this point, so I argue she is not yet aware anything is wrong nor would expect there to be. Furthermore, it's made clear that Zoe is already thrown off by having a 'small slab of snow slip from underneath her', so she may not be paying attention to her surroundings as well for this reason too. The alliteration in this line almost mimics the sound of her slipping, by extending the 's' sound, so the reader is aware that there is a slight danger, but is lulled into a false sense of security in the same way as Zoe due to the previous positive descriptions.

As a result of this separation of Zoe from the danger; the character of Jake is used as a catalyst in the plot to draw both Zoe and the reader's attention to something being amiss. As a result of her positive association with the landscape, Zoe is made distinct from the avalanche and the associated danger. I would argue as her connection with nature is only positive so far she is not in the mindset to view it as negative yet. Jake's face is described as 'rubberised', an unsettling adjective that brings the idea of a man material into focus, starkly contrasting with the unending nature the reader has previously been presented with. This immediately shifts the tone from calm and nature-focused, to panic.

The simile 'like a tsunami at sea', and language in the syntax of water like 'drowning', emphasises how all encompassing the avalanche suddenly becomes, and highlights the lack of warning that Zoe would have had before it struck. By likening the avalanche to another large-scale natural disaster, the author creates a clear sense of danger but also emphasises the helplessness of people in the face of it. The danger of the situation is further conveyed through the violent verbs used, Zoe is described as being 'punched' into the air. This verb personifies the avalanche, giving it a violent quality by imbuing it with a sense of the human. While Zoe wasn't really 'punched', it shows the reader how powerful and sudden the impact of the avalanche is, and the danger that Zoe is in.

Taking this into account, I do not agree that Zoe was too slow to react to the danger of the situation as she wasn't made aware of it. She has a more positive association with nature and needed another person to be able to recognise when it was a risk.

Examiner's report:

- **Perceptive understanding** is shown through **extended explanations** of the techniques used by the author.
- A clear argument is created, and the student's opinion on the given statement is made obvious through personal pronouns like 'I'.
- Both **language and structural techniques** are identified and analysed here to add to the argument.
- Quotes from the text are included and broken down in order to strengthen the argument made.
- This answer assesses **AO3** - compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.

Q5.

a) Write a story about a magical world as suggested by this picture:

Entering the snow globe after her parents, the girl shivered. Something was wrong with the landscape but she became distracted by the constant, sparkling snowfall. The twisted trees and enormous mountains were blanketed in it, refracting the light and causing brilliant rainbows to be thrown across her face. This should have been a beautiful sight, but it was tinged with the heart wrenching knowledge her parents were somewhere in this huge wilderness; and she was the only one who could find them.

Taking a deep breath, she began to clamber into the cave she had been told about. The way was dimly lit by bizarre luminescent wings flapping above her, attached to creatures she could not quite see. The last thing she heard from the witch who cursed her parents before entrapping

them here was a prolonged cackle. A similar one echoed through the cave ahead of her now, raising her heart rate as it did so. She pressed forward.

Suddenly, the cackle cut off and was replaced by a low, rumbling growl. It made the hairs on the back of her neck stand up and her knees weak with fear. Her parents must be in that direction. But what would she find at the end of the darkness?

Examiner report:

- **AO5:** The student has **organised** the story into **paragraphs** that **progress** the narrative.
- **AO6:** The student has spelled **sophisticated words correctly** like 'luminescent' and 'echoed' and their **grammar is correct**.
- **AO5:** A range of **language and structural techniques** are used, like **short sentences** for impact, and **adjectives and verbs** that add to the imagery created. For example, 'Twisted trees' 'She pressed forward'.
- The scene is described well, but there is a focus on **events**, for example 'suddenly' and **the overall plot**, 'her parents must be in that direction' that **differentiates** this answer from a description.
- **AO5:** There is a **structure** to the story, a beginning, middle and slight cliffhanger ending, showing ability to recognise and use **different narrative techniques** creatively.
- **AO6:** The student uses a **range of punctuation** like semicolons, question marks and commas confidently.
- In this answer, you will be marked on **AO5:** content and organisation, and **AO6:** technical accuracy.

b) Describe a place you think is beautiful.

The hill slopes gently away, sandy gold sunlight bathing the trees and grass in a gentle glow. Long shadows thrown by the sunset through the branches of the surrounding trees only lengthen further as I stand and take in the view.

A single pigeon seemingly falls through the air, flaps once, and loops back up to soar over the field. As the afternoon continues, pink, orange and red tinge the light that touches everything in the scene, and illuminates the small herd of deer distantly in the corner of the field. The beauty of the scene came from its stillness, even the deer and the pigeon seem to move in slow motion, as if not to disturb the moment we are all sharing together.

The valley seems to almost curve around everything, cradling me, the deer, the single pigeon, in rich green arms. A small gust of wind first rustles the tops of the trees behind me, moving through the long grass and across my face as it travels down over the hill, the only movement that feels real so far.

Examiner report:

- **AO5:** The student has **organised** the description into **paragraphs** that go into detail about the view that is being described.
 - The student has used the brief to create an imaginative and detailed description.
 - **AO6:** The student has spelled **sophisticated words correctly** like 'illuminates' and their **grammar is correct**.
 - **AO5:** A range of **language and structural techniques** are used, like **complex sentences** to convey detail, and colour based imagery, 'sandy gold sunlight', 'pink, orange and red tinge'.
 - In this answer, you will be marked on **AO5:** content and organisation, and **AO6:** technical accuracy.
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