

X270/201

NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS
2011

FRIDAY, 13 MAY
1.00 PM – 2.00 PM

ENGLISH
INTERMEDIATE 2
Close Reading

Answer all questions.

30 marks are allocated to this paper.

Read the passage carefully and then answer **all** the questions, **using your own words as far as possible**.

The questions will ask you to show that:

you understand the main ideas and important details in the passage—in other words, **what** the writer has said (**Understanding—U**);

you can identify, using appropriate terms, the techniques the writer has used to get across these ideas—in other words, **how** he has said it (**Analysis—A**);

you can, using appropriate evidence, comment on how effective the writer has been—in other words, **how well** he has said it (**Evaluation—E**).

A code letter (U, A, E) is used alongside each question to identify its purpose for you. The number of marks attached to each question will give some indication of the length of answer required.



The gr8 db8

Some people say that text messaging is destroying the English language. David Crystal, an eminent professor of language, argues that it is not.

Recently, a newspaper article headed “I h8 txt msgs: how texting is wrecking our language” argued that texters are “vandals who are doing to our language what Genghis Khan did to his neighbours 800 years ago. They are destroying it: pillaging our punctuation; savaging our sentences.”

- 5 As a new variety of language, texting has been condemned as “textese”, “slanguage”, a “digital virus”, “bleak, bald, sad shorthand”, “drab shrinktalk which masks dyslexia, poor spelling and mental laziness”.

Ever since the arrival of printing—thought to be the invention of the devil because it would put false opinions into people’s minds—people have been arguing that new
10 technology would have disastrous consequences for language. Scares accompanied the introduction of the telegraph, the telephone, and broadcasting. But has there ever been a linguistic phenomenon that has aroused such curiosity, suspicion, fear, confusion, antagonism, fascination, excitement and enthusiasm all at once as texting? And in such a short space of time. Less than a decade ago, hardly anyone had heard
15 of it.

People think that the written language seen on mobile phone screens is new and alien, but all the popular beliefs about texting are wrong. Its distinctiveness is not a new phenomenon, nor is its use restricted to the young. There is increasing evidence that it helps rather than hinders literacy. Texting has added a new dimension to language
20 use, but its long-term impact is negligible. It is not a disaster.

Research has made it clear that the early media hysteria about the novelty (and thus the dangers) of text messaging was misplaced. People seem to have swallowed whole the stories that youngsters use nothing else but abbreviations when they text, such as the reports that a teenager had written an essay so full of textspeak that her teacher
25 was unable to understand it. An extract was posted online, and quoted incessantly, but, as no one was ever able to track down the entire essay, it was probably a hoax.

There are several distinctive features of the way texts are written that combine to give the impression of novelty, but people have been initialising common phrases for ages. IOU is known from 1618. There is no real difference between a modern kid’s “lol”
30 (“laughing out loud”) and an earlier generation’s “SWALK” (“sealed with a loving kiss”).

English has had abbreviated words ever since it began to be written down. Words such as exam, vet, fridge and bus are so familiar that they have effectively become new words. When some of these abbreviated forms first came into use, they also
35 attracted criticism. In 1711, for example, Joseph Addison complained about the way words were being “miserably curtailed”—he mentioned pos (itive) and incog (nito).

Texters use deviant spellings—and they know they are deviant. But they are by no means the first to use such nonstandard forms as “cos” for “because” or “wot” for “what”. Several of these are so much part of English literary tradition that they have
40 been given entries in the Oxford English Dictionary. “Cos” is there from 1828 and “wot” from 1829. Many can be found in the way dialect is written by such writers as Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Walter Scott and D.H. Lawrence.

Sending a message on a mobile phone is not the most natural of ways to communicate. The keypad isn't linguistically sensible. No one took letter-frequency
45 considerations into account when designing it. For example, key 7 on my mobile contains four symbols, pqrs. It takes four key-presses to access the letter s, and yet s is one of the most frequently occurring letters in English. It is twice as easy to input q, which is one of the least frequently occurring letters. It should be the other way round. So any strategy that reduces the time and awkwardness of inputting graphic
50 symbols is bound to be attractive.

Abbreviations were used as a natural, intuitive response to a technological problem. And they appeared in next to no time. Texters simply transferred (and then embellished) what they had encountered in other settings. We have all left notes in which we have replaced "and" with "&", "three" with "3", and so on.

