

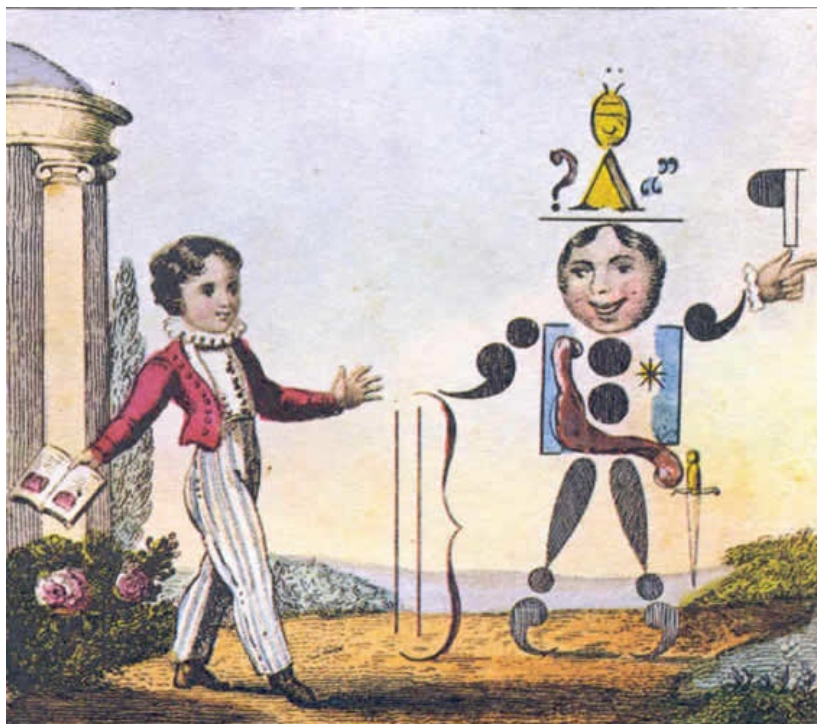
A level ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Component 1 Section B

Language Issues

Punctuation

Teachers' Notes



A level ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Component 1 Section B

TEACHERS' NOTES

The notes here are to accompany the resources based on punctuation, which offer some suggestions about how to tackle the question in Component 1 Section B. The suggested approach is not definitive—candidates could respond to the question effectively in many other ways.

The resources encourage learners to think about and discuss the concepts before tackling the question. There are printable copies of all the materials so that learners can work on the sample question individually or in groups. The printable resources include:

- a collection of extracts discussing the concepts and issues linked to the theme of punctuation (language and situation)
- a sample question + sample marking guidelines
- sample introductions
- sample essay extracts
- 'Tackling the Language Issues essay' guide

The guide can be used to make learners familiar with the demands of the issues essay question. It aims to encourage good practice, with learners developing close reading skills and applying them to the question and stimulus information.

Using the 'punctuation' resource pack

Each of the extracts has been chosen to demonstrate a particular point or feature about the use of punctuation. References to these extracts can be used to respond to the sample question, but may also be relevant in responses to other questions about written language.

The notes below highlight the main focus of each extract, but there are many other elements that could be discussed.

TEXT 1

- advisory text for students who may be second language users
- link between 'good punctuation' and an orderly mind
- the potential consequences of mistakes in punctuation.

TEXT 2

- nineteenth century text by 'amateur expert'; gender references all male: third person possessive determiner *his*
- neutral definition
- emphasis on understanding and communication of ideas (meaning)
- prescriptive undertones (*more correctly*).

TEXT 3 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2015/sep/30/punctuation-commas-apostrophes-wordsworth>

- David Crystal: linguist with a reputation for making linguistics accessible for a wide audience
- punctuation is made up of a limited number of marks—frequently seen and used
- it ‘seems’ manageable (perhaps deceptive), and so people are prepared to criticise others.

TEXT 4 <http://www.personal.kent.edu/~rcraig2/Common/punct1.pdf>

- advisory text targeting undergraduates (modal verb of obligation: *must*)
- focus on a particular punctuation mark (which is seen to cause problems)—emotive language e.g. *most abused* (superlative adjective); *abuse* (abstract noun)
- blame attached to misinformation spread by school teachers
- sets ‘elocution information’ vs ‘grammatical information’ (*to separate grammatical units ... to indicate interruptions of syntax*).

