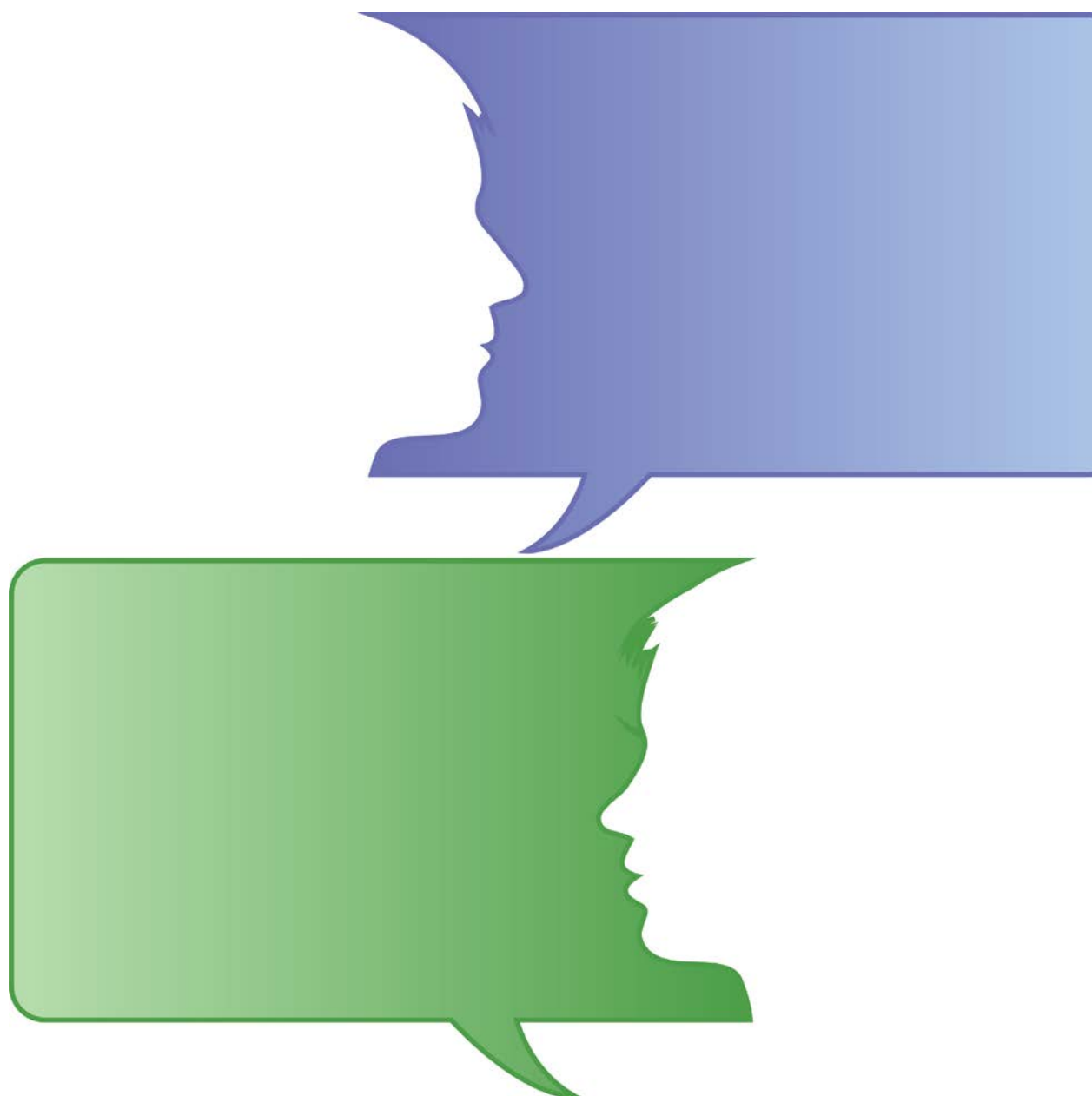


AS and A-level **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Preparing to teach

Session handout

Published: Summer 2015



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AS Component 1 and A-level Component 1 Section A

AS Component 1: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 1 (AS): Specimen question paper** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Textual Variations and Representations

Answer **all** questions.

Text A – This is the first page of a forum on school proms from the website www.mumsnet.com see pages 2 and 3 of the data booklet.

Text B – This is from an article on prom outfits from The Mirror website. See pages 4 and 5 of the data booklet.

- 0 1** Analyse how **Text A** uses language to create meanings and representations. **[25 marks]**
- 0 2** Analyse how **Text B** uses language to create meanings and representations. **[25 marks]**
- 0 3** Compare and contrast **Text A** and **Text B**, showing ways in which they are similar and different in their language use. **[20 marks]**

AS Component 1: data booklet

Text A (for Question 1 and Question 3)

Mumsnet discussion forum '[School proms – aaargh!](#)'

The screenshot shows the Mumsnet website interface. At the top left is the Mumsnet logo with the tagline 'By parents for parents'. A navigation bar contains links for 'Talk', 'Pregnancy', 'Baby', 'Child', 'Education', 'Life & Style', 'Food', 'Money', 'Work', 'News', 'Reviews', and 'Offers'. A search bar is located at the top right. The main content area features a 'Mumsnet Talk' section with a list of topics: 'The country's most popular meeting point for parents' (from The Times), 'Discussions of the day' (including Newborns, World Book Day, Waterbirth, Bizarre habits, and Introvert), and 'Most active'. Below this is a thread titled '... School proms - aaargh! (61 Posts)'. The thread starts with a message from user 'woollyideas' on Mon 23-Jan-12 at 11:55:36. The message discusses the high cost of proms, mentioning 'Prom Fair' and 'Prom Hire' as expensive options. The user asks for advice on how to manage the costs, suggesting alternatives like 'Prom Fair' or 'Prom Hire'.

Kayano Mon 23-Jan-12 11:58:18 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

I got my school prom dress from tkmaxx for £30 back in the day ~~and had 2 dates~~

It's crazy the amount some people spend its like a competition. I remember my friend paid to get a dress which ended up costing nearly £200 for which she got To wear it for 5 hours max

MuckyCarpet Mon 23-Jan-12 11:58:50 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

It's one night they'll never forget. Don't be a grump!

Although the helicopter is way OTT!

webwiz Mon 23-Jan-12 11:59:21 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

Prom fair 😊

woollyideas Mon 23-Jan-12 12:01:03 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

Yep, prom fair... bit like a wedding fayre (with a 'y', of course,) but for your precious teens.

McHappyPants2012 Mon 23-Jan-12 12:02:36 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

my sister's school has just started doing them, and we are all chipping in 😊 i can't wait to see her all dressed up

Mrsrobertduvall Mon 23-Jan-12 12:03:03 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

How old are they 11 or 16?

At 11 a prom is unnecessary and naff. They just need a bit of a bop, not a formal expensive "do".

So glad our schools didn't do it.

woollyideas Mon 23-Jan-12 12:03:47 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

Yes, Kayano - its competitive consumerism. My DD already went to a prom when she left primary school, which made me a bit 🙄... all these eleven year olds in full make up, arriving in hired limos. Now we've got it coming up again next year at the end of Year 11.

pengynum Mon 23-Jan-12 12:04:59 [Add message](#) | [Report](#) | [Message poster](#)

What's a Prom? Is it leaving junior school or secondary school?

Juniors have a Yr 6 Leavers party, theme chosen by the children. Not sure about what the teenagers get up to as not got any that age and I just went to naff Leavers Disco at the end of my school days!

Latest reviews



Petite Star
Zia
★★★★☆



Chalet La
Sonnaile
★★★★★



The Troll
Trap by
Rosen
Trevithick,
by Rosen
Trevithick
★★★★★

+ Add a review

[View all reviews](#)



Mumsnet Insight

Mumsnetters wanted for product tests, surveys and much more.

[Join the panel](#)



PruHealth Vitality Experience:
what's your best beauty or health related treat is for less than £25: you could win a £50 Nectar card

Complete a survey about working and having children - you could win a £200 Love2Shop voucher

Text B (for Question 2 and Question 3)

Mirror.co.uk article '[Boys now spending almost as much as girls on their prom outfits](#)'

Mirror **MONEY** How we use cookies
Advice you can count on

FRONT PAGE NEWS SPORT 3AM TV LIFESTYLE **MONEY** PLAY OPINION

M · Money · Personal finance · Teenagers

Boys now spending almost as much as girls on their prom outfits

Jun 19, 2013 00:00 | By **Ruki Sayid**

Image-conscious teenage lads are going for a slick, groomed look, spending 24% more on their outfit than a year ago

12 Shares

Share

Email



Role model: James Bond actor Daniel Craig

★ See more stories you'll love

You've turned off story recommendations. **Turn them on** and we'll update the list below with stories we think you'll love (**how we do this**).

★ Recommended In Money

American-style prom nights are sending sales of tuxedos rocketing as boys get a glam makeover to keep up with the girls.

Image-conscious teenage lads are ditching trainers and T-shirts for a slick, groomed look, spending 24% more on their outfit than a year ago.

And they are tidying up monobrows and facial hair as they head to beauty salons for head-to-toe treatments from eyebrow threading and face masks to spray tans.

According to a study by department store Debenhams, the influence of top US programmes like Beverley Hills 90210 and fashion icons including David Beckham and screen hero James Bond are smartening up male school leavers with sales of tuxedos rocketing 60% and formal shirts, shoes and bow ties soaring by 20%.

Boys are kitting themselves out with cufflinks, cummerbunds and silk hankies spending an average £385 on the school prom, compared with girls who blow £467.25.

Debenhams spokesman Ed Watson said: "The amount a guy will spend on getting prom-ready is now close to rivalling a girl.

"Prom fever has hit and guys are going all out to look their best and it doesn't stop at the suit.

"Budding prom kings want to achieve a polished, groomed look and are looking to celebrities such as David Beckham and Daniel Craig for their inspiration."

The big party to mark the end of the school year for sixth formers has snowballed in recent years, taking over from the traditional disco in the school hall to themed events in posh locations.

British teenagers have made High School Musical-style prom nights big business as they follow the American trend for stretch limos, designer frocks, suits and expensive accessories.

And they have given rise to the "Promzilla" - prom obsessed teenage girls who book their outfits up to a year in advance and plan the night with the precision of a would-be bride.

Mr Watson said: "The ladies seem to be better prepared - we have seen an increase in occasionwear sales since January whereas guys have been rushing in last minute to get ready for the big night."



ROYAL MAIL LTD.

Report exposes ministers' chaotic handling of botched £1billion Royal Mail sell-off



BROADBAND

BT 'exploiting power of monopoly' in £1.2billion taxpayer-funded rural broadband scheme



ENGLAND FOOTBALL TEAM

Fans, players and parents unite against England's 'rip-off' £90 World Cup kit



PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

Office work can be more hazardous than you think, don't suffer because of your job



ENERGY BILLS

Ofgem's investigation into the Big Six energy providers is long overdue for consumers

Mirror PERSONAL INJURY
How much could YOU claim?

