

Specimen question and mark scheme commentary

AS English Language and Literature Paper 2 (7706/2), Section B, Re-creative writing

This resource explains how the question in the specimen assessment materials for AS Paper 2, Section B, Re-creative writing, addresses the assessment objectives, with some suggestions as to how each task might be approached. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every point that could be made, but it provides teachers and students with some guidance that will support their work on this paper. In addition, this resource is designed to help teachers and students engage with the specimen mark scheme to understand how it will be applied by our examiners. This will be useful when preparing for examination. Furthermore, the information provided here will help teachers to create their own questions and mark schemes for use in the classroom.

Engaging with the question: Question 2

Refer to Text A from [*The Most Beautiful Walk in the World: A Pedestrian in Paris* by John Baxter.]

Recast this as {the section of the Café Danton's website where the cafe's location in Paris is described.}

You should consider:

- what will appeal to visitors about the location
- how the local area might best be described
- the use of an appropriate register for the task.

You should write about 200 words.

The re-creative question will be based on one of the two extracts from the *AQA Anthology: Paris* selected as the focus of comparison in Section A. There will be

no choice of re-creative writing task. In this question students will be asked to write in a genre (excluding spontaneous speech) that is represented in the AQA Anthology: Paris but the emphasis should be on producing the copy with the spirit of the genre conventions recognised in the discourse structure rather than in the signalling of layout intentions.

The question will ask them to recast the base text into a new genre, with a likely different audience and purpose either specified or implied by the wording of the question. In the specimen question the specified genre is a **website**, the audience of **visitors** is identified in the first bullet point and the **persuasive** purpose is suggested by the direction to consider 'what might appeal' and 'how the local area might best be described'. The wording of future questions will also give students directions to the suggested focus of their re-creative writing and the adaptation of the base text in the instruction 'you should consider' and the following bullet points that offer direction and guidance.

The command word, "recast", makes it clear what students need to do in this question, and this is a word with which they should be familiar from their studies for the specification and their work on this kind of task. Students are also given some additional guidance in the form of two bullet points which they should consider in their re-creative decisions. These bullet points will have been carefully selected and worded to give further direction to the students' writing. The third bullet point that directs students to consider the use of an appropriate register for the task will appear every series. Clearly they can call upon all of their study of Paris the *AQA Anthology: Paris* to inform their re-creative choices.

Furthermore, a suggested word count of 200 words is also given, which will assist students in structuring and planning their answers appropriately within the time constraints of the task.

How the question addresses the Assessment Objectives

The sole Assessment Objective assessed Question 2 is A05 (15 marks) and this is made clear to candidates through the question wording.

A05 is pointed to through the command word 'recast' which foregrounds to students that they are required to adapt the base text but use this as a starting point. This is the second strand of A05 assessed.

The question will also specify the genre for the students' own re-creative writing, in addition to any particular focus on Paris. The additional bullet points also give strong pointers to aspects students might consider in their re-creative writing. These all direct students to the first strand of A05

assessed, where the creation of a new and original piece of writing as suitable for the context they have been given is rewarded.

The third bullet point also directs the students to A05, advising them to consider the appropriate register for the specific task; this is the third strand of A05 assessed in this task..

How the Assessment Objectives apply to Question 2

A05: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

The three distinct dimensions of creativity for A05 here are:

- creation of a new and original piece of writing
- use of the base text as a starting point/springboard
- control of any chosen style/s.

To meet this Assessment Objective overall, students will need to demonstrate creativity in their use of English in this recasting task and will have the opportunity to show originality and flair in their deployment of structures and linguistic strategies. They will need to demonstrate how they can take the base text as a starting point and make the new text their own through their creative input.

Engaging with the mark scheme

A05:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

In these questions, students are assessed on their creativity in carrying out a writing task.

Creativity is assessed via the following dimensions:

- creation of a new and original piece of writing
- use of the base text as a starting point/springboard
- control of any chosen style/s

Awarding at the different levels (1-5) for the *first strand* will be based on the success of students' re-creative writing and the degree of flair and crafting of their own writing that they demonstrate.

