Reading and Responding

The passages were of an appropriate level and sufficiently challenging to allow the best candidates to demonstrate their comprehension skills.

Candidates are reminded that they need to write answers in their own words. This was clearly stated in the initial instructions and re-iterated in some of the individual questions. An answer that consists entirely of a block of text copied verbatim from the passage is not appropriate at a pre-tertiary level, as it does not demonstrate evidence of genuine comprehension of written texts.

Question 1

(d) This question challenged the weaker candidates but the higher level candidates were able to answer in sufficient detail to gain full marks in this question, particularly regarding the Nepalese government allowing foreigners into the country.

(j) Some candidates struggled to find enough details in support of their reasoning to gain full marks. This question required careful re-reading of the passage.

Suggested Answers

(a) At the airport – Tribhuvan airport (1 mark)
(b) His mother was overjoyed to see him – placed some Marigolds over his head. Prakash Babu seemed less enthusiastic - tried to push the marigolds away (because she knocked off his glasses) (2 marks)
(c) His mother didn’t even go to the airport to meet any of his brothers but she was very excited to welcome Prakash home. (1 mark)
(d) Prakash had received the honour of being chosen to go to Switzerland to do a hospitality course. This had become possible because Nepal had allowed some foreigners to enter the country and in return Switzerland had offered to train some Nepalese candidates in hotel management. (3 marks)
(e) We are told that 'the airport had only recently been built with a single runway', and 'cows still grazed around the tarmac before and after the plane landed' and that Nepal had only recently 'opened its boundaries to the outside world'. (any two of these) (1 mark)
(f) Prakash Babu waited until evening to open up his suitcases so that everyone would be home from work and he had a big audience to tell his stories to. He wanted them all to be watching when he gave out the presents. He wanted the occasion to be very important. (2 marks)
(g) Yes, he seems to have been very proud. He told stories about his school – ‘the most famous school in hospitality management’ where he had received good marks. (2 marks)
(h) The sisters-in-law were happy because even though the wraps were dull, they looked
truly foreign - they would be admired and envied when they wore these wraps bought overseas. (3 marks)

(i) Maybe she felt guilty because she knew Gopi had not received a piece of cheese and she knew he could not ask for a piece – she knew he was very unimportant in the household. Gopi was usually very kind to her – he ‘towed her around in a bicycle and played badminton with her all day long’. Roshana wanted the extra piece of cheese for herself but she knew that Gopi would have loved to receive it. She was aware that, as a daughter, she was much more important than Gopi. (2 marks)

(j) Probably a servant of some sort. He went to the airport to carry the cases – he could not read or write; he stood in the doorway during the present distribution; he was the only one not to receive any cheese to try and couldn’t ask for a piece. Had to play with Roshana and tow her around. (3 marks)

Question 2

(a) Many candidates found this question difficult as they confused the definition requested with the information in the rest of the paragraph.

(e) The wording ‘according to the article’ does not mean that a candidate can copy verbatim to gain full marks. The better candidates were able to write an answer entirely based on reasons given in the passage using their own words.

(e) and (f) A number of candidates failed to read the word ‘other’ in (f) and repeated answers from (e). Answers for (e) and (f) were accepted interchangeably but only once.

Suggested Answers

(a) The last native speaker is the last person able to speak a particular language which they were taught as a baby by their parents, rather than another language which they learnt as a child or an adult. (1 mark)

(b) Professor Sutherland wants to emphasise that people know and are concerned about the extinction of birds and mammals but in fact not many people know that languages are disappearing much faster. (1 mark)

(c) A healthy language has more than 1 million speakers. Chinese, English and Spanish (2 marks)

(d) The Ethnologue is a database of all the languages spoken in the world. It would be useful for people studying languages and population or for people teaching a ‘dead’ language (2 marks)

(e) Nowadays most places have at least some contact with the ‘outside world’. It would therefore be an advantage to be able to speak an internationally recognised language – for trade, tourism, media etc. so languages which once were spoken in small isolated areas are dying out. (2 marks)

(f) Languages can be lost when people move from small country communities to cities, or when areas are destroyed ‘by the search for oil or timber’. Natural disasters such as an earthquake can also mean a small community is destroyed and so is their language. (2 marks)
(g) It is the language the government chooses to use in schools, ‘conduct its political affairs and carry out its business’. This often means that speakers of a small language forget their native language because they choose to use only the ‘official’ language as it becomes the language they use most of the time. (2 marks)

(h) (i) traditional religious ceremonies
(ii) botanical and zoological information collected over long passages of time
(iii) stories passed on by word of mouth (2 marks)