Injured in the last three years?
Was the accident your fault?
Did you receive medical attention?
Where were you injured?

Name* Phone*

[Find Out NOW! >](#) [Terms & Conditions](#)
*Required

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **accident advice helpline**

END OF TEXTS

A-level Component 1 Section A: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 1 (A-level): Specimen question paper** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Section A

Textual Variations and Representations

Answer **all** questions in this section.

Text A – This is from a forum on learner drivers on The Student Room website – see insert.

Text B – This is an article from the regional newspaper *The Western Times*, published on Friday 18 April 1902. See facing page.

0 1 Analyse how **Text A** uses language to create meanings and representations.

[25 marks]

0 2 Analyse how **Text B** uses language to create meanings and representations.

[25 marks]

0 3 Explore the similarities and differences in the ways that **Text A** and **Text B** use language.

[20 marks]

A-level Component 1 Section A: insert

Text A (for Question 1 and Question 3)

The Student Room forum '[Share your worst learner driving experience!](#)'

The screenshot shows a forum post on 'The Student Room' website. The page has a green header with navigation links like 'Post', 'Log in', and 'Sign up for free'. Below the header is a blue navigation bar with categories like 'Home', 'Forums', 'Articles', 'GCSE', 'A-level', 'Applying to uni', 'University', 'Health & relationships', 'Careers', and 'Student finance'. The main content area shows a forum thread titled 'Share your worst learner driving experience!' with a 'reply' button and social media sharing options for Facebook and Twitter. The thread is started by 'The Phelps' on 09-02-2012 at 11:17. The post content includes a personal anecdote about a learner driver's mishaps and a question asking for others' experiences. A second reply from 'wikiellie' on 09-02-2012 at 11:22 provides advice: 'Never take instructions too literally!'. The post has a rating of 2. On the right side, there are three green-bordered boxes: 'Study resources' with links to 'The chivalry thesis', 'Inflation - AS Economics', 'History - Britain 1951-2007 cont.', and 'Globalisation'; 'Article updates' with links to 'Postgraduate Study', 'Speech and language therapy 2014 choices', 'Medicine Applicants Stalking Page 2014 Entry', 'Dentistry 2014 Stalking Page', and 'Help Choosing a Subject'; and 'Useful resources' with links to 'Advice for learning to drive', 'Basic car maintenance', and 'General motoring advice'.

The Student Room

Home Forums Articles GCSE A-level Applying to uni University Health & relationships Careers Student finance

You are Here: Home > Forums > Hobbies and interests > Motoring

Share your worst learner driving experience!

Like 0 Tweet 0

reply

The Phelps
Thread Starter
+ follow
(0 followers)

09-02-2012 11:17 1

So I passed my test a few months ago, but in the lead up to that I had two little mishaps on the road. **I wondered if you guys had any funny or horrific stories to share about your experience as a learner driver taking lessons or their test?**

I once had a guy walk into the side of my car when I was in the Bingo car park. No idea why you would walk into the side of a moving car! Or how you wouldn't notice it more importantly.

My second mishap was driving into a round about. It was completely empty but for some reason I misjudged the amount I needed to turn and just drove into it.

So what are your experiences being a learner driver?

reply

wikiellie
+ follow
(0 followers)

09-02-2012 11:22 2

My friend was told to 'turn right' by her instructor around a major roundabout in the town I live, and she actually drove the wrong way around the entire circuit. They ended up being pulled over by two police cars 🚔

Advice: Never take instructions too literally!

Post rating: + 2

reply

Study resources

- The chivalry thesis claims that women will be treated more leniently for committing certain crimes, generally shoplifting is often associated more with females than males, but the statistics suggest that males commit many more acts of theft than women, an
- Inflation - AS Economics
- History - Britain 1951-2007 cont.
- Globalisation

see more

Article updates

- Postgraduate Study edited by: CJ, 3 minutes ago
- Speech and language therapy 2014 choices edited by: Chipperpiper, 1 Hour Ago
- Medicine Applicants Stalking Page 2014 Entry edited by: JemimaPuddleduck, 3 hours ago
- Dentistry 2014 Stalking Page edited by: aspiringdentist9, 4 hours ago
- Help Choosing a Subject edited by: returnmigrant, 5 hours ago

see more

Useful resources

Articles:

- Advice for learning to drive
- Basic car maintenance
- General motoring advice



Left Hand Drive



(4 followers)

Post rating: 1



Kurol



(0 followers)

09-02-2012 11:26 3

Being stuck behind one...

reply >

09-02-2012 11:39 4

I think mine was when I was taking my test. The examiner told me to stop on a VERY steep hill. I did it all correct, mirror, signal, maneuver, handbrake, neutral... and as the examiner was saying that she wanted me to do a hill start, I noticed that the car was still moving. I hadn't applied the handbrake properly and was sliding down the hill! Luckily, I used the footbrake and re-applied the handbrake which seemed to be the right think to do since I still passed 😊 Not really funny but still a horrible experience! I thought I'd failed!

Another one was during a lesson and I was approaching a busy roundabout with traffic lights. I was told to go right and the lights were on green so I maintained my speed on the approach. However, other cars coming around the roundabout didn't look like they were slowing down and stopping for their red light so I braked, stalled, and drifted helpless onto the massive roundabout with all of this traffic around 😊 I was so embarrassed and had to restart the car and everything before the lights changed!

reply >

Share this discussion: 0 0

Quick link:

[Unanswered motoring threads](#)

Groups associated with this forum:

Latest discussions Popular

- [League of Nations](#)
- [Some questions about Student Finance](#)
- [Are these grades good for Year 9?](#)
- [21 and pregnant... What do I do?](#)
- [0.5 Language Course-Unit requirement](#)
- [Need help with one- and two-tailed hypothesis please!](#)
- [The Snazzy, Brand Spanking New Year 9 \(2013-2014\) Thread](#)
- [Accounting and finance at bath or economics and finance at Bristol](#)
- [Wastemanz on the TS of R](#)
- [A religious argument that fails every time](#)

see more >

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- Forums
- Articles
- Study help
- Personal statements
- University
- Health & relationships
- Postgrad
- Careers
- Finance
- Hobbies & interests
- Debate & current affairs

Get Started

- Today's posts
- Unanswered posts
- Polls
- Arcade
- Photo albums

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- Mod team (staff/supporters)
- News, help and feedback
- Terms and conditions
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MOTOR CAR PROSECUTION AT EXETER.

At the Exeter Police Court yesterday, Leonard Wiliey, electrical engineer, of 12, Oxford-road, Exeter, was summoned for furiously driving a motor-car down Forestreet on the 12th inst.-P.C. Bradford said he was on duty on Saturday afternoon near St. Olave's Church, when he saw defendant pass him driving a motor-car. At that time he was driving at a moderate rate, but he increased his speed to about 15 miles an hour. This speed he kept up all the way down the hill, slackening a little when he arrived at the bottom. There were several vehicles about at the time.-Blanche Smith, of Alphington, corroborated. -Defendant denied the offence. He estimated the speed down the hill at about six miles an hour. To prove this, defendant said he had speeds on his machine - four, eight, and twelve miles an hour, and he was going less than his second speed. -Miss Theenwisson, a young lady who accompanied defendant in his motor, also denied the offence. -The Bench considered the case proved, and imposed a fine of 10s. and costs.

Source: *The Western Times*, Friday 18 April 1902

AS Component 1: mark scheme extract

This is from our **Paper 1 (AS): Specimen mark scheme** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

01	Analyse how Text A uses language to create meanings and representations	
AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 9–10	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply linguistic methods and terminology, identifying patterns and complexities • apply different levels of language analysis in an integrated way, recognising how they are connected • apply levels of language analysis with rare errors • guide the reader 	Students are likely to describe features such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clause types • clause order • clause linking • cohesion • antithesis • visual design, structure and webpage navigation

AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning in <i>Text A</i>		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 13–15	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore use of language and representations according to context 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore affordances and constraints of message board context • explore how values and attitudes are conveyed eg "It's crazy" • explore the representation of the mumsnet site as helpful and authoritative eg "The country's most popular meeting place for parents", "We're hiring" • evaluate the representation of the mumsnet community eg "We don't allow personal attacks"

A-level Component 1 Section A: mark scheme extract

This is from our **Paper 1 (A-level): Specimen mark scheme** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

01	Analyse how Text A uses language to create meanings and representations	
AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT
		These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 9–10	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply linguistic methods and terminology, identifying patterns and complexities • apply different levels of language analysis in an integrated way, recognising how they are connected • apply levels of language analysis with rare errors • guide the reader 	Students are likely to describe features such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parallel clauses • clause types • clause order • clause linking • cohesion and guiding the reader • visual design, structure and webpage navigation

AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning in Text A		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT
		These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 13–15	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate use of language and representations according to context • explore analysis within wider social and cultural contexts 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore technological dimensions of language use: syntax, grammar, interactivity, genre • evaluate how values and attitudes are conveyed eg "Never take instructions too literally" • evaluate the representation of The Student Room sites as helpful and authoritative eg "Study resources", "Useful resources" • evaluate the representation of The Student Room community

A-level Component 1 Section A: student response A

This is from our **Paper 1 (A-level): Student responses with examiner commentary** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Question 1:

Analyse how Text A uses language to create meanings and representations.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO3 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 25

Student response

Text A is an online conversation among students on 'The Student Room'. The conversation is written, and the purpose is to tell stories of their driving experiences. This makes the purpose transactional as it's about giving information. Participant 1 named 'The Phelps' adds some interactional features into their post in order to engage others and find out about other drivers' experiences. The layout is similar to a social media site which adds a relaxed, casual feel to the posts; the participants write informally and use non-standard English to tell their stories. The lexical choices are simple and the language used is suitable for all participants – there is no lexical field of sophisticated driving language. As this is an online conversation there is a time delay, which means that each post is planned; there are no spelling mistakes which supports the fact that the writers have thought about their response. However, there are some grammatical mistakes but it is unclear whether this is due to the lack of planning or the lack of need to write formally.

The website itself is set out with lots of hyperlinks which make it interactive. On the right hand side of the page the links take you to other websites which share a common topic and some take you to other non-related topics. Along the top is a banner of hyperlinks which will take you around the website where you can explore the other pages available. The layout of this website is user friendly – it's simple to use and has a clear layout. The interactive features continue inside the post box, there are many options enabling you to 'like' on Facebook, 'tweet' about on Twitter, 'reply' to each post and 'follow' profiles on The Student Room. From the amount of hyperlinks and links with social media it is clear that the target audience of this website is designed for students hence the name 'The Student Room'.