TEXT 5

- eighteenth century advisory text by a grammarian and Anglican bishop—giving guidance for a growing middle class on how to use ‘polite’ or ‘correct’ English
- definition and function (to *assist* readers)
- (surprisingly) unprescriptive: *doctrine* described as *imperfect*; emphasis is on *the judgment and taste of the writer* (usage); rules to give *a general direction* with an awareness of *different occasions* (context).

TEXT 6

- language commentator (usually prescriptive)
- analogies (for non-specialist audience)
- punctuation: holds language together (sewing metaphor); orders language (traffic lights metaphor); takes account of readers’ needs (door metaphor).

TEXT 7 <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/721833.html>

- American academic, specialist target audience BUT personal style (opinion piece)
- underlying principles: *clarity and simplicity*; needs to be *as invisible as possible*
- personal comments on usage e.g. period (Americanism) and comma (*lovely/simple/honest*), colon (*smooth over a rough logical connection*), semicolon (*pretentious/overactive*), quotations marks for distancing i.e. ‘scare marks’ (*ugly/spurious impression of ... sensibility*).

TEXT 8 <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/mar/15/council-ban-apostrophes-street-signs>

- online news article (‘broadsheet’ newspaper—now Berliner): quotes expert (lecturer Exeter University) and professional (journalist/former culture secretary)
- best way to teach punctuation is to see practical examples in everyday life
- links to language change—electronic English (Twitter/branding on social media)

- potential for *confusion*.
[NB re. Bradshaw' tweet: punctuation has grammatical function, BUT is not an example of *proper grammar*]

TEXT 9

- David Crystal: linguist with a reputation for making linguistics accessible historical: early manuscripts (complicated system—disappeared with printing)
- function: *guide to phrasing* for reading aloud e.g. *literary and liturgical occasions*.

TEXT 10

- commentator (observing habits) and professional (journalist using language to communicate)
- emphasis on *many varieties* of punctuation which must be suited to *purpose*
- examples of different text types e.g. newspapers, instruction texts, learned article or book (*more elaborate punctuation* allowing *finer distinctions and greater flexibility*)
- BUT making mistakes will lead to *misunderstanding* (ambiguity/confused meaning) and *derision* (judgement).

TEXT 11

- linguists: experts writing for specialist 'beginners' audience
- historical overview: rhetorical vs grammatical function
- punctuation in period texts can seem *puzzling/apparently arbitrary* to PDE readers.

TEXT 12

- non-specialist commentator ('grumpy old man' opinions); colloquial style
- humour, but serious underlying point i.e. criticisms of the way people punctuate can be *a way of looking down and sneering*
- public correction of punctuation in signs is not *a public service*.

TEXT 13 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/10866299/Commas-and-colons-without-them-were-sunk.html>

- online article in culture section ('broadsheet' newspaper); professional
- use of punctuation to avoid semantic ambiguity
- terms make punctuation sound more difficult than it is
- focus on specific features e.g. Oxford comma (*exclusivity and complexity* vs *extremely easy to learn – and to teach*); non-restrictive comma
- examples to explain points made.

TEXT 14

- professional house-style guide for writers
- instructive text e.g. imperatives (*Use*)
- technical language (*en-dashes, em-dashes*) and explanations (space after full stop)
- examples
- reference to language change: effect of word processing software.

TEXT 15 http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/01/style/when-your-punctuation-says-it-all.html?_r=2

- online article in 'Cultural Studies' section ('broadsheet' newspaper); professional
- link between punctuation and tone in electronic English
- *sans the mark* vs *too many marks* vs *additional punctuation ... to soften the marks*
- language change; gender
- examples of language in use (herself, friends, 19-year-old student).

TEXT 16

- linguists; experts writing for specialist 'beginners' audience
- rules: *conventions ... developed by printers and publishers* BUT also *an art*
- function: to establish *consistency* e.g. breaking text into *smaller components*; shaping appearance on page
- *obligatory* (can be 'wrong') vs *optional* elements (all about *choice*).