For the *second strand*, the ways that they use and adapt aspects of the base text is being rewarded with more derivative and over-reliance on the base text placing the writing at the lower levels of the mark scheme, and more successful manipulation and re-shaping of the base texts rewarded in the higher levels.

The *third strand* of A05 rewards, at the higher levels, the ability to sustain the register(s) the student has selected as appropriate for the re-creative writing task. At the lower levels, students are likely to have made a less successful choice of register(s) and/or are unable to maintain their choice of register(s) consistently throughout their writing.

All three strands are assessed together so a 'best fit' approach will be taken to rewarding the students for their re-creative writing. Each level has three marks within it to take into account whether students either meet all the criteria for that specific level or whether they are more or less successful in meeting one or more of the descriptors for that level.

There is no rubric infringement for not meeting the 200 word guidance but going significantly below the suggested word count will be self-limiting as it will be less easy to display the creative skills required by the task. Going significantly above the word guidance may also impact on time and students would be advised to consider the implications of not completing the commentary given that this is worth more marks than the re-creative writing.

The indicative content for the specimen paper proposes that students may:

- use genre conventions associated with websites
- use sub-headings
- recognise that the purpose is to persuade visitors
- present the location positively and gloss over negative ideas
- recast the negatives into positives e.g. the ways in which the base text describes the walkers
- make selections to include / exclude information from the base text in their

Engaging with the question: Question 3

Identify four specific examples of language in your writing and explain your reasons for using them.

In your commentary you should:

- consider the importance of purpose, audience, mode and genre in your language choices
- consider how you have used language to shape your intended meaning
- structure your writing clearly to express your ideas.

You should write about 200 words

Drawing on their re-creative writing for Question 2, students write a critical commentary to evaluate their writing. The question itself will always remain the same and it will always contain the same wording for the bullet points. The choice of language features is up to the students to ensure that they explain the what, the how and the why of the construction of the new text, focusing on the critical decisions made to achieve it and the adaptation of the base text.

Students are required to write about four *different* language features in their response. 'Language feature' here means a specific example of language that they have chosen to use at any of the language levels (grammar, lexis, discourse and so on). These should have been consciously chosen by the student with particular interpretative effects in mind, and consequently allow them to explain why they included them. Whilst it would be acceptable for students to comment on isolated language choices, particularly when they are used in striking and clearly intentional ways, students should also be aware of and write about how they create textual cohesion through patterns of language use. This means that they could comment both on one single use of the passive voice for effect and on the use of various pronouns across their writing as examples of one 'language feature'.

The command word 'identify' directs students to select, make choices and indicate in their commentary the four examples of language features they will discuss. The command word 'explain' directs students to give reasons for these choices of language features.

Students are also given some additional guidance in the form of a suggested word count (200 words), which will help students to plan and structure their writing more easily within the time constraints of the task.

How the question addresses the Assessment Objectives

The AOs assessed in this question are A02, A03 and A05 (A02 5 marks, A03 10 marks and A05 (5 marks).

This is made clear to students through the question wording.

- A02 is pointed to through 'identify four different examples of language features in your writing', 'explain your reasons for using them' and the second bullet point 'consider how you have used language to shape your meaning'
- A03 is also pointed to through the instruction to 'explain your reasons for using them' and the first bullet point 'consider the importance of purpose, audience, mode and genre in your language choices'
- A05 is pointed to through the third bullet point 'structure your writing clearly to express your ideas' and in the suggested word count (200 words) that directs students to plan and structure their writing within this frame of an approximate word limit.

The weighting of A03 is also signalled by the focus on specific contextual factors offered as a detailed list (purpose, audience, mode and genre) in the first bullet point.

How the Assessment Objectives apply to Question 3

A02: Analyse the ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.

There are two strands to this Assessment Objective:

- selecting and identifying different language features
- evaluating the choices they made.

