

INTERNATIONAL GCSE
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
9280/R

Reading Paper

Mark scheme

June 2026

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

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Text 1 Email

Qu	Marking Guidance	Total Marks
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Accept		
01	B (Last month)	1

Accept		
02	B (Guitar)	1

Accept		
03	A (To tell the reader about band practices)	1

Accept		
04	C (Some teachers went to the show.)	1

Accept		
05	C (University)	1

Accept		
06	A (To describe his musical activities)	1

Text 2 Walking in the countryside

For all open responses, accept reasonable spelling variations where the intended meaning is not lost and, if said phonetically, would be understood.

Qu	Marking Guidance	Total Marks
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Accept		
07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The positive effect on your health. <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning.</p>	1

Accept		
08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the weather forecast. <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning.</p>	1

Accept any two of the following		
09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The difficulty of the route How accessible the paths are Your own fitness levels Your own experience <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning.</p>	2

Accept		
10	A (To explain what to take with you when you go walking)	1

Accept		
11	<p>2 marks – Candidate explains both ideas of ‘lift your spirits’ – the idea of raise/improve/positively alter (other synonyms/explanations of ‘lift’ accepted) and the idea of well-being/outlook/morale (other synonyms/explanations of ‘spirits’ accepted)</p> <p>1 mark – Candidate explains one of these ideas or partially both</p> <p>0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written</p>	2

Award a maximum of two marks		
12	C (Stay on pathways.) and D (Walking with others is often best.) The letters can be accepted in any order.	2

Award a maximum of two marks		
13	B (Keeping walking equipment clean is vital.) and C (Walking can lead to a good night's rest.) The letters can be accepted in any order.	2

Accept		
14	A (To give advice on walking outdoors)	1

Text 3 Training to be a teacher

For all open responses, accept reasonable spelling variations where the intended meaning is not lost and, if said phonetically, would be understood.

Qu	Marking Guidance	Total Marks
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Accept		
15	A (The most common way to train is by taking a university course.)	1

Accept		
16	B (What the training course consisted of.)	1

Award a maximum of one mark		
17	1 mark – Candidate explains the idea of ‘grasp’ – understand/comprehend/appreciate (other synonyms/explanations for ‘grasp’ accepted) 0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	1

Accept any three of the following		
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took notes • Read to (some) children • Worked with (small) groups • Asked students what they liked (about school) • Helped (them) with spellings <p>Verb form required – Past tense Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	3

Award a maximum of two marks		
19	2 marks – Candidate explains both ideas of ‘whirlwind’ – something overwhelming/chaos/confusion (other synonyms/explanations for ‘whirlwind’ accepted) and ‘emotions’ – feelings/sensations/reactions (other synonyms/explanations for ‘emotions’ accepted) 1 mark – Candidate explains one of these ideas or partially both 0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	2

Accept		
20	A (He had a form class.), D (He delivered a lesson.), E (He recorded himself teaching.) and G (He had a mock interview.) The letters can be accepted in any order.	4

Award a maximum of one mark		
21	1 mark – Candidate explains the idea of ‘considered’ – thought about/reflected on/ reviewed (other synonyms/explanations for ‘considered’ accepted) 0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	1

Accept any two of the following		
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Became more confident • (Liked) the company of colleagues • (Found) the lecturers helpful • (Most of) it was fun • Working with young people • Young people were thoughtful • Young people were keen (to learn) <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	2

Award a maximum of two marks		
23	2 marks – Candidate explains both ideas of ‘climb’ – get on/ascend/make progress (other synonyms/explanations for ‘climb’ accepted) and ‘the ladder’ – career/promotion/profession (other synonyms/explanations for ‘the ladder’ accepted) 1 mark – Candidate explains one of these ideas or partially both 0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written	2

Accept		
24	B (It describes training to be a teacher.)	1

Text 4 Beyond the Village

For all open responses, accept reasonable spelling variations where the intended meaning is not lost and, if said phonetically, would be understood.

Qu	Marking Guidance	Total Marks
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Award a maximum of three marks

25	<p>3 marks – Candidate explains all ideas of ‘heeded’ – listened to/followed/took notice of (other synonyms/explanations for ‘heeded’ accepted), ‘sage’ – wise/sensible/thoughtful (other synonyms/explanations of ‘sage’ accepted) and ‘advice’ – guidance/recommendation/direction (other synonyms/explanations of ‘guidance’ accepted)</p> <p>2 marks – Candidate explains two ideas or partially three</p> <p>1 mark – Candidate explains one of these ideas or partially two</p> <p>0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written</p>	3
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Accept any four of the following

26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise/get up at 6 am • Have breakfast • (Have a) shower • Help his father/help with the animals • Catch the bus • Spend the day in lessons • Walk home • Complete his homework • Play games <p>Verb form required. Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	4
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Award a maximum of two marks

27	<p>2 marks – Candidate explains both ideas of ‘permanent’ – eternal/never-ending/forever (other synonyms/explanations for ‘permanent’ accepted) and ‘contentment’ – satisfaction/happiness/joy (other synonyms/explanations for ‘contentment’ accepted)</p> <p>1 mark – Candidate explains one of these ideas or partially both</p> <p>0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written</p>	2
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Accept any three of the following		
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (It was) at the other end of the village • (It was) large • Made from (local) stone • (It was) brightly decorated • It had ornate wood carvings • (It had/has) a small kitchen (that smelt pungent) <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	3

Accept		
29	A (To describe a place that was important to the writer)	1

Award a maximum of one mark		
30	<p>1 mark – Candidate explains the idea of 'collapsed' – fell apart/disintegrated/fell to pieces (other synonyms/explanations for 'collapsed' accepted)</p> <p>0 marks – Nothing worthy of credit/nothing written</p>	1

Accept		
31	<p>C (The grandfather had a very old bike.) and D (The grandfather was friendly towards his neighbours.)</p> <p>The letters can be accepted in any order.</p>	2

Accept		
32	B (The writer knew it was time to explore, even though he loved his home.)	1

Accept any four of the following		
33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Leaving home) would be tough • I had some sleepless nights • I had some odd dreams • Wondered if I was making a mistake • I would (aimlessly) wander the village • Lost in my thoughts • Conflicting feelings (about leaving home) • I had tears in my eyes <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	4

Accept any two of the following		
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Like) a miniature version of the world• People from all walks of life there• Heard ten/lots of different languages (being spoken) <p>Accept any reasonable variation that does not affect overall meaning. Award a mark for each correct response even if on the same line.</p>	2

Accept		
35	A (It's about the experience of leaving a well-loved place.)	1