TEXT 17 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/12185164/Nonsense-Backlash-over-new-school-rules-on-exclamation-marks.html>

- online news article in 'Education' section ('broadsheet' newspaper); professional
- educational assessment (Key Stage 1 and 2): rules about exclamation marks
- prescriptive—Government directives about what is acceptable (described by journalist as *restrictive*, and linked to nineteenth century)
- extracts cited from Department of Education document (authoritative)—subject specific e.g. technical terms + examples
- link to language change: text messaging and social media.
[NB how ...!/what ...! = exclamatives; other use of exclamations marks is exclamatory]

TEXT 18

- nineteenth century instructive text for children
- rhyming couplets (memorable)
- humorous (personified 'Mr Stops' made up of numerous punctuation marks) and interactive (riddle)
- focus on full stops as guide to meaning.

[NB Picture of 'Mr Stops' on cover]

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Punctuation_personified.jpg

TEXT 19

- academic research by Debra Myhill et al (Exeter University)
- formal information + table summarising findings
- range/accuracy/ presence or absence of punctuation linked to GCSE grade
- punctuation usage: sentence boundaries/apostrophes.

TEXT 20

- examples of semantic ambiguity caused by misplaced or omitted punctuation (humour)
- vocatives vs objects (examples 2/6):
 - without comma, proper noun *Jack* becomes direct object of verb *eat*
 - with comma, noun phrase *baby seals* becomes vocative (i.e. imperative is addressed directly to the seals), and the semantic field of reference of the verbal noun *clubbing* is linked to nightclubs rather than to the act of culling
- omitted commas (examples 3/4/7):
 - without a comma after the initial position prepositional phrase *Most of the time*, the subject of the sentence appears to be the post-modified noun phrase *Most of the time travellers* (with the noun *time* as part of the compound noun 'time-travellers')
 - without commas separating the items of the list, the possessive noun phrases *their families and their pets* are related directly to the verbal noun *cooking* (as direct objects); with commas, each phrase would be a separate part of the prepositional post-modification of the abstract noun phrase *inspiration in ...*
 - without an Oxford comma before the coordinating conjunction *and*, the proper noun phrases appear to function as parenthesis qualifying the noun phrase *my parents*
- full stops (examples 5/8):
 - as 2 clauses (*No! Don't stop!*), this represents a request to continue; as 3 clauses (*No! Don't! Stop!*), this represents an urgent request to cease
 - with the full stop after the pronoun *someone*, the object complement (the bare infinitive clause *(to) get a job*) becomes an imperative verb—and a polite compliment becomes a rather rude command
- colon (example 1)
 - without a colon following the simple noun phrase *A woman*, the subject of the sentence becomes the post-modified noun phrase *A woman without her man*; with the colon, the subject of the sentence is the simple noun phrase *man* preceded by the fronted prepositional phrase *without her*.

TASK: PUNCTUATION RESOURCES

Give small groups 3-4 of the extracts and ask them to identify:

- the contextual factors (place of publication, authors, target audience)
- the key information provided about punctuation
- the expression of any personal attitudes/opinions.

They should then be prepared to report their findings to the class.

The sections below make some suggestions about how to use the guide, taking the sample question on punctuation as an example. The notes offered under the headings are not definitive, but can be used as a starting point. The approach could then be adapted for other material.

GETTING STARTED: THE QUESTION

The choice of question is very important and candidates need to think carefully about which of the three suits them best. Encourage classroom discussion about different types of potential question, and about assessing the different questions in terms of learners' strengths and weaknesses, linguistic likes and dislikes.

It is worth pointing out the following about the essay in Section B:

- any contextual information provided is an important part of understanding the stimulus material—having identified the key points, candidates should think about how this information will influence language use, and how it will underpin their readings of the material
- this sample question is focused on written language, but other questions may specify a particular mode, spoken **and** written modes, or may leave it open for candidates to choose the mode(s) they see as most appropriate to the question.
- candidates need to keep the bullet points in mind while reading the stimulus material and while writing their response.

TASK: SAMPLE QUESTION

Ask learners to identify:

- significant **contextual information**
e.g. county council signs (public information, need for clarity/accuracy, authoritative status because produced for government); *Daily Mail* article (a middle-market tabloid newspaper with a reputation for strong opinions and attention grabbing headlines)
- the **focus of the question**
e.g. how different writers use punctuation
- any **indication of mode**
e.g. written
- **key terms/phrases in the bullet points.**
e.g. language features; tenor and function; link between punctuation, grammar and meaning; context.

FIRST READ-THROUGH: UNPICKING THE STIMULUS MATERIAL

By getting a broad sense of the content, the register and the function of the stimulus material, learners will be able to make sensible points about the focus topic.