This task requires students to identify four specific examples of language in their writing and explain their reasons for using them. Here A02 relates to the students' ability to explain the decisions they made in reshaping the material, their own language choices and how they intended these to both create and contribute to meaning. The recasting task has required students to reshape material and as such to reshape meanings, so the commentary provides the ideal opportunity for them to analyse the ways in which they have reshaped these meanings. Students will be able to pick out structures, linguistic strategies and devices used in their reshaping of material and explain their reasons for using them. They will be able to explore their own crafting as a writer and evaluate the varied choices they have made.

A03: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received.

This Assessment Objective accounts for 50% of the marks for the question and so students need to explore the significance of contextual factors surrounding production and reception in relation to their writing task. They are specifically asked to consider the effects of purpose, audience, mode and genre but should also consider other relevant aspects of the contexts of production and reception relevant to their new text. For example, in acknowledging the importance of this AO students should find relevant links between the examples of language features they are discussing to contextual factors.

A05: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

Through their critical commentary, students will need to be able to demonstrate expertise in the use of English. Students should aim to produce a commentary which is cohesive, concise and complete, to demonstrate complete control of an appropriate style, and to write accurately

Engaging with the mark scheme

A02:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

This relates to the students' ability to explain the decisions they made in reshaping the material, their own language choices and how they intended these to both create and contribute to meaning.

The mark scheme shows that this assesses two distinct strands:

- selecting and identifying different language features
- evaluating the choices they made.

Students' consideration of these two strands combined will help determine the level they are awarded. There is only one mark per band. Although the

Assessment Objectives is separated into two strands, the overarching descriptor at each level distinguishes between the quality of the accounts of the features selected: 'perceptive' (Level 5), 'competent' (Level 4), 'clear' (Level 3), 'broad' (Level 2) and 'minimal' (Level 1), although the number of features identified will potentially limit students' achievement. For example, if they only explore one example of a language feature even if it is perceptively done they would be unlikely to be awarded a level 5 mark.

The *first strand* is numerical in the sense that it assesses whether students have met the instruction to identify and explain four examples of language features. Achieving Levels 4-5 require that 'four' examples are selected, Level 3 asks for 'at least three', Level 2 asks for 'one to two' and Level 1 might not identify specific language features. Identifying features calls for the labelling of features (for example 'pronouns', 'varying sentence types' or temporal deixis) as well as offering relevant examples and quotations from their own re-creative writing.

The *second strand* is judging the level of exploration of the language features they have chosen. Students will be 'evaluating' (Level 5), 'exploring' (Level 4), 'making some observations' (Level 3), 'generalised comments' (Level 2) and 'little or no comment' (Level 1).

A03:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

This relates to students' ability to explore the significance of contextual factors surrounding production and reception in relation to their writing task.

The mark scheme breaks this Assessment Objective down through into purpose, audience, mode and genre (linked to the first bullet point of the question where students are asked to 'consider' different aspects of their re-creative writing. The quality of this discussion is then rewarded depending on whether students 'evaluate' (Level 5), 'explore' (Level 4), 'explain' (Level 3), 'describe' (Level 2) and 'identify' (Level 1) these specific aspects of context. Students will also be credited for exploring the significance of other contextual factors surrounding production and reception of their new text as indicated in the overall descriptor for this Assessment Objective. This means that in broader terms the overarching descriptor for achievement in the levels will be 'perceptive' (Level 5), 'clear'

(Level 4), 'some consideration (Level 3), 'generalised' (Level 2) and 'little' (Level 1) in terms of the overall discussion of contextual factors. A04

A05:

The mark scheme descriptor is:

Students are assessed on their writing expertise in producing a commentary on the recasting they did in Questions 2.

This Assessment Objective is rewarding the organisation of the commentary and the accuracy of the students' use of English rather than in their accurate labelling of linguistic features.

There is no rubric infringement for not meeting the 200 word guidance but going significantly below the suggested word count will be self-limiting as it will be less easy either to identify four examples of language features or to expand on the reasons for the choices in the light of the requirements of A02 and A03. Going significantly above the word guidance has implications for A05 in terms of producing a critical commentary that is cohesive, concise and complete, demonstrating complete control of an appropriate style.