

INTERNATIONAL AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Unit 1 Language and context

Monday 27 April 2026

08:00 UK Time

Time allowed: 2 hours

Material

For this paper you must have:

- an OxfordAQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.
- There are **two** sections:
 - Section A: Understanding texts
 - Section B: Directed writing.
- Answer Question 1 from Section A **and either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 from Section B.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- There are 25 marks for Question 1 and 25 marks for either Question 2 or Question 3.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Section A: Understanding texts

Answer Question 1.

0	1
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Text A and **Text B** are printed on pages **3, 4** and **5**.

Text A is an online news article from the Family and Education section of the BBC website.

Text B is a page from the website *Smartphone Free Childhood*.

Examine how the writers of **Text A** and **Text B** use language to create meanings.

In your answer you should consider different:

- audiences
- purposes
- genres
- modes of communication.

[25 marks]

Text A

What happened when 10 teens gave up their smartphones?



NEWS/KRISTIAN JOHNSON

Ben is worried about spending five days without internet, with just a “brick phone”

Kristian Johnson

News

12 Jun 2024

As part of a five-day digital detox, 10 teenagers swapped their devices for basic phones that can only make calls and send texts. How did they get on?

Ben regularly spends more than eight hours a day staring at his smartphone.

When he was younger, he used to love riding his bike – he’s 15 now and spends most of his free time after college scrolling through videos. Last week, Ben clocked up 31 hours on social-media apps alone. But for the next five days, he will have no access to social media.

“I’m worried how I’ll cope,” he says. “I’ll now have to be sociable with my parents.”

The detox is part of a BBC project looking at young people’s smartphone habits – and Ben is one of 10 students who have agreed to trade in their phones for a basic handset.

Question 1 continues on the next page

Almost every aspect of the students' lives will be affected – they've grown up with smartphones and use the internet for everything. They communicate mainly on social media apps, use Google Maps and are always streaming music on-the-go.

College students describe what it's like without a smartphone

Ruby says she spends way too much time on her phone.

She acknowledges that having a break from her smartphone “has opened up more conversation” with her parents – and her mum, Emma, agrees the detox is having a positive impact.

“She’s talking more and she’s going to bed earlier. It’s a nice break.”

Usually, Ruby would check an app on her phone to find out when the next tram will arrive. Reading timetables on the display board at a tram stop is not something this generation does.

“Without a phone, I’ve got no way of knowing,” she says.

For some of the teens, giving up their smartphone has been really difficult.

Students taking part in the experiment acknowledge a fear of missing out, but most say they are surprised at how liberating they are finding the experience. Some are getting better sleep, they say, while others feel they have been more productive without their phones.

In a survey of 2,000 13 to 18-year-olds, conducted by BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Bitesize, young people were asked about various aspects of life – including mental health and their smartphone habits.

The [findings of the survey, carried out by polling company Survation](#), suggest:

- 23% agree that smartphones should be banned for under-16s
- 35% think social media should be banned for under-16s
- 50% say not having their smartphone on them makes them feel anxious. *Last year, this figure was slightly higher (56%).*

After five long days, it's time for the students to be reunited with their smartphones. Most say after taking part in the detox, they would like to find ways to limit their screentime.

“It’s made me realise how much time I spent on social media, and I’ve realised I need to cut down on it and go out more,” acknowledges Ben. He admits it’s been difficult, and he’s particularly missed listening to music. But time away from his phone has allowed Ben to reignite his passion for cycling – something he’s determined to continue instead of spending endless hours scrolling.

“Eight hours a day is just crazy,” he says.

Text B



ABOUT THE PROBLEM OUR MISSION RESOURCES JOIN US



When we all started using smartphones, we had little understanding of the impact they have on children and teenagers.

Now we do. The evidence is overwhelming, and we need to act, now.

SMARTPHONES ARE HIGHLY ADDICTIVE

Tech companies spend billions on making apps and devices intentionally addictive, affecting young brains in a way that is similar to gambling. One study found one-in-five teens looked at social media apps "almost constantly".

[2022 Study into teens and social media](#)

SMARTPHONE USE CORRELATES TO MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

They've been directly linked to poor mental health and low self-esteem, especially in girls. And social media use in teens correlates directly to rates of anxiety and depression.

[Depression and social media use in teens](#)

SMARTPHONES REDUCE ATTENTION SPANS

They're changing the way children's brains develop, and fundamentally affecting their ability to concentrate.

[2021 Study by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights](#)

SMARTPHONES ROB CHILDREN OF THEIR CHILDHOOD

Even harmless content isn't harmless. Time spent on a device is time not spent with other children; playing, exploring, interacting and developing vital social skills.

[Must-watch Jonathan Haidt Talk](#)

Despite the compelling evidence, a [fifth of three to four-year-olds](#) in the UK have a smartphone. By age 11, only 17% don't have one.

OUR MISSION

We're determined to turn the growing public support we've already received into real change for our children and future generations. We'll do it by:

Growing the national conversation about the harms of smartphones for children

Empowering parents and schools to create change at a local level

Putting pressure on government and tech companies to help us protect our children.

Just as we marvel at the fact cigarette companies used to market their products as healthy, people will look back on this era and ask why children weren't protected from smartphones.

Let's get together to change the norm.

Together we're powerful

Sign up to be part of the movement and for the latest updates from our campaign.

Section B: Directed writing

Answer **one** question from this section.

Either

0	2
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Write a letter to be published in a newspaper. Your aim is to express your views about whether or not mobile phones should be banned for young people under the age of 16.

You may use the information and ideas in **Section A**.

Write the text for the letter using about 400 words.

[25 marks]

or

0	3
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Your school or college is holding a 24 hour 'phone free day' to raise money for charity.

Write the text for a talk to students. The aim of your talk is to persuade them to give up their phones for a day to raise money for charity.

You may use the information and ideas in **Section A**.

Write the text for the talk using about 400 words.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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