55 But the need to save time and energy is by no means the whole story of texting. When we look at some texts, they are linguistically quite complex. There are an extraordinary number of ways in which people play with language—creating riddles, solving crosswords, playing Scrabble, inventing new words. Professional writers do the same—providing catchy copy for advertising slogans, thinking up puns in
60 newspaper headlines, and writing poems, novels and plays. Children quickly learn that one of the most enjoyable things you can do with language is to play with its sounds, words, grammar—and spelling.

An extraordinary number of doom-laden prophecies have been made about the supposed linguistic evils unleashed by texting. Sadly, its creative potential has been
65 virtually ignored. But children could not be good at texting if they had not already developed considerable literacy awareness. Before you can write and play with abbreviated forms, you need to have a sense of how the sounds of your language relate to the letters. You need to know that there are such things as alternative spellings. If you are aware that your texting behaviour is different, you must have already realised
70 that there is such a thing as a standard.

Some people dislike texting. Some are bemused by it. But it is merely the latest manifestation of the human ability to be linguistically creative and to adapt language to suit the demands of diverse settings. There is no disaster pending. We will not see a new generation of adults growing up unable to write proper English. The language
75 as a whole will not decline. In texting what we are seeing, in a small way, is language in evolution.

Adapted from an article
by David Crystal in *The Guardian*

QUESTIONS

Marks Code

1. Look at the opening paragraph (lines 1–4).
 - (a) Write down **one** expression from this paragraph which continues the idea introduced by "wrecking". 1 U
 - (b) Identify a feature of the expression "pillaging our punctuation; savaging our sentences" which makes it effective. 1 A
2. The writer tells us that "texting has been condemned" (line 5).
Explain fully how any **one** of the expressions he quotes in the rest of this paragraph conveys disapproval of text message language. 2 A

QUESTIONS (continued)

Marks Code

3. Why does the writer mention “the telegraph, the telephone, and broadcasting” (line 11) at this point in his argument? 2 U
4. Look at the sentence “But . . . texting?” (lines 11–13).
 (a) In this sentence, what point is the writer making about attitudes to texting? 1 U
 (b) Show how the writer’s **word choice or structure** helps to reinforce this point. 1 A
5. The writer tells us (line 17) that “all the popular beliefs about texting are wrong”.
 Look at the remainder of the paragraph (lines 17–20), and then explain **in your own words** what **two** of these popular beliefs are. 2 U
6. How effective do you find the writer’s use of “hysteria” (line 21) as an **image** or **metaphor**? 2 E
7. The expression “swallowed whole” (line 22) suggests that people were too ready to believe what they had heard.
 Show how the writer continues this idea of gullibility in the remainder of the paragraph. 2 A
8. Why is the writer correct when he tells us that “there is no real difference” between “lol” and “SWALK” (see lines 29–31)? 1 A
9. Re-read lines 32–36, and then explain **in your own words two** points the writer is making about abbreviations. 2 U
10. Explain how effective you find the author’s inclusion of the names of Dickens, Twain, Scott and Lawrence (line 42). 2 E
11. Re-read lines 43–50, and then explain **in your own words** in what ways “The keypad isn’t linguistically sensible”. 2 U
12. Explain why the sentence “Abbreviations were used as a natural, intuitive response to a technological problem” (line 51) is an appropriate link at this point in the passage. 2 A
13. Explain fully why the writer’s use of “But” (line 55) is appropriate at this point in the structure of his argument. 3 U/A
14. What **tone** does the writer create by using the expression “supposed linguistic evils” (line 64)? 1 A
15. Look at lines 65–70, and then explain briefly **and in your own words** what the writer means when he refers to “literacy awareness” (line 66). 1 U
16. Look at the final paragraph (lines 71–76), and then explain how well you feel this paragraph works as a conclusion to the passage as a whole. 2 E

Total (30)

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

[Open out for Questions]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Close Reading—Article is adapted from “2b or not 2b” by David Crystal, taken from *The Guardian*, 5 July 2008. Reproduced by kind permission of Professor David Crystal & Mrs Hilary Crystal Business Partnership.