Talk through the guide, getting learners to think about the key areas listed (i.e. context, function, participants, target audience, distinctive features of the genre) and how these will help in interpreting the stimulus material provided.

TASK: SAMPLE QUESTION

Ask learners to make notes individually on the stimulus material in preparation for a class discussion. They should use the headings from the guide:

- context
- function
- writers
- target audience
- distinctive features.

The notes below are suggested responses, but there are other valid points that could come up in discussion.

Context

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public • formal • authoritative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public • formal • authoritative

Function

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform • communicate/shape opinions • entertain

Participants

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council departments • sign producers • experts • professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • journalist • copy editor etc. • experts • professionals

Target audience

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wide audience, including visitors whose first language is not English • distant • indirect (limited opportunity for feedback) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • target audience of readers with the same ideology • distant • indirect (limited opportunity for feedback)
Distinctive features	
SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noun phrases • simple sentences • straightforward language • short, direct and unambiguous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotive language • quoting/quoted clauses (experts) • verifiable information • proper nouns

CLOSE READING: ANNOTATING THE STIMULUS MATERIAL

As they read the stimulus material, candidates need to become accustomed to text-marking interesting examples of language use and making marginal notes. Any features that they mark should have a relevance to the focus of the question.

TASK: SAMPLE QUESTION

Ask learners to annotate the stimulus material in preparation for a class discussion. They should use the headings from the guide to focus their annotations:

- key concepts
- information for arguing a case
- examples to support the argument
- distinctive point of view(s)
- key features of the genre.

The notes below are just suggestions, and learners may well think of other valid points.

Key concepts/issues: language and situation

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • standard vs non-standard • accuracy • readability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitudes • status (authoritative official institutions) • readability • language change • 'correct' usage/setting an example • 'slippery slope' argument

Information to argue a case

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> signs without punctuation (intentional) signs with missing punctuation signs with inaccurate punctuation (unintentional) use of apostrophes clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> juxtaposition of famous university town and removal of apostrophes following guidelines (National Land & Property Gazetteer) policy to affect documentation/signs mistakes by emergency services criticised by Good Grammar Company public language as example for school students (language in use)

Examples to support argument (with terminology)

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of singular possessive inflection –'s with plural noun ending with a vowel (<i>camera's</i>) use of plural possessive inflection –s' with irregular plural noun (<i>childrens'</i>) unintentional omission of apostrophe (<i>childrens</i>) intentional omission of apostrophe for clarity and simplicity (<i>Andrews</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attitudes: <i>anger</i> (abstract noun), <i>dreadful</i> (predicative adjective—stressed position) language change ('decay'): <i>slippery slope</i> (noun phrase—collocation) judgement: 's <i>pandering</i> (progressive verb phrase—ongoing process), <i>lowest common denominator</i> (noun phrase—emotive superlative) context (Cambridge): <i>one of our major seats of learning</i> (noun phrase) legal language: <i>bans</i> (verb), <i>abolishing</i> (verbal noun) evidence not provided by council: <i>are said</i> (passive verb phrase—no agent) director of GGC engages audience: <i>what kind of message ...</i> (rhetorical question—implicit message will be recognised by <i>Daily Mail</i> readers)

Distinctive points of view

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> neutral language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> emotive repetition of <i>pandering</i> (<i>DM</i> sees this as a view that will be shared by readers?) city council: apostrophes lead to mistakes GGC: objecting to language change—apostrophes are not <i>superfluous</i>

Key features of the genre

SIGNS	ARTICLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • short, direct style • minimal use of words • inform (name plates) • advisory (cameras; keep dog on lead) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dramatic headline (including quoted clause) • providing information • implicit judgement • citing experts • quoting/quoted clauses

ADDING YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE: DECIDING WHAT'S RELEVANT

This element of the question focuses on AO2. It allows candidates to broaden the argument with any **relevant** knowledge they have built up during their course. The bullet points in the guide suggest three key areas candidates might consider as they plan:

- information linked to the focus of the question
- theorists, linguists, commentators
- other contexts/examples.

Under these headings candidates could consider:

INFORMATION

- specific genres/text types
- general language principles (e.g. spoken vs written language, descriptive vs prescriptive approaches, standard vs non-standard, language change etc.)