The title of this page is 'Share your worst learner driving experience!' which is a declarative. The verb 'share' at the start makes the sentence an instruction; it comes across quite blunt and makes the title seem short and snappy. The exclamation mark at the end makes the article seem fun which encourages the reader to take part in the story telling. As the website is designed for students a short snappy title will engage the reader more instead of a long lengthy 'would you like to share your worst learner driving experience' which readers may get bored and become uninterested. The adjective 'worst' pre-modifies the phrase 'learner driving experience' to give the readers an idea of what sort of stories to tell. The abstract noun 'experience' is normally associated with eventful past occurrences, which makes it more appealing to readers as they think they are going to read interesting, potentially horrifying stories.

The language is non-standard English; the colloquial terms used makes it more suited for the target audience. 'I wondered if you guys had any funny or horrific stories'. The pronoun 'guys' is used to address the whole audience both boys and girls, they speak in an active and it comes across like they are actually interested in each reader personally. The second person pronoun 'you' and 'your' are also used to address the reader, this is called synthetic personalisation and is used to create a relationship with reader. You would use the pronoun 'guys' to address people in your friendship group and that feel is being brought into this online chat, making it more appealing for people to write in as their know that their stories are for entertainment purposes only and they aren't going to be bullied to laughed at.

The sentences are mainly simple with the occasional compound where coordinating conjunctions are used to justify expanding on the independent clause. 'So I passed my test a few months ago, but in the lead up to that I had two little mishaps on the road'. The coordinating conjunction 'but' is used here to connect the independent clauses 'So I passed my test a few months ago' and 'in the lead up to that I had two little mishaps on the road'. But by adding the second clause it makes the writer open up and give more information, perhaps making the reader want to do the same; it creates a relationship.

Overall, the article uses a range of language frameworks to engage and entertain the reader. The original post uses questions to engage the reader and to get thinking about their experiences. The language used creates chatty friendly feel which increases the number of participants as they know it's a bit of fun. Participants express their emotion through emoticons; again this adds that teenage feel making it fun to be involved. The website suits its target audience and the interactional features for example hyperlinks and questions, this works well in order to get a response from the reader.

Planning aid: Textual variations and representations

Text	Topic	Writer/Speaker	Audience	Purpose	Genre	Mode	Methods of language analysis

AS Component 2 and A-level Component 2

AS Component 2: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (AS): Specimen question paper** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

or

0 2

Discuss the idea that women and men use language differently.

In your answer you should discuss concepts and issues from language study. You should use your own supporting examples and the data in **Table 1**, below.

Table 1 gives details of the turns, speaking time and interruptions at a staff meeting.

[30 marks]

Table 1

Speaker	Average turns per meeting	Average no. of seconds per turn	Average 'did interrupt' per meeting	Average 'was interrupted' per meeting
Woman A	5.5	7.8	0.5	3.0
Woman B	5.8	10.0	0.0	3.0
Woman C	8.0	3.0	1.0	3.2
Woman D	20.5	8.5	2.0	7.5
Man E	11.3	16.5	2.0	2.6
Man F	32.3	17.1	8.0	6.7
Man G	32.6	13.2	6.6	6.3
Man H	30.2	10.7	4.3	5.0
Man I	17.0	15.8	4.5	2.5

Source: B Dubois and I Crouch, 'The question of tag questions in women's speech: they don't really use more of them, do they?' *Language in Society*, 4, 03, pp289-294. Reproduced with permission.

Turn over for Section B

A-level Component 2 Section A: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (A-level): Specimen question paper** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Section A

Diversity and Change

Answer **one** question in this section.

Either

0 1

Evaluate the idea that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication.

[30 marks]

or

0 2

Evaluate the idea that the English language is changing and breaking up into many different Englishes.

[30 marks]

AS Component 2: mark scheme extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (AS): Specimen mark scheme** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

02	Discuss the idea that women and men use language differently. In your answer you should discuss concepts and issues from language study. You should use your own supporting examples and the data in Table 1 , below. Table 1 gives details of the turns, speaking time and interruptions at a staff meeting. [30 marks]	
AO2: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 17–20	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an individual overview of issues assess views, approaches, interpretations of linguistic issues 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore heterogeneity of female/male speakers explain gender similarities hypothesis explore other kinds of language use than spoken interaction assess dominance and difference approaches explicitly
Level 4 13–16	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify different views, approaches and interpretations of linguistic issues 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrate effect of situation and use illustrate effect of other characteristics of speakers: age, class, ethnicity explore different interpretations of female/male conversational behaviours eg tags as showing uncertainty or wielding power illustrate research on gender and other variables, eg effect of status by Woods

A-level Component 2: mark scheme extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (A-level): Specimen mark scheme** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

01	Evaluate the idea that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication. [30 marks]	
AO2: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use		
Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT These are examples of ways students' work might exemplify the performance characteristics in the question above. They indicate possible content and how it can be treated at different levels.
Level 5 17–20	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate a synthesised, conceptualised and individual overview of issues evaluate and challenge views, approaches, interpretations of linguistic issues 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate deficit/dominance/difference views, research and methodologies challenge ideas of difference: gender polarisation and dichotomies, universalising, biologism, miscommunication conceptualise diversity views: heterogeneity of women's and men's social identities explore gender as performance, eg roles people play in difference situations
Level 4 13–16	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and comment on different views, approaches and interpretations of linguistic issues 	Students are likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and classify deficit/dominance/difference views explore different interpretations of female/male conversational behaviours, eg tags as showing uncertainty or wielding power consider research on/effect of other variables, eg context, age, class, ethnicity explore other aspects of language such as differences in accent and dialect, use of other modes of communication

A-level Component 2: student response B and C

This is from our **Paper 2 (A-level): Student responses with examiner commentary** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Question 1:

Evaluate the idea that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO2 (20 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Student B: Student response

There is a debate in the linguistic field that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication. There are linguists such as Lakoff and Tannen who claim that there is difference in how men and women use language. This leads to the argument that perhaps it is miscommunication that forms a major characteristic between men and women's spoken interactions. There are others however, such as Cameron, who disagree and claim that differences are exaggerated and focused on too much, for reasons other than language.

Robin Lakoff identified characteristics that were predominantly found in women's language. Lakoff suggested that hedges and fillers along with tag questions were found in women's spoken language more than in men's. It could be considered by men that women's use of hedges, filler and tag questions mean women are needy, talk too much and are indecisive. However, according to Lakoff, women talk less than men. It could be argued that the language features used by women show that they have an inferior social status than men. This is known as the Deficit Model and could be a reason for a possible miscommunication between men and women. Men could see women's use of tag questions as indecisive whereas a woman would see them as trying to get the man's view on a subject and understand how he was feeling or what he was thinking. It is language features such as this which could lead to miscommunication and confusion between men and women.

However, research conducted by O'Barr and Atkins on American courtroom trials found that many of the features identified by Lakoff to be "female" were found in both men and women who were of low social status. This suggests that the language features Lakoff identified as being female are in fact found within individuals who are feeling powerless and not just women on the whole. Lakoff's ideas of women's language features cannot be applied to all women and therefore may not be a clear indication as to why there may be miscommunications between men and women in spoken language as men are using some of the language features that Lakoff has branded as being a feature of women's spoken language.

Another feature of spoken language that could provide miscommunication between men and women is the issue of dominance. Men have a desire in a conversation between men and women to be seen as the dominant participant and have control of the conversation including when people speak, how long they speak for and the topic of the conversation. Men could do this by not taking up a woman's suggested topic of conversation and instead putting their own topic across by interrupting the women as Zimmerman and West found in their 1975 study. Conversations between men and women were recorded by Zimmerman and West and they found that 96% of all

interruptions in the whole conversation recorded were by men. They argue that this was a reflection of male dominance in society, something that Lakoff's research also suggests.

There is a common misconception that women interrupt more and do this to potentially show support to the person or people who they are in a conversation with. Beattie follows this view point but criticises Zimmerman and West by saying that men may not be interrupting to show dominance alone but may be attempting to show some form of support and that they are listening to the conversation by saying things like 'yeah' and 'mhummm'. Interruptions can often be mistaken for something else within a conversation. They can be seen as an attempt to gain control and dominance of a conversation but could actually be intended for the complete opposite as Bettie reported.

Tannen takes the approach of describing men and women's conversational style as being different which could lead to miscommunication. Tannen, like Zimmerman and West, claims that men are concerned with dominance in a conversation and interrupt a lot to gain status. Women are the opposite to this and, according to Tannen, are far more interested in forming bonds with who they are talking to and so they agree more and talk less than men do. Another feature Tannen found was that men are more inclined to give direct orders such as 'give me that' and are not attempting to get away from any conflict. Women on the other hand, use more polite and indirect orders such as 'would you mind giving me that please' in order to avoid conflict and maintain positive face with who they are talking to. Men have no problem with breaking face in order to communicate with another person and communicate directly what they mean. Tannen also notes that women show understanding and offer support rather than solutions where as men are the opposite and want factual information. Men are more concerned with finding solutions. Women may see men as being emotionally unattached when engaging in a conversation when in fact it is simply just the way in which men communicate.

The nature of how men and women converse can provide a large source of what could be described as miscommunication. Cameron would disagree entirely with Tannen and claim that research is biased and there has been a huge focus on the differences between male and female language, which is rather small, and not enough focus on the similarities.

Language is used in everyday life and it is easy to sometimes mishear what people say or take what they have said in the wrong way. This is something that can lead to miscommunication and on top of that, there is the added issue of how men and women communicate differently which leads to another level of miscommunication. People can use language in a vulgar way to express how they are feeling or in a more articulate way. This suggests that language is not only a source of miscommunication between men and women but also between different social classes. Working classes tend to speak with shorter sentences and think that the person who they are talking to shares similar experiences to them. The middle class however tend to talk with longer, more complex sentences and do not assume that the person they are talking to has undergone similar experiences. Of course this is, like Lakoff's research, highly generalised but is a set of generalised statements that can be applied to society. This shows that gender is not the only factor that is causing miscommunication between men and women but also social status and class.

Spoken interactions between men and women can lead to miscommunication for a number of reasons such as interruptions occurring, dominance being asserted and conversation starters not being taken up. There are different theories as to why this happens along with the idea that men and women simply communicate in a different way which inevitably leads to miscommunication between the two sexes. However, it may never be fully and definitely understood by leading linguists as to why there is, at times, such miscommunication in spoken interactions between men and women. Perhaps the topic in itself is just misunderstood.

Student C: Student response

The difference between men and women in society in general has been a long-standing debate argued throughout the centuries and the differences between men and women in speech do not vary from this pattern. There are many different views and in fact theories as to whether men and women differ in the way they communicate both supporting and disputing whether the foundations of male and female interactions are characterised by miscommunication.