(i) ‘Trilingualism’ – Joseph Poth believes we should all be able to speak our mother tongue, a ‘neighbour language’ and an international language. This could be a good thing because there are many advantages in not losing a ‘native language’ eg keeping information about plants and animals. Research has shown that it is good for brain development to learn another language. Would be useful to speak the language of a neighbouring country as many things could be shared and speaking an international language would allow people to have the advantages of contact with many other countries. (OR not very sensible – not many people could learn to speak 3 languages – it would take too long to learn and technology can provide translation) (3 marks)

(j) Readers are asked to imagine being the last native speaker of English, when no-one else can speak their language. It is effective because it makes readers start to think about what it would be like to lose their native language, where even their own children don’t speak it. It has direct personal appeal, involves readers and makes them curious about what is to come. (3 marks)

Writing in English

There were some excellent scripts, as well as some weak ones from candidates who were not really ready to sit a pre-tertiary examination in English. The questions were interesting and appropriate. The most popular was the discussion which was selected by 44 candidates, followed by the narrative (29), description (28) and comparison (23). Only 6 candidates chose the reflection.

Some candidates did not properly address the topic A Winter Day but instead wrote a general description of Tasmania and its seasons. In the narrative, some candidates did not follow the instructions to begin or end with the words ‘How embarrassing! she thought’ but instead incorporated it into their story. However, they were not penalised for this.

Texts

Again this year some candidates attempted all 3 questions. Examiners marked only the first 2 answers if all 3 were attempted.

Some began one question and then abandoned it without putting a line through it. Candidates should be reminded that they must clearly indicate that they do not want a question marked.
Many candidates wrote extremely long, wordy, responses, which were mostly irrelevant. They should be reminded to use the mark scheme and the number of lines allocated in the answer booklet, as a guide.

Generally it appeared as if the weaker candidates made poor choices out of the 3 texts, selecting the first 2, with the second one being the most challenging. They would have been better off choosing 1 and 3.

**Question 4**

(a) Most candidates could correctly identify the target audience. There were some, however, who gave a ‘generic’ audience: ‘people who want to buy a car’. They need to be aware that a target audience question requires a more specific answer. The second part of this question was misunderstood by many. They began their answers: ‘this suggests that….’ instead of discussing the clues in the advertisement that led them to a specific target audience.

(b) & (c) Candidates were expected to differentiate between **written** and **visual** techniques in each question. This proved difficult for many candidates, who discussed both aspects in their answers.

**Suggested Answers**

(a) The target audience -- people who like adventure, who are very active. This is suggested by the picture with the bike and kayak (boat) on the roof and by the list of things the car can take people to – where ‘adventure calls’ and by the fact that the car seems to be going fast in a country area – away from other cars. (3 marks)

(b) Slogan (‘shift the way you move’) suggests to change the way you travel, make a shift – suggests ‘change gear’ so links with a new car. Personal appeal – ‘choose your adventure. choose your space ’; ‘when adventure calls you’ll be ready’. Many persuasive words – ‘itching for adventure’. ‘Sporty Nissan’. ‘Livina x gear’(name appeals as a sporty car –also the number-plate); lists of sports – readers will find at least one that appeals. Sense of adventure – discover new places. Other features listed – ‘sturdy roof rails’ to carry big loads, 6 CD player. Contact details (email and phone) provided so reader can find out more. (3 marks)

(c) Yes effective visual techniques – wide blue sky, open road, sea in distance – all suggest adventure; picture suggests speed, countryside appears to be rushing past. Red kayak and upright bike – attract attention, car looks very sporty, on the way to an adventure. Slogan on blue – links with sky. Logo very obvious at top of text and on the car – easily recognised. Silver car – matches logo and sophisticated and good contrast with red kayak (and red back lights) and blue sky. No other cars or houses or people – adventures in the country – isolated area. Car is large and at the centre of the text so reader’s attention drawn to it. (4 marks)
Question 5

This proved to be the most challenging text as many candidates were unable to determine what the message was, believing it was related literally to space on a bench. This misunderstanding then flowed onto their other answers. There were a small number of very insightful and articulate candidates who handled this question admirably, even going so far to state that it was not an effective advertisement for the very reason that it might be taken literally.