THEORISTS, LINGUISTS, COMMENTATORS.

- specific individuals
- specific opinions
- specific theories

CONTEXTS

- contextual factors and other relevant contexts/examples
- their own language experiences (e.g. examples of their own usage, results from surveys, personal opinions based on linguistic knowledge,).

All knowledge linked to the **focus of the question** will be credited, but candidates must remember to keep referring to the question when they are planning their response and deciding which knowledge to use.

Providing examples and using terminology to support the points made is also an important part of AO2.

TASK: SAMPLE QUESTION

Ask learners to list the wider knowledge they could use in response to the sample question under the bullet points from the guide:

- other relevant information
- appropriate theorists, linguists, commentators
- other contexts/examples.

They should think about:

- useful facts
- relevant concepts
- points of view
- examples
- different text types.

Candidates can cite as direct quotation, or as a paraphrase of the key idea(s), but it is important to include a brief reference to the source of the information and the place of publication (e.g. author, title of book/newspaper, some indication of date if not PDE, name of website etc.)

In the sample question, candidates could cite any of the extracts from the punctuation resources or from their own wider knowledge about standard/non-standard English, attitudes, written English etc. They would also need to refer to some of the following contexts:

- legal language (restricted punctuation)
- newspaper headlines (minimal punctuation)
- fiction e.g. Molly Bloom's monologue, Cormac McCarthy's lack of speech marks, E.E. Cummings, Dickens' use of apostrophes to mark the speech of characters with lower status (creative punctuation)
- personal texts e.g. diaries (personal punctuation)
- formal letters (language change—punctuation often no longer used for addresses)
- texting and social media (language change—creative punctuation)
- public writing e.g. academic essays, reports (traditional punctuation)
- speeches e.g. political (punctuation used to mirror rhythms of spoken language).

ANSWERING THE QUESTION: FITTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

When the process of working through the stimulus material is complete, use the four structured sections (Planning, Style, Developing an Argument, Summing Up) to stimulate discussion about the importance of producing a well-structured, clearly argued essay.

It is important to emphasise that these are only broad suggestions. In the exam, candidates are free to tackle the essay in any way they wish. However, these key areas remind them of what they should be thinking about as they plan and write.

Having a formula/mnemonic to remind learners of the areas to include can be helpful (particularly for learners who need a little extra support). Where topic sentences are shaped by these, however, it can restrict the ability of more able students to produce a personalised and distinctive response. It is important that learners are able to demonstrate their personal engagement with the stimulus material/topic as well as their linguistic knowledge.

Making judgements

Use the 6 sample introductions so that learners can think about the most effective ways of analysing the stimulus material.

TASK: SAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS

Ask learners to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each response. They need to think about how effective each one is in exploring the stimulus material as an introduction to the question focus.

They should text mark the samples to draw attention to:

- evidence of understanding the topic
- references to the stimulus material
- wider knowledge
- examples
- use of terminology
- personal engagement
- writing style.

When they have finished assessing the examples, get them to write their own introduction.

The notes below suggest some of the strengths/weaknesses which could be discussed.

RESPONSE 1

Strengths: demonstrates some knowledge; basic link made to stimulus material; evidence of personal engagement; some awareness of 'judgements' based on linguistic usage; straightforward style, but technically accurate.

Weaknesses: no examples; limited use of terminology (a few broad terms e.g. 'context', 'standard'); points are rather broad; narrow range

RESPONSE 2

Strengths: clear understanding with an opening sentence to frame the topic; wider knowledge with clear source information; explicit references to stimulus material; using examples; relevant terminology to underpin points; confident awareness of key concepts

(e.g. language change, importance of meaning); effective use of stimulus material to support developing argument; strong engagement; coherent, academic style

RESPONSE 3

Strengths: basic indication of relevant text types (e.g. signs, newspapers); some very basic awareness of context ('public'), tenor ('formal') and opinions ('anger'); implicit links to stimulus material/question focus

Weaknesses: no need to explain what the essay will contain; no examples; no terminology; narrow range; technical inaccuracy ('its')

RESPONSE 4

Strengths: explicit links to stimulus material; purposeful sense of 'opinions'; using examples; accurate use of terminology; sound on meaning; effective use of wider knowledge to support argument; clear source information; coherent, academic style