Professor of linguistics at Georgetown Deborah Tannen developed a theory which she called The Difference model, which would have supported the idea that interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication. She believed that the characteristics of each gender's method of communication completely oppose one another and are at opposite ends of a linguistic spectrum. She represents this in six contrasts including the idea of status vs support and advice vs understanding. Using these contrasts she outlined the way in which the genders are different for example using the status vs support contrast she believes that men grow up in a world where conversation is competitive which means that they are competitive in their speech to gain status and dominance, whereas women use conversation to gain affirmation in their ideas and to gain support from the people whom they are speaking with. Tannen also believes that men and women's speech also varies in their linguistic characteristics. She referred to male speech as report talk, as they speak in a very structured way to negotiate status and avoid failure giving more factual representations of events for example. She referred to women's speech as rapport speech as they speak to achieve a different purpose, to build relationships with others. Because of this Tannen believes that in order for members of each gender to be able to communicate effectively a conscious effort must be made to learn the others communication methods and purposes and only then will men and women be able to communicate effectively with full understanding between them.

A theory that would oppose this idea is Deborah Cameron's Gender theory which states that there are in fact more differences within the genders than between them. She would argue that the interactions between men and women are not mischaracterised by miscommunication but that in fact the theories outlining the differences between them are. Cameron believes that the way in which we speak is characterised by our own personality, emotions, interests and many other individual factors but not solely our gender. She acknowledges that there are certain gender specific expectations within society that some feel they must adhere to to remain looking manly or feminine, but she feels that this does not completely tailor the way in which we speak. Many feel that Deborah Cameron's theory represents the attitudes within modern society now as the gap between the roles of men and women in society has largely closed. She believes that the way in which we speak is tailored personally to us and to categorise our speech in to genders would not only be incorrect but would also be evidentially lacking.

Another linguist who developed a theory demonstrating the differences between genders and their importance is Robin Lakoff, who developed the theory of women's language. She claimed that women use certain features very differently from men and analysed women's speech to form a basic set of assumptions she believes demonstrates the way in which women use language. She believed that women use features such as hedging using modal auxiliaries such as 'may' or 'might' where men would use the more definite forms, and that this shows women's insecurity in expressing certain ideas. She also believes that women make more use of tag questions than men and this is a way to gain reassurance and support from her audience, especially when in the company of males. The list of these assumptions goes on, however their criticisms do seem to undermine their purpose in a modern society. Lakoff was a feminist and she used this theory to show how she believed that the oppression of women had had an effect on their language; however many feel that although this may have been the case in previous decades the roles of

men and women have largely changed and there are very few differences in their work and social lives now. This means that lexically and semantically a gap has been closed as there is much more common ground between men and women now in the topics they discuss compared to, for example, the 1960's. This leads some people to believe that Lakoff's theory has lost its credibility as it is no longer valid as times have changed, and that this now means that miscommunication does not characterise interactions between men and women.

In both Tannen and Lakoff's theory it is not only believed that men and women have varied pragmatic purposes but that they also have varied use of spoken language features in their interactions. This can highlight what some believe to be miscommunication in speech. For example both men and women use tag questions in their speech, however some believe that men use tag questions to ensure that their audience is engaged in what they are saying and to gain backchannels which increases status, whereas women use tag questions to gain reassurance and support in their speech. This could cause miscommunication as the different purposes may not be recognised by each gender and this will cause confusion; however nowadays many believe this to be untrue. Many would ask how it is possible to determine the pragmatic meaning behind every single tag question a male or female uses, and how this could possibly be generalised in this way. In some cases the use of tag questions may adhere to these guidelines but who is to say that men don't use tags for support, and women don't use them for status?

In conclusion, I believe that the language debate about gender will continue into the future as no clear answer or guideline can be distinguished. I personally believe that it is impossible to categorise our interactions into that of typical male or female ones as we all differ so much in the way we communicate due to our own internal differences, and differing external factors. I believe that men and women can communicate effectively in many cases and to say that mixed gender interactions are characterised by miscommunication would be only representative of a minute section of society in the modern day.

Planner: Component 2: generating ideas for study

Write a series of ideas about language that could be **discussed for AS**.

Write a series of ideas about language that could be **evaluated for A-level**.

there is no such thing as 'correct' language, only what is 'standard' or 'non-standard'

technology is the single most important influence on language change

Planner: A-level Component 2: topic planner

Topic	
Textual data	
Linguistic research	
Linguistic concepts	
Big questions/ debates	
Language discourses	
Directed writing	

Teaching Materials: World Englishes

Where in the world?

Watch the following video clip. Try to remember as many countries as you can!

[World Englishes: 30 countries with a million English speakers](#)

What is the implication of the title?

What points does David Crystal make about different Englishes from around the world and what makes them different?

[David Crystal – World Englishes](#)

Labelling heaven

What do the initialisms and the word below stand for and what do they mean?

L1

L2

EIL

EFL

ESL

ENL

ELF

W(S)SE

Globish

South African English

Quiz starter:

[Trivia Quiz - South African Slang](#)

Video clip:

[Language in District 6, Cape Town, South Africa](#)

- 1 What is Afrikaans?
- 2 What have you learned about the history of District Six in Cape Town, South Africa?
- 3 What have you learned about the language that was spoken in this area? What is it called? What are some of its characteristics?
- 4 How did the apartheid regime affect language use and attitudes?
- 5 How do people from District 6 feel about their language? What significances does it have for people?
- 6 Why might this District 6 dialect survive?

Text: Community News

The text below is a news report from a community newspaper published in South Africa.

- 1 What lexical items reflect the South African context that has produced this variety of English? What other distinctive lexical items or uses of vocabulary can you see?
- 2 What distinctive grammatical issues can you see?
- 3 Is there any evidence that this text was produced by a very local paper with basic resources?
- 4 How would you classify this kind of English and what kind of user do you think the writer might be?

Extract: Bloody weekly pub

BLOODY WEEKLY PUB

It is a weekend thing, for the medical personnel and the police to make routine patrol on the town waterholes due to number of bodily grievous harm cases reported during the weekends. It has been established that during the weekends all the beer downers do swarm the pubs land fighting in tow. The absence of bouncers in those beer holes makes the matter worse since everybody is roving free with guns, knives, pangas, catapults and tomahawks etc. without being search. This has shot the number of assault incidents to be disgustingly high.

Imagine the places where the beer bottles are turned into arms and sent one to five star mortuary cold rooms. It was a very bloody weekends when follow boozers were standing by the walls wooing and whistling at the extremely drunk couple who were thrusting and pinching each other with broken beer bottles without being torn apart at Mantshokgotho. The fighters had nearly been drained when the police and the medical personnel threw a red towel at their booze filled corners. Hot on the footsteps of the cleaners another guy was stabbed on the top of the right eye, and to be afterwards hospitalized due heavy blood loss. All incidents happened on 28/06/2008, Saturday at the very hot. Waterhole without a disciplined bounce.

Many death cases had been reported in results of stubbornness at pubs such as Potlaneng, Mantshokgotho, Donot Worry etc, but the community members are not ready to be away from such places.

The cleaners have to work very hard to make these pubs to tow the line, otherwise are going to be held responsible for incompetency.

NB. Please parents make every effort to dissociate your children from fellows who frequent such places, because they are susceptible to violence, drugs, alcohol and illegal activities etc.

Source: Community News, 1 July 2008

Read the *article South African English* by Penny Silva:

public.oed.com/aspects-of-english/english-in-use/south-african-english/

- 1 What are the significances of speaking English in South Africa?
- 2 What kinds of English speakers are there in South Africa? What is the language situation overall?
- 3 Find out the meanings of some of the words that SAE has borrowed.
- 4 What are the distinctive features of the pronunciation of SAE?

Extract: Japanese English

Look at this website:

engrish.com

The screenshot shows the homepage of Engrish.com. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Main', 'Brog', 'Store', and 'Submit', along with social media icons for Facebook, RSS, and Twitter. A banner at the top right says 'You'll Shopping!! at The Engrish.com Store'. The main content area features a date 'July 21st, 2014' and a headline 'Be vevy vevy quiet...'. Below this is a large image of a sign with Chinese characters '專營各款歐美品牌服飾' and the English text 'Section of European and Amweican brand clothing'. The sign also includes the website URL 'www.engrish.com'. To the left of the main content is a 'Most Popular Engrish' sidebar with a list of categories such as 'Anime/Manga', 'Bags/Packaging', 'Books/Magazines', 'Buildings', 'Candy/Gum', 'Chinglish', 'Clothing', 'Computer', 'Containers', 'Drinks', 'Engrish from Other Countries', 'Engrish Leftovers', 'Household Items', 'Instructions', 'Media', 'Menus', and 'Music'. On the right side, there is a search bar and a newsletter sign-up form. At the bottom of the main content area, there is a rating section for 'Rate This Engrish' with a star rating and a link to 'Posted in: Chinglish | Signs'. Social sharing options for Email, Facebook, Twitter, Digg, and SU are also present.

- How does it present Japanese English (and other Englishes from around the world)?
- What is your response to the English you have seen? What do you think about this website? What attitudes to Japanese English are being shown?
- Look at the website's FAQs. What do you learn about Japanese English from this? How do you respond to the website now?

Extract: Japanese English – In touch with the world

The text is an email from a Japanese woman in reply to her English friend's enquiry about the tsunami that hit Japan in 2011.

video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/japan-tsunami-2011-vin

- How would you characterise the writer as a user of English?
- Analyse the distinctive features of the English used in the email.
- Analyse how the writer uses language to convey her experiences and feelings.

Dear Cathy

Thank you very much for asking. My family and I are OK.
As you know, we are in the west part of Japan, so we have no damage here.
I felt the earthquake (my mother didn't) and that was very long.

The quake areas was the beginning of a set of ... nightmare.
At first, HUGE earthquake, HUGE tsunami, and then hydrocarbon explosion of nuclear energy plants.
This is NIGHTMARE.

The situation is getting worse and worse.
The information of nuclear plants is becoming snarled.
So some people wrap themselves up in suspicion.
This is not good.
But no one loot any stores. Unnecessary disruptoins are not happening.
As of now, people are keeping patience and calmness. People are helping each other.
This is really good.
I am proud of Japanese who can act right way at a time like this.

We have prepared against those disaster; earthqueke, tsunami, and so on.
We have evacuation drills from childhood.
But there was no way we could beat such a huge tsunami.
The tsunami got above the limit of breakwater (the tsunami was over 2nd floor in English way). I could not imagine such a big wave.
I couldn't believe what ones I saw on TV.
Even now I can not imagine hundreds of drowned bodies

are on the seashores and even the self-defense forces are hard to reach there.
(Now, the self-defense forces who are mobilized for rescue are hundred thousand troop level.)

I can not take my eyes off from TV even in the midnight, but what all I see are too brutal things. But I also beliebe we can get over and fight back this.
We could get over 2 A-bombs and huge earthquake in Kobe, so we can do this again.

But it must be very difficult to reconstruction this, this situation might be the same 6 months later.

It will take a long time for the complete recovery, so I want you not to forget us.

We will just keep working, so I want you to support and watch over us.

Finally Cathy, we thank all over the world helping us. And, thank you very much for sending me the mail again. Yunie oxox

Why do people want to learn English?

