GradeMax

Pearson

Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2026

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

in English Language (4EA1)

Paper 1R: Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Specific Marking Guidance

When deciding how to reward an answer, examiners should consult both the indicative content and the associated marking grid(s). When using a levels-based mark scheme, the 'best fit' approach should be used.

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level.
- The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.
- Indicative content is exactly that – they are factual points that candidates are likely to use to construct their answer.
- It is possible for an answer to be constructed without mentioning some or all of these points, as long as they provide alternative responses to the indicative content that fulfils the requirements of the question. It is the examiner's responsibility to apply their professional judgement to the candidate's response in determining if the answer fulfils the requirements of the question.

Placing a mark within a level

- Examiners should first decide which descriptor most closely matches the answer and place it in that level. The mark awarded within the level will be decided based on the quality of the answer and will be modified according to how securely all bullet points are displayed at that level.
- In cases of uneven performance, the points above will still apply. Candidates will be placed in the level that best describes their answer according to the descriptors in that level. Marks will be awarded towards the top or bottom of that level depending on how they have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.
- If the candidate's answer meets the requirements fully, markers should be prepared to award full marks within the level. The top mark in the level is used for work that is as good as can realistically be expected within that level.

AO1	Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.
AO2	Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.
AO3	Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.
AO4	Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences.
AO5	Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Section A: Reading

Question Number	**AO1** Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
1	*Then I noticed my dive guide waving and pointing just over my left shoulder. A whale shark had arrived. I turned to see an enormous mouth coming right toward me. Then an immense, spot-flecked flank[1] glided by, followed by a huge tail the size of my entire body.* Accept any of the following, up to a maximum of **two** marks: • 'enormous'/'enormous mouth' (1) • 'coming (right) towards me' (1) • 'immense' (1) • 'spot-flecked (flank)' (1) • 'glided (by)' (1) • 'huge'/'huge tail'/'tail the size of my entire body' (1)	**(2)**

Question Number	AO1 Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
2	*The fishermen around here have long regarded whale sharks as lucky since they are thought to keep other predators and sharks away from their traditional floating platforms called bagans. It is these fishermen, who put out to sea for weeks or even months at a time on the bagans, that have formed a symbiotic[3] relationship with the whale sharks.* *In the local language, the name for them is gurano bintang, which means "star shark" thanks to their distinctive spots, which are unique to each beast and can be used to identify them like a fingerprint.* *Each night, the fishermen lower enormous nets to catch small fish, which they then use to catch larger species. They noticed, however, that the whale sharks were attracted to their nets and would try to suck the baitfish out from them, often becoming tangled and tearing the nets.* *In an effort to protect both their catch and their nets, the fishermen started feeding whale sharks buckets of baitfish off the sides of the bagans so they would not go for the fish in the nets.* Accept any reasonable explanation of what we learn about the fishermen, in own words where possible, up to a maximum of **four** marks. For example: • those who fish think that the whale sharks bring good fortune/luck/they appreciate them • they believe the whale sharks deter large, hunting fish/predators from approaching their fishing station • they spend long periods of time away from home at their fishing base • they have found a way of interacting with the whale sharks that works well for both the men and animals/have a deep connection with them • in their language, the fishermen call the whale sharks *gurano bintang*/they recognise them/know them by their spots • (every evening) the fishermen put out large nets to trap little fish • they use the little fish to act as bait for the bigger fish • the fishermen realised that the whale sharks were damaging/getting caught up in the nets (as they were trying to get to the small fish) • the fishermen wanted to save their nets from damage • they want to preserve their haul of fish • they began to give the whale sharks plenty of the small fish (to prevent them damaging the nets) Reward **all** valid points.	**(4)**

