Assessment guide: Using legacy texts and building your own mark schemes

This resource shows you how a teacher might create a mark scheme using legacy texts. We have designed it to be a starting point for you and a stimulus to help you build your own mark schemes.

One of the ways to prepare students for Component 1 of the new AS is to use texts from the old AQA A and B specifications with the new format of questions. In this example, a teacher has used the two texts about elephants taken from the June 2013 ENGA1 paper and set this as an assignment for their students.

The teacher has also started putting together a mark scheme based on these texts. There are blanks where most of the indicative content would normally appear. You can work with students, the sample mark schemes and the old mark scheme for ENGA1 to identify the kinds of things that you think should appear in each level for each of the AOs and questions. For example, by looking at the indicative content at Level 5 for AO3 on Question 2 you can see that "explore the self-representation of participants" has been placed by the teacher in the top level. What else would sit alongside this at Level 5 for this spoken text? Which characteristics and features of the text might appear in the Levels below?

Examples of indicative content for each AO and each question have been provided (presented in italics) to get you started.

AS English Language major assignment

Text A is from the World Wildlife Fund website.

Text B is a transcript of part of a conversation between two sisters, Carol and Lucy, and their respective husbands, Martin and Jim.

Question 1

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

(25 marks. AO1 10 marks; AO3 15 marks)

Question 2

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

(25 marks. AO1 10 marks; AO3 15 marks)

Question 3

Compare and contrast Text A and Text B, showing ways in which they are similar and different in their language use.

(AO4 20 marks)

Question 1

Level/Marks	PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS	INDICATIVE CONTENT
AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		
		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: • 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:* • *clause linking* • *antithesis*
Level 4 7–8	Students will: • apply linguistic methods and terminology with precision and detail • apply two or more levels of language analysis • apply levels of language analysis with occasional errors • develop a line of argument	*Students are likely to describe features such as:* • *tenses: present, past* • *voice*

Level 3 5–6	Students will: • apply linguistic methods and terminology consistently and appropriately • label features that have value for the task • label features with more accuracy than inaccuracy • communicate with clear topics and paragraphs	*Students are likely to describe features such as:* • *word classes: verbs, adjectives, nouns*
Level 2 3–4	Students will: • use linguistic methods and terminology inconsistently and sometimes without value for the task • generalise about language use with limited/unclear evidence • label features with more inaccuracy than accuracy • express ideas with organisation emerging	*Students are likely to:* • *make unsupported generalisations about nature of sentences* • *discuss formality, complexity at a generalised level*
Level 1 1–2	Students will: • quote or identify features of language without linguistic description • present material with limited organisation	*Students are likely to:* • *quote relevant examples without any linguistic examples*
Level 0 0	Nothing written	

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: • explore use of language and representations according to context	*Students are likely to:* • *explore how threat to elephants is represented (eg "the magnificent Asian elephant is threatened by extinction in the wild")* • *explore the use of spoken language elements in a written form*
Level 4 10–12	Students will: • analyse how language choices create meanings and representations • analyse how aspects of context work together to affect language use	*Students are likely to:* • *analyse how audience is positioned eg "Last minute gift?" and "Help us..."*

Level 3 7–9	Students will: • interpret significance of specific choices of language according to context • link specific language choices with an aspect of context	*Students are likely to:* • *describe use of interactive features eg "Choose a monthly amount", "Adopt now"*
Level 2 4–6	Students will: • identify distinctive features of language and significant aspects of context	*Students are likely to:* • *identify different potential audiences and use of serious message with cuddly toys*
Level 1 1–3	Students will: • paraphrase or describe content of texts • misunderstand text or context	*Students are likely to:* • *give factual information about elephants*
Level 0 0	Nothing written	

Question 2

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: • 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:* • *discourse structure of the interaction* • *narrative structure*
Level 4 7–8	Students will: • apply linguistic methods and terminology with precision and detail • apply two or more levels of language analysis • apply levels of language analysis with occasional errors • develop a line of argument	*Students are likely to describe features such as:* • *tenses: present, past*

Level 3 5–6	Students will: - apply linguistic methods and terminology consistently and appropriately - label features that have value for the task - label features with more accuracy than inaccuracy - communicate with clear topics and paragraphs	*Students are likely to describe features such as:* *word classes: verbs, adjectives, nouns* *interaction features of dialogue (eg confirmation checks/tag questions, backchannelling)*
Level 2 3–4	Students will: - use linguistic methods and terminology inconsistently and sometimes without value for the task - generalise about language use with limited/unclear evidence - label features with more inaccuracy than accuracy - express ideas with organisation emerging	*Students are likely to:* *make generalisations about nature of sentences and utterances* *refer to pauses and micropauses*
Level 1 1-2	Students will: - quote or identify features of language without linguistic description - present material with limited organisation	*Students are likely to:* *quote relevant examples without any linguistic examples*
Level 0 0	Nothing written	

AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning in Text B		
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: • explore use of language and representations according to context	Students are likely to: • explore the self-representation of participants
Level 4 10–12	Students will: • analyse how language choices create meanings and representations • analyse how aspects of context work together to affect language use	Students are likely to: • analyse how participants position themselves and address each other

Level 3	Students will:	Students are likely to:
7–9	• interpret significance of specific choices of language according to context • link specific language choices with an aspect of context	• *describe features eg simultaneous speech and how they are used*
Level 2 4–6	Students will: • identify distinctive features of language and significant aspects of context	*Students are likely to:* • *identify some different opinions*
Level 1 1–3	Students will: • paraphrase or describe content of texts • misunderstand text or context	*Students are likely to:* • *give factual information about elephants and holiday*
Level 0 0	Nothing written	

Question 3

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods		
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: • explore the significance of connections found across texts	*Students are likely to:* • *explore effects of internet and spoken contexts on language use, representations and meanings*
Level 4 13-16	Students will: • examine connections between texts by linking language and context	*Students are likely to:* • *examine internet context of A and visual presentation compared to spoken context of B*

Level 3 9-12	Students will: • make connections across texts by identifying similar or different uses of language/content/context	*Students are likely to:* • *compare use of first, second and third-person discourses* • *describe degrees of interactivity*
Level 2 5-8	Students will: • make connections at a literal level	*Students are likely to:* • *compare audiences/listeners* • *compare topics*
Level 1 1–4	Students will: • discuss relevant aspects of texts without making connections explicitly	*Students are likely to:* • *make one/two explicit connections (4)* • *make implicit connections by using similar topics for paragraphs (3)* • *write about each text separately (2)* • *write about one text only (1)*
0	Nothing written about the text or topic	