Let's think about the possible reasons why those for whom English is not their mother tongue should wish to learn it, not only in countries such as India, where it is a nativised language that performs institutional functions, but increasingly in Expanding Circle countries such as Brazil and China. In *World Englishes* pp 40-41 **Jennifer Jenkins** summarises and comments on the reasons **David Crystal** provides in 2003 in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*.

Rate these from 1 (highest) to 7 in terms of which you think are the most powerful reasons why a non-native speaker might want to learn English today.

English in China

Watch this video:

[youtube.com/watch?v=Nm-p_kMv_jg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nm-p_kMv_jg)

Make notes on the following questions.

- 1 Why did Chinese people not learn English up to the 1970s?
- 2 How and why did things change? Why do people now want to learn English?
- 3 What has changed about the English people now learn and why?
- 4 What concerns do some people have about the spread of English in China?

International Students at College – Where do they come from?

Research task

Talk to one of our international students. Find out what country they have come from.

- 1 Ask them about why they want to learn English.
 - Do this first as an open question. Classify what kinds of reason they mention.
 - Then use a document explaining Crystal's reasons, which you have expressed in a simple way, and get them to rate the reasons from their point of view.
- 2 Ask them to talk about a topic and record what they say. Listen back to it and prepare some brief feedback on some of the distinctive features of the student's English.
- 3 Ask the student what they have found difficult about learning English as a language.

The future of English

Extract from telegraph.co.uk ['English will fragment into 'global dialects''](#)

English will fragment into 'global dialects'

By Laura Clout

6:01PM GMT 05 Mar 2008

Traditional English is set to fragment into a multitude of dialects as it spreads around the world, a language expert claims.

Professor David Crystal, one of the world's foremost experts on English, said people will effectively have to learn two varieties of the language - one spoken in their home country, and a new kind of Standard English which can be internationally understood.

The English spoken in countries with rapidly-booming economies, such as India and China, will increasingly influence this global standard, he said.



Chinese students in an English class. Traditional English could one day become a family of languages, just as Latin once did

In future, users of global Standard English might replace the British English: "I think it's going to rain", with the Indian English: "I am thinking it's going to rain", Prof Crystal argues.

This could spell the end of the dominance of American English as the prevailing language of international affairs.

In their 2008 book *World Englishes: The Study of New Linguistic Varieties* **Mesthrie and Bhatt** use the term **English Language Complex** (first coined by McArthur) to describe the complexity of 21st century English with all its types and varieties. This list is available on pp 97-8 of Jenkins, J. (2009) *World Englishes*, London.

- 1 Take the slip(s) you have been given. Make sure you understand what kind of English it is referring to and can explain this to others. Find other people who have different slips to form a group. There are 12 slips to collect!
- 2 Discuss which of these varieties will have the most influence on the future of English and why. Will they be forces for the convergence of English varieties towards one global language or will they be forces for the divergence of varieties and the fragmentation of English?
- 3 Make an illustrated poster showing the range of types of English according to Mesthrie and Bhatt.

AS Component 2 Section B: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (AS): Specimen question paper** on aqa.org.uk/7702. Navigate to 'assess'.

Section B

Language Discourses

Answer the question in this section

0 3

Text B is the start of an article in which a newspaper columnist discusses a celebrity who changed her local accent.

Text B

Alreet pet, there's nowt wrong with trying to sound posh... JAN MOIR defends James Middleton's new girlfriend for dropping her Geordie accent

Excuse me, pet. What in the name of stottie cake has happened to Donna Air's accent? Interviewed on Daybreak television this week, the Geordie actress and personality appears to have mislaid the jaunty cadences of her native Newcastle somewhere on the road from La-Di-Dah to Snootsville.

'I'm just heah to talk about Cowes Week today,' she rather grandly told presenter Kate Garraway, who had been impertinent enough to ask Lady Donna d'Airs et Graces about her romance with James Middleton.



Airs and graces: Donna with James Middleton

Source: Daily Mail

Write an opinion article in which you discuss the issues surrounding people changing their accents. Before writing your article you should state your intended audience.

[40 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

A-level Component 2 Section B: question paper extract

This is from our **Paper 2 (A-level): Specimen question paper** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Section B

Language Discourses

Answer **both** Question 3 **and** Question 4 in this section.

0 3

Text A, printed on the insert, is a blog post about language change from The Guardian online. **Text B**, printed on page 3, is the start of an article about language change from The Daily Telegraph online.

Analyse how language is used in **Text A** and **Text B** to present views about the nature of language change. In your answer you should:

- examine any similarities and differences you find between the two texts
- explore how effectively the texts present their views.

[40 marks]

0 4

Write an opinion article about language change in which you assess the ideas and issues raised in **Text A** and **Text B** and argue your own views.

[30 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

A-level Component 2 Section B: insert

Text A (for Question 3 and Question 4)

Extract from theguardian.com '[How language is literally losing its meaning](#)'

theguardian
News | Sport | Comment | Culture | Business | Money | Life & style | Travel | Environment

News > Science > Language

SHORTCUTSBLOG

TRENDING TOPICS AND NEWS ANALYSIS

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How language is literally losing its meaning

The Oxford English Dictionary has accepted a new definition for the word literally – and it's not the only word changing beyond recognition. It's enough to, like, make one despair

[Email](#)


Posted by John Sutherland
Wednesday 14 August 2013 19.07 BST
The Guardian
[Jump to comments \(69\)](#)

[Article history](#)

Science
Language

Society
Social trends

UK news

More from Shortcuts on

Science
Language



'Historic'
Now tied to sex abuse scandals

'Like'
It, like, fills cracks in conversation

'Inappropriate'
Who knows what is proper these days?

It is literally the biggest semantics story of the week: the informal use of the word "literally" – as a term for emphasis when a statement isn't true – has been included as a definition in the Oxford English Dictionary. Writers have responded, protesting very convincingly that we are breaking up the English language – we are like so many monkeys tossing around a Ming vase, the richest cultural property we possess.

It's immeasurable, but unquestionably there is more written communication nowadays than there ever has been. Consequently, we don't handle language with care any more. Beyond "literally", there is a load of other peeves one encounters in modern communication, verbal and written. Each of them could be taken as another sign of endemic decay. The word whose mishandling I, on my part, feel sorriest for is "historic".

Traditionally, historic meant something grand and noble. For example, Tolstoy's declaration as to why we are all here: "Man lives consciously for himself, but is an unconscious instrument in the attainment of the historic, universal, aims of humanity." Or the following headline from a BBC report on the last, glorious, Test match: Ashes 2013: "Alastair Cook targets historic win in fifth Test at The Oval". It's the kind of word that traditionally gave you a warm glow.

But check out a slew of recent usages and you will find the word "historic" slimed by the poison berry juice of Scotland Yard's Operation Yewtree. Take, for example, the following from the Daily Telegraph of 18 July: "The Jimmy Savile scandal has fuelled hundreds of extra allegations about historic sex attacks, according to the Office for National Statistics." How could such unspeakable offenses against children be tied with Stuart Broad's historic bowling attack at Chester-le-Street, or with Tolstoy's "historic, universal aims of humanity"?

I also object to the suffix "like". It crops up everywhere nowadays in conversation. Rarely, if ever, in written exchanges. It's a kind of vocal lubricant, as in: "I went, like, and told him face to face, like, that, really, like, it's not my responsibility, etc. etc." What's this little linguistic slimeball doing? It fills cracks. In an ugly way.

"Innit?" (equally ugly to the ear) is interesting because English has no handy, and linguistically forceful, equivalent to the French "*n'est ce pas?*", or the German "*nicht wahr?*", that is, a kind of questioning tail piece to any declarative sentence that asks for assent, or dissent. The phrase "is that not the case?" is clumsy. I never hear the word "innit" without wishing we had some better way of doing what the Europeans do.

"Robust" is nowadays a word tossed about promiscuously by those inveterate trashers of language – politicians, government officials, and the spokespeople (shoot that damn word when you see it) of commerce. Too often, companies claim to operate "a robust program". Robust means sweet Fanny Adams here. What, God help one, is a "robust approval program"? A useful word (robust, even) has been annihilated and dragged in to express a kind of "we're gonna tough it out" mentality. A new acronym must be adopted: SOL. Save our literacy.

Society

Social trends

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Have we literally broken the English language?

Martha Gill: Well, no, but the redefinition of 'literally' leaves it in a rather awkward state. Perhaps it's a word best avoided for the moment

Literally – the much misused word of the moment

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Text B

Extract from telegraph.co.uk '[Meaning of 'literally' shrinking away](#)'

Home News World Sport Finance Comment **Culture** Travel Life Women Fashion
Film Music Art Books TV and Radio Theatre Comedy Dance Opera Photography

HOME » CULTURE

Meaning of 'literally' shrinking away

Inappropriate use of the word "literally" has become so commonplace it is now "epidemic", a leading author said yesterday.

By [John-Paul Ford](#)
[Rojas](#) 11:20AM
GMT 12 Mar 2012

Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, incorrectly used the word to describe high earners when he said in an interview with the Daily Telegraph: "You see people literally in a different galaxy who are paying extraordinarily low rates of tax."

Writer and comedian Paul Parry was scathing about the Deputy Prime Minister's slip. He told Today: "This is probably the worst thing Nick Clegg has ever done. He's just completely misusing the word."

He added: "It's not about pedantry, it's about communication. The key thing is the word 'literally' is a safe word.

"We've got a wonderful, floral language. You can say that you've got itchy feet, that you'd kill for a cup of coffee, that you'd bring the house down, that you've got a frog in your throat, but ultimately you need to be able to show that words have a literal meaning as well.

"There is no other word that means 'literally' and if the word 'literally's meaning is eroded by all this misuse then there is nothing to replace it and we'll get a lot more confusion."



Nick Clegg Photo: GETTY

A-level Component 2: Student response D and E

This is from our **Paper 2 (A-level): Student responses with examiner commentary** on [aqa.org.uk/7702](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7702). Navigate to 'assess'.

Student D

Question 3:

Text A, printed on the insert, is a blog post about language change from The Guardian online. Text B, printed on page 3, is the start of an article about language change from The Daily Telegraph online.

Analyse how language is used in Text A and Text B to present views about the nature of language change. In your answer you should:

- examine any similarities and differences you find between the two texts
- explore how effectively the texts present their views

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO3 (15 marks)

AO4 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 40

Student response

Text A is titled “How language is literally losing its meaning”. This alliterative, simple declarative sets up the blog post by using the adverb “literally” in the correct but playful way. Sutherland goes on to explain “The Oxford English Dictionary has accepted a new definition for the word literally – **and it’s not the only word changing beyond recognition.**” This compound, declarative sentence begins with a formal tone, but switches to more of a conversational tone in the **second independent clause** that is joined by the coordinating conjunction ‘and’. This paragraph ends with a simple sentence “It’s enough to, like make one despair”. The use of the verbal filler ‘like’ adds to the conversational tone that is carried throughout the post. It creates a sense of humour as this is the exact thing he discusses in the post. It’s like he is showing the reader how annoying it is to have ‘like’ cropping up in the middle of a sentence not being used for its original purpose.