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FRIDAY, 13 MAY
2.20 PM – 3.50 PM

ENGLISH
INTERMEDIATE 2
Critical Essay

Answer **two** questions.

Each question must be taken from a different section.

Each question is worth 25 marks.



Answer TWO questions from this paper.

Each question must be chosen from a different Section (A–E). You are not allowed to choose two questions from the same Section.

In all Sections you may use Scottish texts.

Write the number of each question in the margin of your answer booklet and begin each essay on a fresh page.

You should spend about 45 minutes on each essay.

The following will be assessed:

- **the relevance of your essays to the questions you have chosen**
- **your knowledge and understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the chosen texts**
- **your explanation of ways in which aspects of structure/style/language contribute to the meaning/effect/impact of the chosen texts**
- **your evaluation of the effectiveness of the chosen texts, supported by detailed and relevant evidence**
- **the quality and technical accuracy of your writing.**

Each question is worth 25 marks. The total for this paper is 50 marks.

SECTION A—DRAMA

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: characterisation, key scene(s), structure, climax, theme, plot, conflict, setting . . .

1. Choose a play in which there is a character who suffers from a human weakness such as ambition, selfishness, lack of self-knowledge, jealousy, pride, lust . . .
Show how the weakness is revealed, then explain how this weakness affects both the characters and the events of the play.
2. Choose a play in which there is an important relationship between two of the main characters.
Describe the nature of the relationship, and explain how it is developed throughout the play.
3. Choose a play which you feel has a dramatic final scene.
Describe briefly what happens and explain how effective the ending is in bringing to a conclusion the central concerns of the text.

SECTION B—PROSE

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, theme, ideas, description . . .

4. Choose a novel **or** a short story in which you feel there is an incident of great importance to the story as a whole.
Describe the incident and go on to show its importance to the development of the characters and the central concerns of the text.
5. Choose a novel **or** a short story which has a character who affects you emotionally.
Describe how you feel about the character, and show how the writer leads you to feel this way.
6. Choose a prose work (fiction **or** non-fiction) in which the writer uses a memorable style/voice/narrative technique.
Explain in detail how features of the writing style/voice/narrative technique contribute to the effectiveness of the text.

SECTION C—POETRY

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: word choice, tone, imagery, structure, content, rhythm, theme, sound, ideas . . .

7. Choose a poem which deals with an important issue such as war, crime, poverty **or** racism.
Explain how the poet deepens your understanding of the issue by the choice of content and the skilful use of poetic techniques.
8. Choose a poem which describes an animal **or** a place **or** an event in an effective way.
Briefly state what is being described and go on to show how the techniques used in the poem make the description effective.
9. Choose a poem written in a specific form such as ballad, sonnet, elegy, monologue, ode . . .
Explain how the distinctive features of this form contribute to your appreciation of the text.

[Turn over

SECTION D—FILM AND TV DRAMA

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: use of camera, key sequence, characterisation, mise-en-scène, editing, setting, music/sound, special effects, plot, dialogue . . .

10. Choose a film **or** TV drama* which has a character who could be described as a hero or as a villain.

Explain how the the character is introduced and then developed throughout the film or TV drama.

11. Choose a film **or** TV drama* in which setting is an important feature.

Explain how the setting is established and go on to show how the setting contributes to the effectiveness of the film **or** TV drama as a whole.

12. Choose a scene or sequence from a film **or** TV drama* in which an atmosphere of mystery, **or** horror, **or** suspense is created.

Describe what happens in the scene or sequence, explaining how the techniques used by the film or programme makers create this atmosphere.

* “TV drama” includes a single play, a series or a serial.

SECTION E—LANGUAGE

Answers to questions in this section should refer to the text and to such relevant features as: register, accent, dialect, slang, jargon, vocabulary, tone, abbreviation . . .

13. Consider a text which aims to persuade people to support a particular group, **or** to buy a particular product.

By referring to specific examples from your chosen text, show how persuasive techniques are used.

14. Consider a modern form of communication such as e-mail **or** text message.

By referring to specific examples of language and vocabulary, explain how such communication differs from formal English, and what advantages this presents to users.

15. Consider the specialist language used by any group of people to talk about a particular interest, for example, a sport, a job, a hobby . . .

By referring to specific examples, show how the specialist language used by the group is effective in communicating ideas clearly.

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]