

*These notes are to give guidance with the application of the criterion descriptors. In all cases Criterion A: Task/Message is discussed; Criteria B and C are mentioned only if they are directly affected by the task.*

- 1. It's the year 2025. You are one of the first scientists to live and work on the moon. Write a diary account of an amazing experience, and describe how it has changed you.**

*Theme:*  
Exploring change

*Criterion A Task/message:*

A text that fully meets the reader's expectations will be balanced: it will contain both a narrative of "an amazing experience" and a description/reflections on how this has influenced the narrator. The two parts will not necessarily be of equal length, but they should be coherently linked. Candidates who offer a good narrative, but who fail to link it to an appropriate description would not be expected to attain the highest marks.

How candidates interpret "amazing" must be left open, but the more realistic accounts will score higher in terms of ability to convince and relevance.

*Criterion B Presentation:*

The presentation required of a diary entry is difficult to define. However, the stronger candidates will be able to show through their use of 1st person narrative, and reflective "talking to myself" phrases, that they are not writing a narrative. The narrative text should not be penalised as such, but the highest scores will go to candidates who have been able to balance their story telling with the reflective tone of the diary. Imaginative presentation may include stylistic devices like "Dateline..." and/or time references to mark the sequence of events.

*Criterion C Language:*

The stronger candidates will use a range of appropriate scientific or pseudo-scientific jargon, and show they can handle appropriate reflective, emotional or psychological description. Weaker candidates will probably be limited and repetitive in their vocabulary, and may be unable to offer more than basic reflections on their response to the "event".

- 2. "The homeless are victims of social change." Write a letter to your local newspaper defending homeless people. Suggest three ways society can change in order to reintegrate them.**

*Theme:*  
Exploring change

*Criterion A Task/message:*

This task sets candidates a clear standpoint from which to discuss the topic, and three points of content to include. Candidates should be rewarded according to the logical construction of their arguments, rather than the adequacy of the ideas.

*Criterion B Presentation:*

A letter to the editor will have a clear structure, with an introduction, body and conclusion. It will not necessarily have a greeting and/or farewell, or an address, though a simple "Harare,

1st May 1999" – or something similar – would be expected. Marks should be deducted for candidates who do not present the date in an acceptable format: *i.e.* "the 1st of May" will be penalised.

Register should be consistent and tend towards the more formal, without necessarily being wholly consistent. The use of informal language – which in the context of this task could easily occur – will be rewarded when it is effective.

*Criterion C Language:*

Expect exponents of enumeration (firstly, secondly...).

3. **You are a struggling screenwriter sitting alone in a room, surrounded by food wrappers and empty coffee cups, staring at a blank page. Suddenly you have an idea for a new, thirty-minute series, for all the family, based around a school. Summarise the plot, and describe the main characters and their relationships.**

*Theme:*

Exploring group; leisure

*Criterion A Task/message:*

The content that is required in this task is clear. Candidates who are able to plan their text and to present all elements of the task in a balanced manner will score high marks for their ability to convince. Poorer candidates will perhaps lose their way: they may give too much plot detail, or write over-elaborate descriptions of one or more of the characters, at the expense of the rest of the task.

*Criterion B Presentation:*

Presentation would probably not be in standard essay form. Candidates who use separate sections: "The plot..."; "Characters..."; "Billy and the Science teacher" should be rewarded for the clarity that this gives to their work.

4. **People often do strange things to attract attention to their situation, or to something they feel strongly about. Write a newspaper account of a successful attempt to gain publicity.**

*Theme:*

Exploring group

*Criterion B Presentation:*

By a "newspaper account" we mean a news article, which must have an appropriate headline, and could also have a by-line, with the correspondent's role – *e.g.* Moscow correspondent – and/or a place of writing. Imaginative candidates may add details like "AFP" or "Reuters". The ubiquitous one-sentence paragraph would be acceptable as representing a characteristic of journalistic English, but this needs to be balanced against the degree of control of syntax that candidates show. Some candidates will write perfectly acceptable sentences of this type; others will transfer L1 syntax into English. Examiners will need to be consistent in the way in which they mark this feature, which could be considered under Criterion B or C.

5. **Can you remember, or imagine, someone who is really funny? Describe a situation she or he was involved in, and explain its appeal to you.**

*Theme:*

Exploring group; literary

*Criterion A Task/message:*

This is not just asking candidates to tell a funny story, and the stronger candidates should be able to contextualize their accounts and offer some reflections on what they have observed. Be prepared for all kinds of definitions of "funny": the most interesting ones will reflect different cultural backgrounds. We hope that some candidates will draw on their reading in English or in other languages and choose characters from fiction as the focus of this task.

*Criterion B Presentation:*

The basic, three-part essay structure is what is called for here. Candidates could use 1st or 3rd person narratives.

6. **Conflict between religious groups causes great pain and suffering. Describe a conflict you know about, and propose a solution both sides can accept.**

*Theme:*

Exploring group

*Criterion A Task/message:*

This rather "heavy" topic will probably not be popular. Content must be balanced, and stronger candidates will be able to link the conflict situation to their proposed solution. The practicality of their proposals should not affect the overall mark, although irrelevance will be penalised.

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