“Writers have responded, protesting very convincingly that we are breaking up the English language – we are like so many monkeys tossing around a Ming vase, the richest cultural property we possess.” This complex sentence begins with the verb phrase “...have **responded, protesting very convincingly**...” The **verbs** and **adverbs** are doubled up suggesting that the writers think this is a very serious matter and therefore creating emphasis. It positions the writers above us, as prescriptivists, suggesting that they are against this change in the meanings and usage of certain words. However, language is always changing and always has. There is nothing we can do to stop changes creeping in and out of our idiolects. The use of the adverb phrase “very convincingly” suggests that the fact language is changing is a big problem and we are guilty of this crime. It leaves the reader wondering is it really a crime when words and meanings are changing all the time and always have changed?

Sutherland continues with a simile “**we are** like so many monkeys tossing around a ming vase...” The use of the **1st person plural pronoun and present tense verb** suggests that he is placing himself among the readers, suggesting that he also uses literally in a non-literal sense. However, he is also comparing us to monkeys, suggesting that we don’t care about the history or original meanings of words. He suggests that we are careless with language and are not preserving it like prescriptivists think we should be, as suggested by Jean Aitchison’s damp spoon metaphor. He’s comparing language to an historical and cultural Ming vase – something that is old and has history and needs to be preserved which can be explained by Aitchison’s crumbling castle metaphor. These metaphors are also explored in the next paragraph in the simple, declarative sentence “**Consequently**, we don’t handle language with care any more.” **The adverb** has been fronted to bring emphasis to the fact that we’ve become careless and because of this we are facing the consequences of language change. It makes language change appear to be a bad thing, even though language changed in the past and it wasn’t because of carelessness. Surely because there is more written language the consequence is us being more creative.

“**I never hear** the word “innit” without wishing we had some better way of doing what the Europeans do.” Sutherland makes a very abrupt point, which also seems a little harsh. He shows a high level of certainty with the **1st person singular pronoun and negative verb phrase**, allowing him to position himself away from the reader taking a prescriptive viewpoint. It suggests that he thinks the English most of us use is sloppy and embarrassing to him and that we could do better with English. The use of the verb “wishing” in the progressive aspect makes him appear almost jealous of other European languages seeing as French have the French Academy to help protect their language. It’s like he’s just upset as it comes across that he views the English language as messier than other European languages.

Sutherland ends the article with “A new acronym must be adopted: SOL. Save our literacy.” The first simple sentence is passive and therefore avoids addressing the imperative verb phrase “must be adopted” at anyone. It allows it to be presented in the form of a humorous idea, bringing the blog post to a light hearted close. Although it makes it seem a little less serious, the imperative still suggests that maybe we do need to take more care over language. It’s like Sutherland is longing for some kind of English equivalent to the French Academy.

Text B begins with a complex sentence that has omitted the subordinate conjunction (that) prior to the **subordinate clause**, “...“literally” has become so commonplace **it is now “epidemic”**...” The use of the present tense **verb phrase** suggests that usage of literally inappropriately is something that increased over time, as the adverb of time ‘now’ indicates to us that it’s currently a so called ‘problem’. The use of the hyperbolic, common noun ‘epidemic’ is used to suggest to us that it is like an infectious disease as suggested by Jean Aitchison’s metaphors. It suggests to the audience that the usage is so widespread and people have gradually started using it like they would catch a disease. It adds a sense of drama and highlights the problem.

It ends with the compound-complex sentence “**There is no other word that means ‘literally’** and if the word ‘literally’’s meaning is eroded by all this misuse then there is nothing to replace it and we’ll get a lot more confusion.” It begins with a **declarative main clause** to explain that there isn’t an exact synonym of ‘literally’. It conveys a high degree of certainty suggesting that this is a potential problem. Next there is a clause of condition, which suggests to the reader the possible outcome if we continue to use literally in a non- literal sense, which could push the reader to start thinking about the words they’re using and the context they use them in. The use of the verb ‘eroded’ suggests that we’re using ‘literally’ incorrectly so often that the original meaning is becoming slowly more and more worn away as a result and that maybe this careless use of the word is breaking down language and communication and causing confusion.

Student E

Question 4:

Write an opinion article about language change in which you assess the ideas and issues raised in Text A and Text B and argue your own views.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO2 (20 marks)

AO5 (10 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Student response

Language change over time has 'literally' been a rapid process, to the extent that it is hard to keep up with. The broadening of 'literally' will leave some quivering at the thought and it is a change that seems, to me, pointless. Giving a metaphorical meaning to the word we use to show that something is exact? Seems one big contradiction to me! In fact, the complete contrast in meanings is so counteracting that what is the point in the word at all? We are now living in a world of confusion with a daily challenge being whether to believe that, "literally a million" is fact or fiction.

Of course we should give the informal use of the word its time of day but what we should be focussing on is how this came to be in the first place. The meaning of the word getting so twisted that it'd become an antonym for itself is quite something to get your head around. It can be argued that this broadening is a means to an end and that it is on the track to becoming an archaism.

Unfortunately, 'literally' is not the first word to have a semantic change of heart, and yes I mean it is literally not the first. I'm sure your childhood memories of the cowboy heroes of Old Western's has been quashed by your very real, very adult fears of encountering a cowboy builder. This pejorative shift has much disappointment to account for.

For years we have been losing and gaining gems to our lexis. It can be argued that some we have acquired, through the media for example, make no cultural contribution to our society whatsoever. I would hate to have such a negative attitude towards a word but 'yolo' is a tragedy we cannot ignore. The acronym was made famous by Drake who thankfully, as far as I know, has left his lexical talents in the past. However, the word has its merits as we are able to see the influence media has even in the area of linguistics. It seems a fairly simple chain of events, people hear the song, use the word and others then use it too. This is a bottom up change and so it was not dictated upon us. Rather we, for some strange reason, chose to use it and bring it into common use.

It would be hard not to acknowledge the prescriptivist and descriptivist debate that acts as our own linguistic Eastenders – full of drama and arguments. Whilst I admit I am a stick in the mud over some, not all, grammatical and lexical elements, it would never be to the point

I'd call myself a prescriptivist. But if we meet, maybe at a suave dinner party, and engage in some intellectual discussion over the addition of the informal use of 'literally' to the Oxford English Dictionary, you would indeed call me a liar. The official acknowledgment of this use will encourage this meaning to overtake the original which is true madness to me. It is hard to imagine a world where literally nothing is exact.

Text: “Yes, we are judged on our accents”

Extract taken from theguardian.com [‘Yes, we are judged on our accents’](#)

I have altered how I speak to suit situations in the past, but I would never go full Eliza Doolittle and get rid of my Liverpool accent

[Hannah Jane Parkinson](#) - [theguardian.com](#), Thursday 22 January 2015

If a Liverpudlian child had aspirations to be a doctor, would the fact that he or she pronounced doctor as if spelt with four cs and not one be a hindrance? Before even buying the Fisher Price stethoscope, should parents take a surgical scalpel to slice out extraneous consonants and sharpen sloppy vowels?

[Esther McVey](#), the Liverpool-born employment minister, has said that [people should not feel the need to “neutralise” their accents](#) in order to get ahead in life. In a culture as obsessed with class as Britain, it’s a perennial debate. We all know that Lincolnshire lass Margaret Thatcher rubbed out her accent. The Telegraph once presented actual evidence that [Cherie Blair had undergone vocal coaching](#).

Does the taboo still exist? I too am from Liverpool, and the two most significant interviews I’ve had in life were for entrance to Oxford at 20, and the other to work at the Guardian. One was successful, the other less so (I’ll leave discerning readers to work out which was which).

Did I alter my accent during these interviews? At Oxford, I’m afraid to say I definitely did. Especially after the don suggested that as I was from Liverpool I had “come a long way”. I glowered at him and fired back that I lived just around the corner (I did), but I still felt like I’d been picked last for a game of fives.

As for the Guardian interview, well, there’s not much that is more intimidating than being interviewed by Alan Rusbridger. In that instance I was lucky just to get any words out at all.

I have never had a particularly strong Scouse accent, however – the result of a mother who was born an hour away from the city. However, this too can be a problem and has invited accusations of inauthenticity. In Liverpool I will be accused of being “posh” or mocked for saying “yah”. This happened in the girls’ football team I played with before I had even left the city, but it happens more often now as a returning Londoner.

There is also the matter of regional slang. I can go for months down south without uttering words I would frequently use in Liverpool, simply because people will not understand them. I would never say that something is [“arlarse”](#) down here, for example.

Words like “like”, used as an ellipsis, are even harder to shake. I’ve sort of replaced this with a Sloaney sounding “ohm” when I need to bide time, but it does sound as though I’m about to go into a Dharmic [religious chant](#).

It’s not just a British thing, however. We may be more gripped than most, but I do remember my stilted Russian being mocked by sophisticated Muscovites. I had learned it in the southern city of [Samara](#), so I basically sounded like a bumpkin.

So are McVey’s comments still pertinent? Yes, I think they are. I am grateful that [my pronunciation can’t always be pinned down](#), and that my vowel sounds slide around like a calf on ice. And that wouldn’t be the case if I never felt as though I was being judged.

I would never go full [Eliza Doolittle](#) though, and dispel my Scouse accent completely, because I wouldn't feel comfortable with fudging such an integral part of my identity (politicians with faux Estuary accents, take note).

Tomayto? Tomahto? I honestly don't care. In fact, I don't even really like tomatoes, however they're pronounced. Let's definitely call the whole thing off.

Text: "Are regional dialects dying out, and should we care if they are?"

The big question

BY TERRY KIRBY
CHIEF REPORTER

Are regional dialects dying out, and should we care if they are?

Why ask this now?

The British Library launches its Sounds Familiar website today, which is an archive of accents and dialects across the United Kingdom, designed to "capture and celebrate the diversity of spoken English in the second half of the 20th century". The website allows users to hear examples of dialects and accents from all over the country, including some recorded more than 50 years ago. The library hopes people will add their own contributions, to help expand the archive.

Are the nation's dialects dying out?

No, according to Jonnie Robinson, the curator of accents and dialects at the British Library sound archive, who says it is a popular misconception that distinctive regional voices are disappearing. Britain has a rich heritage of different accents and dialects - where else would you find the words "cob", "barm cake", "scuffer" and "bread cake" all meaning a bread roll? - which have their origins in the Anglo-Saxon era 1,500 years ago and which are now deeply embedded in our culture. But, as is well known, the English language is constantly changing. Due to a complex combination of influences, some words will inevitably disappear from common usage - who today uses "groovy" or "vagabond" non-ironically - only to be replaced by others - such as "char" - which become absorbed into the everyday lexicon.

Is there a difference between an accent and a dialect?

An accent is simply variations in pronunciation and the sound of words, while a dialect is speech that involves distinctive words and grammatical constructions. For instance, the word "muffin" is "nothing" with a Cockney accent, while "nowt" is the same word in a Yorkshire dialect.