Question Number	**AO1** Read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives.	Mark
3	*The WWF is also working with the Indonesian government to responsibly develop tourism strategies and a code of conduct for activities involving the whale sharks. So, although visitors can scuba dive with the sharks — which is not the case in most other places where they are found — numbers are limited and divers are extensively briefed on appropriate behaviour around these living natural wonders. That includes no touching, maintaining a respectful distance and only spending brief amounts of time in the water with them each day.* *The journey to Cenderawasih Bay requires a series of short flights within Indonesia. Most people visit the area on a live-aboard boat and stop near Kwatisore to see the whale sharks for one or two days. The boats then continue on to other areas of the bay so guests can snorkel the area's stunning coral reefs and see sunken planes and shipwrecks. They can also visit vibrant villages, and just take in the natural splendour of the area.* Accept any reasonable description of what tourists to the area might do up to a maximum of **five** marks. For example: • tourists are expected to follow rules of behaviour • they can go diving (with the whale sharks) • take part in controlled diving: 'numbers are limited' • people are given a great deal of guidance on how to act around the sharks: 'divers are extensively briefed on appropriate behaviour' • they are allowed to see the animals but not touch them • visitors can swim with the sharks as long as they do not get too close: 'maintaining a respectful distance' • they can be with the sharks for a short time • take several plane journeys to reach the area • visitors normally stay on a boat/and moor close to Kwatisore for a couple of days (to view the sharks) • they can go snorkelling in other areas of the ocean/see a variety of interesting things in the water • visitors can also visit nearby places on land/enjoy the beautiful scenery Reward **all** valid points.	**(5)**

Question Number	Indicative content
4	Reward responses that explain and analyse how the writer uses language and structure to present the people of Thule and their lives. Examiners should refer to the following bullet points and then to the table to come to an overall judgement. Responses may include some of the following points: • the opening paragraph focuses on the prelude to the hunt to draw the readers into the story, and time markers are used to show how the watchers are waiting and anticipating the hunt: 'Two hours after'; 'Within an hour' • the men are presented through their occupation and purpose and are referred to as 'the hunters' several times in the first paragraph. This both anonymises them and emphasises how they are defined by their role • the juxtaposition of 'man and whale' supplies an epic quality to the confrontation • the separation between the men hunting on the water and the observers is made clear with the closeness of the men to the narwhal and the distance from them of 'those of us on the shore' • although all the men are on the water and working together, there is also a sense, through the reference to 'a lone hunter's pipe', of each one's isolation • the intense focus that the men must have is conveyed through the fact that 'they never moved', which implies their complete stillness • the adjective 'fortunate' indicates how lucky the people of Thule are that the narwhal come back to the fjord each year and suggests that there would be problems if they did not return • this idea is explained further in the next paragraph where the writer presents a justification of hunting. It becomes clear that the people would struggle without the narwhal, which are 'an essential contributor to the survival of the hunters' and have been so for centuries • the writer is keen to show how hunting is a centuries-old way of life and explains how the people rely on the narwhal by listing all the different parts of the animals that they utilise, for example the 'blubber' and the 'dark, rich meat' • the writer also lists the different uses made of the 'single ivory tusk', including the cultural tradition of 'carving protective tupilaks' • the role of the women seems to be as observers and supporters of the men in their family with 'each woman focusing on her husband or family member' • the writer returns to the hunt in the fourth paragraph, starting with a long complex sentence which moves from all the women to each individual. The wives' reactions – 'a small gasp or jump' – convey the intensity of the experience for them • the use of the adjectives 'crucial', 'staple', 'much-needed' reinforces the significance of a successful hunt for all members of the community