Suggested Answers

(a) The message is that people should save water – use only the water that is needed – do not use unnecessary water. (2 marks)

(b) Bright orange sign to attract attention and to contrast with green lawn. Orange suggests warning. Large writing on bright orange sign. Direct personal appeal – use only what you need. Green lawn suggests sufficient water to keep it alive but not just wasted. Part seat – enough to sit on – the rest of the seat not needed – eye catching (shadow emphasises this). White path contrasts with green lawn. Simple, not cluttered, text. (4 marks)

(c) Yes it is an effective text - a very simple message – text is striking, unusual and different. Picture is eye-catching and makes the reader puzzle about the message. It is clever. Effective use of colour contrast - orange, white, green, large white printing on orange. Sign effective – Hobart water clearly suggests it is about water saving. The message conveyed by the seat is clever – just as you need only enough of the seat to be comfortably seated so the grass needs just enough water. Reader’s attention is drawn to the central seat and the sign. The shadow of the seat suggests strong sun but still the green grass has enough water.

OR: No it is not an effective text – too difficult to understand the message. Green lawn not necessary if trying to save water. Seat (bench) designed for more than one person so the rest would not be wasted. (4 marks)

Question 6

This was handled well. Most candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of how film posters are constructed to appeal to an audience and were able to discuss the effectiveness of the text.

Suggested Answers

(a) Would appeal to people who like romantic movies (suggested by picture of glamorous man and woman) and who like adventure movies (suggested by isolation, plane, desert, camels). The title of the movie could suggest illness. The khaki of clothes might suggest war. (2 marks)

(b) The poster attempts to attract people by emphasising in large print at the top of the text that the movie has won ‘Nine Academy Awards’ including best picture’ and ‘best director’ and these are very well-known and well-regarded awards. Quotes from ‘well
known sources such as the New York Times suggest that others have found it an excellent movie. The text lists famous actors who appear in the movie and this can attract people. The picture of man and woman, plane and camels arouses curiosity about the storyline. (4 marks)
(c) Yes, it is an effective poster because it would attract people to see this movie. It advertises that the movie has well known actors and the awards won and good reviews quoted suggest it is an outstanding movie. The picture is eye-catching and well balanced so the reader’s eye is drawn to the two people in the centre but then to the plane and camels. The colours eg the sky are bright and would attract people to look at the picture more closely. OR: No there is not enough suggestion of a storyline to attract viewers (4 marks)

**Listening and Responding**

The passages were interesting, appropriate and nicely varied. The clarity and quality of the recordings were excellent. On the first recording the speakers spoke slightly more quickly, which may explain why some candidates found this the more challenging of the two texts. Candidates were not penalised for incorrect spelling as long as the meaning was clear, since this section is a test of comprehension of spoken English, not of spelling. However, some answers could not be accepted. For example, in question 8 (k) many candidates had difficulty spelling ‘career’. ‘Carrier and ‘career) were accepted but not ‘carrier’, ‘clear’ or ‘Korea’. Some of the weaker candidates had trouble with numbers, e.g. five thousand, two thousand, and in particular twenty two thousand, which was often written as 2200.

**Question 7**

(e) The expected answer was Yes, but markers accepted No as a valid answer as long as candidates were able to support their answer with information from the text. Many candidates did so.

*Suggested Answers*

(a) leader of a team that has just published a report called ‘Healthy Cities’. (1 mark)  
(b) London will have temperatures more like Hong Kong in the future. Temperatures up by as much as 10 degrees Celsius. Heat waves are expected to become more frequent in Britain (2 marks)  
(c) elderly people struggle to cool down (1 mark)  
(d) doesn’t like them - waste of energy and pump even more hot air into the city (3 marks)  
(e) (i) wearing loose summer clothing  
(ii) taking short sleeps during the day  
(iii) changing hours of work depending on the weather  
(iv) drinking more water  
Not mentioned: (ii) and (v) (½ mark each-3 marks)  
(f) some office workers would welcome those changes (1 mark)  
(g) better insulated buildings to reduce emissions and keep interiors cool.
paint roofs white to reflect sunlight  (2 marks)  
(h) cool the air, prevent flash flooding, provide food, leisure facilities (2 marks)  
(i) 24,000; (2 000 extra deaths in Britain and 22 000 in Europe) (1 mark)  
(j) yes – many recommendations to make cities ‘healthy’ places to live even when the climate becomes hotter (2 marks)  

Question 8

Some candidates simply listed the various challenges suggested by people, which of course did not answer the question.