Pronunciation of the word "bath", as the accompanying map shows, varies greatly around the country - with a short "a" mainly in the North, the drawn out "aa" sound in the South-east and the more rustic "ah" in the South-west and East Anglia. But accent and dialect can also be closely related: Geordie dialect words include ones such as "bairns" or "lass", while it is also possible speak with a Geordie accent, such as "all reet" instead of "all right".

British regional accents and dialects

Differences persist despite mass travel and communications

THE PRONUNCIATION OF 'BATH' ACROSS THE UK



Source: British Library

Where is there the greatest change?

The south-east of Britain has seen the greatest loss of variety with the encroachment of suburbia, so that the distinctive rural voices of parts of Oxfordshire, Suffolk and Kent, which were common 50 years ago, are heard no more. The influence of London, particularly due to commuting, has also minimised the distinctiveness of accents in other towns such as Reading and Oxford.

Other conurbations, such as Greater Manchester and the West Midlands have had a similar effect on satellite towns. In central London itself, the Cockney twang of the East End has been diluted by successive waves of

immigration and the dispersal of traditional communities since the Second World War.

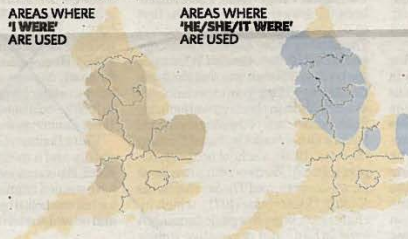
Rural areas with much less population movement have seen the least change - dialects and accents in regions such as South-west England, northern Scotland and Northern Ireland have remained relatively unaltered over the centuries. While in urban areas there is continual evolution.

What is RP?

Received Pronunciation is simply what has become the neutral accent of the middle classes, although since it is very rare in Scotland, unusual in Wales and dying out rapidly in Northern



THE 'WERE' MAP OF ENGLAND



Ireland, some argue that it should be described as an English, rather than British, accent. In linguistic terms it is a very young accent and was not in evidence when Dr Johnson wrote *A Dictionary of the English Language* in 1755. Its origins lie in the public schools and universities of the mid-19th century, who gave voice to the ruling classes of the Empire, leading to its subsequent spread downwards and adoption by the expanding middle classes of the early 20th century.

Originally called Public School Pronunciation, the term Received Pronunciation was first used by the phoneticist Daniel Jones in 1924. There is no such officially defined style of language as "The Queen's English" - although the British Library web-

site notes slyly that the Queen speaks an almost unique form of English. Only about 2 per cent of the population now speak RP. Estuary English, defined first in 1984, is deemed to be a hybrid of RP and South-eastern accents, often called "Mockney" and used by some, including Tony Blair, to give a more working-class slant to their speech.

What part does television play?

Today, probably a lot less than people think. The adoption of Received Pronunciation as the official style of speech by the BBC under Lord Reith in the 1920s was because he believed it would be the most widely understood

form of English in Britain and around the world. This accelerated the spread of RP as the standard form of speech for the middle classes and reinforced stereotypically negative perceptions of regional accents. Now the BBC is actively promoting regional accents among its broadcasters, too much for the tastes of some people, particularly the likes of Radio 4 listeners, who have objected to the erosion of RP usage.

What are the new influences?

Unquestionably the main ones have come from immigrant Asian and Caribbean communities, which settled in particular parts of Britain. Many such words began as limited dialect words but became universal. London-Jamaican, for instance, is predominantly a youthful dialect, which sometimes uses words where letters are transposed such as "aksing" for "asking" and has also given us "diss" (insult) and "nang" (cool).

Bradford-Asian, meanwhile, has introduced words derived from Hindi or Urdu such as "chuddies" (underpants) or "desi" meaning typically Asian. Birmingham Pakistanis gave us the word "balti", now the word for both a type of curry and the dish that it is served in, but most often used to denote a "bucket".

The use of the interrogative "innit" at the end of the sentence has been attributed to the influx of both Asian and Caribbean words, but may have spread so rapidly because it has similarities with speech patterns among people in Wales and South-west England.

Does it matter if you speak with a regional accent?

It used to be widely believed that you could not get a job in the BBC, or the upper reaches of the Civil Service and the City, if you had a regional accent. While there were never any strict rules about this, it was undeniable that a certain type of Oxbridge-educated Englishman, who would naturally have spoken with RP, tended to dominate the professional classes up until recently. But in today's more diverse, pluralistic society, and thanks to the influence of ethnic minorities, regional - and ethnic - accents are more celebrated than ever.

Sounds Familiar is at www.bl.uk/soundsfamiliar

A changing language

Old words

- **Hadaway** - traditional Geordie (Tyne-side) expression for "get away" or "you must be joking"
- **Cob** - one of many different regional words, this one is from Derby, for a simple bread roll
- **Crone** - a type of hook, used to drag weeds out of ditches and used only around parts of East Anglia

New words

- **Chav** - originally Romany slang from Kent (chavi, meaning child), it may also derive from the Spanish "chaval", meaning lad
- **Chuddies** - Hindu word for underpants, popularised by the comedy *Goodness Gracious Me*
- **Balti** - originated from the Spaldwick area of Birmingham, it refers to a type of curry named after the wolf-style dish it was served in

Teaching material: Language discourses: language variation

Activity 1: deductions and contextualisations

- What deductions can you make about this text?
- What patterns or connections can you see amongst these words?
- Write a paragraph about accents using some of these phrases.
- Now find them in the passage. How are they being used there?

working class accent	able to assume their	thoughtful, intelligent
help	accents	and well-educated
hinder	easily	speaks like a lager lout
fool	put on a dinner jacket.	head-butts people in
upper-class accents	quickly drop	pubs
has assumed	advantage	keeps 10 Alsatians in
the peculiarly new	more classless people	horrible conditions in
accent	this odd, hybrid accent	his backyard
luckily	Transclass	a universal accent
wish	far more useful	an impeccable accent
like Eurocheques.	talking to	spout total bilge
access	builders	sound like Lady Muck
almost anywhere	matey	snobbish graciousness
still	snobby	horrible barrier
some pockets	rich young trustafarians	affectionate
old, posh accents	a vocabulary of 10	relationships.
matter	words	has escaped this self-
the very old and grand a	ghastly grammar	destructive trap.
certain kind of bone-	designed to drive their	not a hindrance
headed, landed young	parents bonkers	it's a gift.

Activity 2: identifying different views in a text

Using different colours, underlining and +/- highlight:

- The mother's views
- Virginia Ironside's views
- Comments about RP – positive and negative
- Comments about the new accents – positive and negative.

What linguistic ideas and research can you link the views expressed in this article?

Extract from independent.co.uk '[Dilemmas: I hate my son's working-class accent](#)'

Dilemmas: I hate my son's working-class accent with Virginia Ironside

Chloe sent her son to a private school to get the best education. Now he and his friends are going to university, but they have very different accents to Chloe and her husband. Will a working-class accent help or hinder him in the future?

VIRGINIA'S ADVICE

The truth about the working-class accents of private schoolchildren, is that they fool only some. Listen carefully, and you can usually tell that here is a person from a family that speaks in upper-class accents, who has assumed a working-class accent for his or her own reasons. The peculiarly new accent is luckily one that can be spotted only by those of us poor souls who are riddled with class, whose wincing at the word "toilet" is something over which we have no control.

But I'm all for these new accents and only wish I had one myself. Because they are like Eurocheques. They give you access almost anywhere.

There are still some pockets of English society in which old, posh accents matter. Among the very old and grand, for instance; and among a certain kind of bone-headed, landed young. But Chloe's son will be able to assume their accents as easily as he'll be able to put on a dinner jacket. He'll quickly drop the "like" and "if ya know wha' I mean" if he thinks it's to his advantage. At the same time, with more classless people he can assume this odd, hybrid accent. It's not transatlantic, but it's transclass, far more useful. When talking to builders (and I don't mean posh builders called Hugo), Chloe's son can be matey with them without appearing snobby.

But Chloe's son has developed this accent not just to appear classless. It's difficult, these days, for children to rebel against their parents, who have lived through sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. Accent, however, is something else. It's one way they can really get their parents' backs up. There are no end of rich young trustafarians who speak as if they have a vocabulary of 10 words, with ghastly grammar such as "We was walking..." purposely designed to drive their parents bonkers.

But Chloe shouldn't worry. If her son is thoughtful, intelligent and well-educated, who cares what his accent is? Just because he speaks like a lager lout, it doesn't follow that he head-butts people in pubs and keeps 10 Alsatians in horrible conditions in his backyard. Far better to have a universal accent, than have an impeccable accent and spout total bilge from morning to night.

I myself am constantly aware of class differences; since it was hammered into me since I was born, I find it fantastically hard to shed, however much I loathe it. When I try to treat people of a different class equally I sound like Lady Muck, full of a kind of snobbish graciousness. I see it as a horrible barrier to affectionate relationships. Chloe should be glad her son has escaped this self-destructive trap. His language makes people more at ease with him, and also makes him more at ease with other people. It is not a hindrance; it's a gift.



Accent Reduction

Is your accent holding you back? Do you have the right qualifications and experience to get ahead but feel you are not taken seriously because of the way you sound? Are you frustrated at continually being asked to repeat yourself? If so, our accent reduction training can help.

We will show you how to modify your speech into Received Pronunciation (RP) - the standard accent often heard on the BBC. We will show you the difference between your own accent and RP, and we will explain the precise changes you need to make.

Our clients often find that with a softer accent they become easier to understand and sound more authoritative and professional.

This elocution training is equally useful whether English is your first or your second language.

Learn to hear and feel a new pattern of sounds

The first step in learning a new accent is understanding the sounds and being able to replicate them. This means listening very carefully and noticing the differences between your own sounds and that of the RP accent.

We will explain how to put your tongue, jaw and lips and soft palate into positions which make RP sounds. This will not feel natural at first, but with practice it will eventually become easy and habitual.

Softening your accent is rather like learning to drive a car. At first you have to look down to change gear; you think about putting your foot on the clutch and looking in the mirrors. But the more you drive the more natural it becomes, until one day you no longer have to think about it.

Training sessions

Simply Speaking accent reduction training usually takes place on a one-to-one basis, ensuring that



‘The British are today particularly sensitive to variations in the pronunciation of their language. The ‘wrong’ accent may still be an impediment.’

Activity 3: Analysing the experiential values of the text – how the writer represents language and associated issues

- Analyse how Simply Speaking present their views about accents and changing accents.
- Highlight the key words in the quotations.
- Write a TEA sentence to describe the features of language and how they convey their views. How are the ideas presented persuasively and authoritatively?

Accent reduction	
You are not taken seriously because of the way you sound?	
Is your accent holding you back?	
Received Pronunciation (RP) – the standard accent often heard on the BBC	
A softer accent	
Easier to understand and sounds more authoritative and professional.	
Softening your accent is rather like learning to drive a car.	