	• the short sentence 'Every hunter was on the water' emphasises the importance of the hunt • the use of the analogy 'It was like watching a vast, waterborne game' almost makes the experience seem like entertainment; this is undercut by the simile of 'the hunters spread like a net', which reminds the reader of their purpose and intent • the use of longer, multi-clausal sentences in the penultimate paragraph allows the writer to build up the tension of the hunt. We get a sense of her admiration for the hunters as she describes one as 'so brave to attempt what he was about to do' • the extreme danger that each man faces is emphasised through the use of the adjective 'flimsy' to describe the kayak; the verbs 'capsized and drowned' show how a hunter could lose his life • this paragraph highlights the writer's mixed feelings about the hunt: her admiration for the 'intelligent creatures' and also her 'respect' for the hunters • the use of the asyndetic tricolon of infinitive verbs urging the narwhal 'to dive, to leave, to survive', with its rhythm and rhyme, conveys the writer's conflicted thoughts, despite her understanding of the Inughuit people's need to hunt • despite the beauty of much of the description, the writer acknowledges the 'harshness of life in the Arctic' for the Inughuit • the final paragraph returns to a calmer tone that contrasts with the pace and immediacy of the previous paragraph; the use of the impersonal 'one cannot afford to be sentimental in the Arctic' offers an insight into the lives of the people • the final single-clause sentence, with its use of an intensifier, sums up the writer's thoughts about life for the local people in a strong and unarguable statement: 'Hunting is still an absolute necessity in Thule'. Reward **all** valid points.

Question 4		
Level	**Mark**	**AO2** Understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• Basic identification and little understanding of the language and/or structure used by writers to achieve effects. • The use of references is limited.
Level 2	3–4	• Some understanding of and comment on language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary. • The selection of references is valid, but not developed.
Level 3	5–7	• Clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary and sentence structure. • The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	8–10	• Thorough understanding and exploration of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is detailed, appropriate and fully supports the points being made.
Level 5	11–12	• Perceptive understanding and analysis of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects, including use of vocabulary, sentence structure and other language features. • The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made.

Question Number	Indicative content
5	Reward responses that compare the ways in which the writers present their ideas and perspectives. Examiners should refer to the following bullet points and then to the table to come to an overall judgement. Responses may include some of the following points: • both texts are written in the first person and describe the writers' experiences of observing marine mammals in their natural habitat • in both texts, the animals studied are very large and the writers provide some mention of measurement to help us imagine the size: in Text One we are told that the whale sharks are 'colossal creatures' that 'grow to 40 feet in length and can weigh 20 tons', and in Text Two the narwhal are 'huge' and their single tusks 'can grow up to six feet in length' • both writers make reference to the proximity of the animals: in Text One the whale shark is 'coming right toward me' and 'glided by' and in Text Two, 'it looked as though the hunters were close enough to touch the narwhal with their bare hands' • both texts include facts and aim to educate the reader: in Text One the writer gives information about the size of the whale sharks and their diet, and in Text Two the writer tells the reader about the ways in which the Inughuit make use of the different parts of the narwhal • in both texts, the animals appear to be under threat: in Text One the whale sharks are an 'endangered species' and in Text Two the narwhal are hunted • both writers describe ways of life that have remained little changed for years: in Text One 'the locals make their living in traditional ways like farming and fishing' and in Text Two 'most of the food in Thule is still brought in by the hunter-gatherers and fishermen' • both writers attempt to show a balanced view. In Text One the writer describes how visitors are encouraged as they bring in money but is keen to point out how 'The WWF is also working with the Indonesian government to responsibly develop tourism strategies'; in Text Two the writer acknowledges the needs of the Inughuit 'to hunt and live on animals that we demand to be protected because of their beauty' • both writers make reference to their feelings about their experiences. In Text One, Rosen merely says it was 'one of the most rewarding days of travel in my life', whereas Herbert is not only impressed by the beauty of the scenery but also talks of her 'dilemma', explaining how 'my heart leapt for both hunter and narwhal' • in Text One, Rosen relates how 'hordes' of 'wildlife enthusiasts', including himself, are keen to swim with whale sharks, whereas in Text Two Herbert is an observer of a hunt • in Text One the whale sharks are described as 'Mostly solitary', but in Text Two the narwhal keep together in 'pods' and two pods are in close proximity, seemingly co-existing in harmony