Suggested Answers

(a) bored (when he was studying), so he turned on his laptop and started surfing the Internet (2 marks)  
(b) (i) minute (1 mark)  
(c) a video of someone talking to a camera about his/her life or something else interesting (2 marks)  
(d) a video called How to be English (1 mark)  
(e) to suggest funny or difficult things for him to do in his videos (2 marks)  
(f) raised £5 000 for charity by shaving all his hair off on live TV (1 mark)  
(g) raised more than four times as much (£20 000) when he co-presented a live show on the Internet - donated the money to a children’s charity (2 marks)  
(h) purchase a house (1 mark)  
(i) makes videos that he would want to watch - not trying to sell anything (2 marks)  
(j) passed exams with nine A grades and one B (wants to go to uni??) (1 mark)  
(k) to try and make a career on YouTube (2 marks)  
(l) video blogger (1 mark)  

Oral Assessment

Most of the oral examiners commented that, as well as the usual number of weak candidates who were not really ready to tackle the pre-tertiary exam, this year there were also many excellent candidates. As in previous years, reproduced below in full are the detailed comments from two of the teams of oral examiners as teachers often find such comments helpful.

(a) It was felt by examiners that this year many candidates were particularly strong in spoken English. This could be attributed to the fact most had been here for over two years so were speaking with fluency and confidence.  

The candidates who were well prepared and were familiar with the content of their folio were able to speak to them and respond to questions in an engaging manner.
Comprehension of questions appeared to be strong. For the stronger candidates, questions were pitched at a higher level and speed. For the weaker candidates, questions were simple and not so open ended.

Current issues were popular topics for folios. Candidates are tackling issues that relate to their lives; discrimination (gender, racial, age, political), China’s one child policy and the changes happening in China, arranged marriages, global warming and pollution and use of technology were popular topics. The candidates commented on how the drafting process had helped them improve their written English.

Common grammatical errors in spoken English included incorrect use of prepositions, omitting articles, problems with singular/plural and verb agreements and word order.

Over the four days a number of listed candidates simply did not attend their examination. It would be helpful if teachers could inform TQA if they know in advance that a candidate does not intend to attend the oral.

(b) Candidates were punctual and well prepared.

The standard of spoken English was very good, both in the general conversation and in the folio discussion.
### Criterion 4 – Communicate in writing.

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<th>A</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>high level of accuracy (though not necessarily error-free) and meaning is clearly conveyed</em></td>
<td><em>good level of accuracy and meaning is clearly conveyed</em></td>
<td><em>reasonable level of accuracy: writing may be marred by errors but overall meaning is clear</em></td>
<td><em>so many errors that meaning is unclear</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>rich vocabulary which engages reader and enhances meaning.</em></td>
<td><em>good vocabulary</em></td>
<td><em>adequate vocabulary</em></td>
<td><em>limited vocabulary</em></td>
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<td><em>excellent structure at all levels (sentence, paragraph, whole text)</em></td>
<td><em>good structure at all levels (sentence, paragraph, whole text)</em></td>
<td><em>reasonable structure at all levels (sentence, paragraph, whole text)</em></td>
<td><em>Writing is poorly structured at all levels (sentence, paragraph, whole text)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>coherent writing and evidence that writer can use complex sentences</em></td>
<td><em>coherent writing and some evidence of mastery of complex sentences</em></td>
<td><em>reasonably coherent, but sentences are generally lacking in complexity</em></td>
<td><em>Lack of coherence, with only very basic or incomplete sentences</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>addresses topic very well in the required genre</em></td>
<td><em>addresses topic well in the required genre</em></td>
<td><em>addresses topic adequately with some adherence to the required genre</em></td>
<td><em>little or no attempt to address the topic or adhere to the required genre</em></td>
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### Notes:

- Re. accuracy, examiners will look at spelling, punctuation, tense usage, use of articles, word order, amongst other aspects.
- Students will be penalised if they write substantially less than the required length (of approximately 250 words). On the other hand, some candidates write far in excess of 250 words, and thereby often sacrifice quality for quantity.
- Any method of paragraphing is acceptable (indented, blocked, line space) as long as it is consistent and clear.
- Examiners are well aware that students are writing under time pressure and will do their best to be fair to candidates. (For example, whilst the writing must be generally appropriate to the genre, some allowance will be made for blurring of genres, e.g. between narrative and descriptive.) However, examiners will penalise candidates if they feel that they have prepared an answer and not addressed the topic adequately.
- Marking scheme: D- = 1, D+ = 2, D+ = 3  
  C- = 4, C = 5, C+ = 6  
  B- = 7, B = 8, B+ = 9  
  A- = 10, A = 10, A+ = 12
ESL315109 English as a Second Language

**ASSESSMENT PANEL REPORT**

### Award Distribution

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<td>22 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous 5 years (all examined subjects)</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
<td>40 %</td>
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### Student Distribution (SA or better)

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<td>38% (44)</td>
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