Activity 4: Analysing the expressive values of the text – how the writer constructs their position of authority and social identity

- How does the company present itself?
- What AO1 descriptions help analyse this self-presentation?

Quotation	AO1 features	Comment
<i>If so, our accent reduction training can help</i>		
<i>We will show you</i>		
<i>Our clients often find</i>		
<i>The first step in learning</i>		
<i>How to put your tongue, jaw and lips and soft palate into positions</i>		
<i>Softening your accent is rather like learning to drive a car</i>		

Activity 5: Analysing the relational values of the text – how the writer addresses the reader and positions them

- How does the writer address the reader?
- How does the writer make the text accessible and entertaining for the reader?
- How does the writer shape the reader's response?

Quotation	Analysis
Do you have the right qualifications and experience to get ahead but feel you are not taken seriously	
explain the precise changes you need to make	
whether English is your first or your second language	
But the more you drive the more natural it becomes, until one day you no longer have to think about it	

Activity 6: Evaluating the ideas in a text

- What points would you make to support the idea of losing your accent and learning to speak RP?
- What other courses of action could be taken? What points are there in support of them?

Term planner

Term 1a

Term 1b

Term 2a

Term 2b

Term planner

Term 3a

Term 3b

Term 4a

Term 4b

Term planner

Term 5a

Term 5b

Term 6a

Examiner commentaries on exemplar student responses

Student A

Analyse how Text A uses language to create meanings and representations.

This answer offers some close analysis of parts of Text A but tends to be rather vague in its discussion of meanings and there is very little at all on representation. The balance of marks in this question (15 for AO3 and 10 for AO1) would suggest that a student should concentrate more on exploring what is discussed and how ideas are expressed than this response has done. Also, the student has focused quite narrowly on the language in the posts and not on the surrounding text and design. Students answering this question are encouraged to discuss the **whole** text rather than just some parts of it.

AO1: There is some identification of word classes (pronouns, adjectives), some word class types (conjunction types), sentence functions and some sentence and clause work in one section. There are errors in labelling but it is mostly accurate. The spread of achievement – solidly level 3, with some Level 4 and a touch of level 5 – would suggest a mark in Level 4.

AO3: This is much less secure and there are some quite large gaps in what this student has done. However, they do manage to talk about the audience, some of the address used in the text and some of the contextual characteristics of the webpage. What is missing is any real sense of how experiences are being expressed and how the posters feel. There is very little on the ways in which the web page itself represents a community (although there are some hints of this in the answer). This response probably ceilings at the low end of Level 3.

Student B

Evaluate the idea that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication.

This is a response that shows some knowledge of the topic and a clear engagement with the issues around gender and communication. There are gaps in the answer – a lack of detailed examples and a lack of clear definition of the terms in the question – but many strengths too.

For AO1, the structure is sound, the expression clear and generally effective. There is a clear attempt to develop a line of argument. The linguistic register is appropriate and there are few errors. This would be a secure Level 4.

For AO2, the student has written with some knowledge about different models for gender study: deficit, difference, dominance (and some diversity). These are illustrated on occasion, but some longer examples – either drawn from existing studies, from the student's own investigations or case studies looked at in class – would have been helpful. Also, the lack of a clear definition of 'miscommunication' at the start of the answer prevents the student from investigating and challenging some of the assumptions inherent in it. There are some good moments of evaluation and some awareness of the need to weigh up different approaches and assess their validity. The answer displays the characteristics of most of Level 3 and many of Level 4 so would probably be a sound Level 4 mark.

Positives:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows detailed knowledge of different models. • Offers some effective evaluation of different models. • Some references to case studies (O’Barr & Atkins, Zimmerman & West) • Offers examples of language features and alternative interpretations concerning their use. • Starts to evaluate the different positions in light of recent work on gender. • Some wider variables are mentioned (class, status, power) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Miscommunication’ could have been defined from the start. • Some explanations and evaluations would benefit from greater clarity of expression. • More specific and contextualized examples could have been used sooner (including slightly longer examples of speech). • Some evaluation isn’t developed sufficiently to offer a challenge or critique to polarized models of male and female talk. • Some models are taken at face value, without enough sense of how they might be limited by treating men and women as homogeneous groups.

Student C

Evaluate the idea that spoken interactions between men and women are characterised by miscommunication.

This is an effective and well-argued response that offers some detailed knowledge, evaluation of different models and an intelligent overview of the topic.

For AO1, the expression is generally organised and clear, with an appropriately linguistic register and some shaping of the overall structure to address the demands of the question. There are infelicities in places and some ideas are not as clearly expressed as they might have been, lessening the impact of the evaluation at times. It would probably achieve a Level 4 mark for AO1.

For AO2, there is some clear discussion of alternative models (difference, deficit and diversity), although these are not always labelled as such. The answer moves rapidly through the Levels for AO2 and achieves most elements of Levels 3 and 4 and some of Level 5. While the overall approach is evaluative and exploratory, there are few specific examples to begin with and this is an area that would need to be improved to secure a higher mark. Examples do appear later on and they are assessed and interpreted with some insight. There is detailed knowledge of different ideas and some reference to individual studies, but some more specific examples could have been quoted and some other studies mentioned. Overall, this would be a borderline Level 4/5 for AO2. It has many strengths and few weaknesses, but might not achieve a high Band 5 because of the lack of examples.

Positives:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts well by defining terms from the title and concludes well by returning to 'miscommunication' • Shows detailed knowledge of different models. • Challenges polarized notions of male and female difference. • Offers examples of language features and alternative interpretations concerning their use. • Shows the beginnings of a conceptualized understanding about how social contexts can influence views about gender and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some explanations and evaluations would benefit from greater clarity of expression. • More specific and contextualized examples could have been used sooner (including slightly longer examples of speech). • As well as models and ideas, specific case studies (Goodwin, McElhinney, Coates) might have also been discussed.

Student D

Text A, printed on the insert, is a blog post about language change from The Guardian online. Text B, printed on page 3, is the start of an article about language change from The Daily Telegraph online.

Analyse how language is used in Text A and Text B to present views about the nature of language change. In your answer you should:

- **examine any similarities and differences you find between the two texts**
- **explore how effectively the texts present their views**

This is a perceptive and analytical response to the question that scores very highly for AO1 and AO3 but is undermined by the lack of explicit comparison across the two texts (for AO4).

For AO1, the analysis is precise and focused, with good exemplification of a range of language features from word classes through to phrase types, sentence types and clauses, as well as explicit discussion of positioning. It would be a good Level 5 for AO1. In terms of expression, it is very accurately written, but perhaps a little lacking in some cohesion between paragraphs. A more signposted structure navigating between ideas in the two texts might have helped make this a top mark in AO1 and allowed more discussion of the two texts together for AO4.

For AO3, this is slightly less secure than AO1 as some of the explanations of effects are not absolutely clear. Overall, there is a clear grasp of how both texts create meanings and express viewpoints, with some good focus on modality and persuasiveness (touches of Level 5) and how English is represented as a cultural artefact (Level 4), but overall this would probably have enough depth and understanding to be awarded a mark at the top end of Level 4. While many language features are discussed, they are not always linked closely to meaning (eg referring to a sentence/clause but then only discussing the idea, not the effect of the linguistic choice in conveying the idea) and this prevents the answer from entering Level 5.

For AO4, while there is clear understanding of the different discourses (Aitchison’s crumbling castle and infectious disease) and a good grasp of how each text is placed within these discourses, there is no explicit comparison or discussion of the two texts’ shared concerns and themes. This makes it a difficult answer to fit into the higher levels of the mark scheme. Level 1 (2 marks) states in one of its descriptors that students will “write about both texts separately”, so Level 1 is where it would go. In questions such as this, with an AO4 component, it would definitely be a good idea to encourage students to adopt a structure that allows them to pull together ideas from the texts and treat those together, rather than treat the texts side by side and separately. Alternatively, encouraging students to at least have an overview paragraph towards the end, in which different themes and techniques are pulled together, might be another way of addressing AO4, but to achieve a high mark there must be explicit comparison and evaluation.

Positives:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very clear and focused language analysis across all levels. • Clear and effective use of examples. • Strong appreciation of authors’ language choices, positioning and key ideas. • Grasps tone and irony. • Places texts in their wider discourses and engages with how individual language features contribute to these wider discourses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student could have compared texts and structured essay to allow more obvious evaluation of different ideas and language devices. • More signposting and grouping of ideas might have helped, rather than a paragraph by paragraph structure. • Some consideration of the placement of the texts, their design, mode and existence in an online context where debate and discussion are encouraged would perhaps offer a broader context to the whole discussion.

Student E

Write an opinion article about language change in which you assess the ideas and issues raised in Text A and Text B and argue your own views.

This is a serious (if brief) attempt to address the question and write in an op-ed form, but it falls short of being a successful response. As a result, it offers a few useful pointers for teachers and students about addressing a task like this.

AO2: There is evidence of some knowledge of arguments around language change and the prescriptive versus descriptive model, but there is a lack of clear explanation and development of these ideas. Some, but not all, of Level 2 is addressed (some examples of language change and some discussion of how language change occurs) but there is a lack of detailed knowledge on show. To reach Level 3 or above, this would need to consider a wider range of ideas, not just ‘literally’ and its changing meanings, but some of the other examples provided in Texts A and B and the bigger linguistic ideas behind them. There is some discussion of the author’s own view of change (a touch of Level 3) and a mention of a cause of language change (popular culture and music) but little beyond this. As a result, it would probably stay in Level 2 at the top end of the band; it is not fulfilling all of Level 2 but does have flashes of level 3.

AO5: The writer shapes some sentences effectively and has clearly tried to engage and interest the audience with wit and style. This would suggest moments of Level 3 achievement in places, but there is also a tendency to leave technical terms unclear for the non-specialist audience ('lexis', 'prescriptivist', 'descriptivist' and 'broadening'). It would be much better to gloss these for the audience. The lack of headline and subeditorial features is also an issue. When writing an opinion piece, these are not just added extras or a question of making the text "look the part", but essential features of structure and style. To establish a clear voice (as the writer attempts) requires some sense of who the writer is and where the piece is appearing, along with a clear sense of where they are going with the article. These are lacking and it would be a good idea to work with students to make sure they have studied style models and are ready to use subeditorial features for texts like this. The student has included some nice touches of style but these are offset by lapses in clarity and accuracy. Overall, this would probably secure a high Level 2 mark, but an answer like this would struggle to be rewarded more highly without clearer shaping, structure and clarity for a non-specialist audience.

Positives:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Text A and B examples. • Responds to some issues of language change. • Writes (mostly) with clarity and some engaging style. • Uses some of own examples & offers opinion. • Starts to discuss debates about language (prescriptivism vs. descriptivism). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short and undeveloped. • Doesn't use headline or other subeditorial features. • Doesn't gloss technical vocabulary for audience. • Lapses in clarity & accuracy at times. • Doesn't range very widely. • Doesn't address wider language issues connected to change (how it happens, why it happens etc).

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