	• in Text One the fishermen have 'a symbiotic relationship with the whale sharks' and feed them, but in Text Two 'The narwhal … is an essential contributor to the survival of the hunters' • Text One presents the idea of responsible tourism whilst also seeming to serve as an advertisement for 'The luxurious five-cabin *Alila Purnama*', whilst Text Two describes 'the harshness of life in the Arctic', where few travellers would ever venture • in Text One Rosen describes the landscape factually – 'Indonesia's largest marine national park' – with brief references to 'the area's stunning coral reefs' and 'vibrant villages', but in Text Two Herbert creates a scene of beauty in poetic terms – 'glittering kingdom' and 'butter-gold' light • in Text One, the tone is quite light as the only thing a person diving with whale sharks might carry with them is a 'GoPro camera' to record their experience. However, although the hunt in Text Two is described as 'like watching a vast, waterborne game', the men have a 'harpoon with two heads' with which to kill the narwhal • similarly, the verbs used to describe the people's actions in Text One – 'cram', 'flop' – suggest a casual or chaotic attitude, whereas in Text Two the men 'had to sit so very still' • in Text One there is no build-up of tension or real sense of danger, despite 'an enormous mouth coming right toward me', whereas in Text Two the hunters 'could easily be capsized and drowned' • in Text One 'little is known about the habits or lives' of the whale sharks, which are described as 'mysterious creatures', whereas in Text Two the writer informs the reader how narwhal are 'intelligent creatures, their senses are keen and they talk to one another under the water' • Text One is divided into sections using sub-headings with the sub-heading – 'Planning Your Trip' – clearly directing the reader towards preparing for a holiday, but Text Two, although moving between dramatic narrative and factual information, does not overtly signpost a change in focus • Text Two has a strong conclusion, with the reader being told that 'Hunting is still an absolute necessity in Thule', whereas Text One ends by enticing the reader to visit Indonesia through describing an indulgent and 'luxurious' stay. Reward **all** valid points.

Question 5		
Level	**Mark**	**AO3** Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• The response does not compare the texts. • Description of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. • The use of references is limited.
Level 2	5–8	• The response considers obvious comparisons between the texts. • Comment on writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. • The selection of references is valid, but not developed. **NB: candidates who have considered only ONE text may only achieve a mark up to the top of Level 2**
Level 3	9–13	• The response considers a range of comparisons between the texts. • Explanation of writers' ideas and perspectives, including theme, language and/or structure. • The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.
Level 4	14–18	• The response considers a wide range of comparisons between the texts. • Exploration of writers' ideas and perspectives, including how theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts. • References are balanced across both texts and fully support the points being made.
Level 5	19–22	• The response considers a varied and comprehensive range of comparisons between the texts. • Analysis of writers' ideas and perspectives, including how theme, language and/or structure are used across the texts. • References are balanced across both texts; they are discriminating and fully support the points being made.

SECTION B: Transactional Writing

Refer to the writing assessment grids at the end of this section when marking questions 6 and 7.

Question Number	Indicative content
6	**Purpose:** to write a letter – informative and discursive. **Audience:** the readers of a national or local newspaper. The focus is on communicating ideas about the ways in which we do – and should – treat animals. There should be an attempt to engage and influence the audience. **Form:** the response should be set out effectively as a formal letter, using organisational features. Candidates do not have to include postal addresses but should include an appropriate salutation and letter ending. There should be a clear introduction, development of points and a conclusion. **Responses may:** • offer views agreeing or disagreeing with the statement • give examples of ways in which some people do not show care towards or respect for animals: for example, carrying out actions that affect their habitat, placing animals in zoos or circuses, using animals for sport or entertainment, not giving animals sufficient food and shelter, hunting animals for sport • consider how animals should be treated: for example, being provided with sufficient food and appropriate accommodation; being allowed to live in their natural habitat without people interfering or causing harm • be written from a personal or wider perspective • include anecdotes, 'statistics' or 'expert' opinion. *The best-fit approach* An answer may not always satisfy every one of the assessment criteria for a particular level in order to receive a mark within that level range, since on individual criteria the answer may meet the descriptor for a higher or lower mark range. The best-fit approach should be used to determine the mark which **corresponds most closely** to the overall quality of the response.

Question Number	Indicative content
7	**Purpose:** to write a leaflet – informative and advisory. **Audience:** general readership. The focus is on communicating ideas about why people love to travel and how tourists should/should not behave. There should be an attempt to engage and influence the audience. **Form:** candidates may use some stylistic conventions of a leaflet such as heading, sub-heading or occasional use of bullet points. Candidates should not include features of layout like pictures or columns. There should be clear organisation and structure with an introduction, development of points and a conclusion. **Responses may:** • explore the reasons why people might love to travel, for example, the enjoyment of seeing new places and meeting new people; widening knowledge of other cultures and languages; trying new food; experiencing a range of activities; visiting iconic sites • offer suggestions on how tourists should behave, for example, be friendly and polite to people they meet; treat the place and any local customs with appreciation and respect; wear appropriate clothing; if visiting a foreign country, try to learn some simple phrases in the language • give examples of conduct and actions that are not acceptable • include 'statistics' and 'expert' opinion. *The best-fit approach* An answer may not always satisfy every one of the assessment criteria for a particular level in order to receive a mark within that level range, since on individual criteria the answer may meet the descriptor for a higher or lower mark range. The best-fit approach should be used to determine the mark which **corresponds most closely** to the overall quality of the response.

Writing assessment grids for Questions 6 and 7

Questions 6 and 7		
Level	**Mark**	**AO4** Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	• Communication is at a basic level, and limited in clarity. • Little awareness is shown of the purpose of the writing and the intended reader. • Little awareness of form, tone and register.
Level 2	6–11	• Communicates in a broadly appropriate way. • Shows some grasp of the purpose and of the expectations/ requirements of the intended reader. • Straightforward use of form, tone and register.
Level 3	12–17	• Communicates clearly. • Shows a clear sense of purpose and understanding of the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Appropriate use of form, tone and register.
Level 4	18–22	• Communicates successfully. • A secure realisation of purpose and the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. • Effective use of form, tone and register.
Level 5	23–27	• Communication is perceptive and subtle. • Task is sharply focused on purpose and the expectations/ requirements of the intended reader. • Sophisticated use of form, tone and register.

Questions 6 and 7		
Level	**Mark**	**AO5** Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Expresses information and ideas, with limited use of structural and grammatical features. • Uses basic vocabulary, often misspelt. • Uses punctuation with basic control, creating undeveloped, often repetitive, sentence structures.
Level 2	4–7	• Expresses and orders information and ideas; uses paragraphs and a range of structural and grammatical features. • Uses some correctly spelt vocabulary, e.g. words with regular patterns such as prefixes, suffixes, double consonants. • Uses punctuation with some control, creating a range of sentence structures, including coordination and subordination.
Level 3	8–11	• Develops and connects appropriate information and ideas; structural and grammatical features and paragraphing make the meaning clear. • Uses a varied vocabulary and spells words containing irregular patterns correctly. • Uses accurate and varied punctuation, adapting sentence structures as appropriate.
Level 4	12–15	• Manages information and ideas, with structural and grammatical features used cohesively and deliberately across the text. • Uses a wide, selective vocabulary with only occasional spelling errors. • Positions a range of punctuation for clarity, managing sentence structures for deliberate effect.
Level 5	16–18	• Manipulates complex ideas, utilising a range of structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. • Uses extensive vocabulary strategically; rare spelling errors do not detract from overall meaning. • Punctuates writing with accuracy to aid emphasis and precision, using a range of sentence structures accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects.

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