Weaknesses: could be more analysis of stimulus material (e.g. more explicit reference to the signs and their specific features of punctuation); reference to 'longer written texts' could be supported with examples of specific text types; explanation needed about why apostrophes are not 'superfluous'; two sides of argument (apparently contradictory) need to be flagged up more clearly (i.e. 'possible to understand' council's position vs removing apostrophes from public signs 'sends the wrong kind of message')

RESPONSE 5

Strengths: demonstrates basic understanding of topic; some broad reference to stimulus material; proper noun identified correctly + example; some discussion of concepts (e.g. formality, prescriptivism), but simplistic; some attempt to engage

Weaknesses: limited wider references (no specific source information and refers to author by first name); lacks terms in places (use of 'word'); approach remains very general (e.g. 'subject mainly revolves around apostrophes'); technical inaccuracy (some lack of sentence control; non-agreement of subject and verb; spelling errors)

RESPONSE 6

Strengths: shows understanding of what punctuation is and its function; reference to Lowth and the potential for an overly complicated system; some awareness of the balance of rules vs personal judgement; link established between punctuation and context; secure link to issue in newspaper extract; sensible use of signs as evidence to support argument; using some terminology

Weaknesses: development needed in places (e.g. how we organise and control words/make meaning clear; contextual reference to 'embarrassment'; explanation of 'general' rules vs personal judgement); reference to Lowth's son not really tied to question focus; additional examples to support points.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES: HITTING THE TARGETS

This section is designed to develop familiarity with the criteria by which the essays will be assessed. The guide includes a breakdown of the AOs for the essay, and candidates need to make sure they are meeting these requirements in their responses.

Once learners have a clear idea of the key constituents of each AO, they can consider the essay extracts and identify where the AOs are being fulfilled. Clearly these are extracts from longer essays, but they can be used to highlight different approaches to the sample question, and to the 'Issues' essay in general.

The annotations on the sample responses suggest points where the AOs are being met. Since these are extracts rather than whole essays, the summative commentaries offer guidance about the general quality of the extract—references to the bands are used to provide an overview of the achievement in the section cited.

COMMENTARIES

RESPONSE 1

This response demonstrates qualities of low Band 2. There is a consistent attempt to focus on the question and some evidence of language study in the basic discussion of concepts (e.g. appropriateness, levels of formality and SE/non-SE). There is also some broad awareness of the ways in which context affects language use. Different text types are referenced (e.g. essay text message, letter of complaint). The only supporting example is not analysed linguistically. The approach can be rather simplistic (e.g. comments re. educational level, 'medieval' judgements), but there is some attempt to tackle attitudes. The absence of linguistic terminology, the technical inaccuracy (spelling and sentence control) and awkward expression mean that the response is weaker in AO1 than in AO2.

RESPONSE 2

This response demonstrates qualities of mid Band 4. There is a secure understanding of concepts with effective references to other sources (e.g. Crystal, Lowth, Greenbaum/Nelson) to support the argument. Secure discussion of the topic is underpinned by clear organisation and fluent, accurate expression. The terminology used is accurate and sensible, but this element of AO1 remains underdeveloped. The references to different text types are useful with points clearly linked to the focus of the question. However, examples are quite broad and so do not offer additional opportunities to use terms/methods of analysis. The approach is sound throughout, there are some purposeful comments about meaning, and the range of knowledge shows a secure understanding of the topic.

RESPONSE 3

This response demonstrates qualities of a secure Band 3. The focus on the question is clear and there is secure evidence of understanding re. the topic/context. The discussion of texting provides an appropriate example to support the point; the parallel discussion of a letter of complaint (cleverly linked by content) could have been developed. The use of terminology is effective and the expression is accurate and clear (Band 4). This response does less well, however, on AO2 because the wider knowledge is quite narrow in range.

RESPONSE 1

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO3: CONTEXT

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE
(ATTITUDES)

AO2: EXAMPLE
TEXT TYPE

AO2: EXAMPLE
TEXT TYPE

AO2: EXAMPLE

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO2: EXAMPLE
TEXT TYPE

There is still a very clear view point on the use of punctuation and therefore the person using it. Of course the judgement is widely based on context but this is very much based on our perceptions of the use of punctuation.

An example of this would be that the right punctuation is "appropriate" in formal situations such as letters this is based on the implication that wrong punctuation was a depiction of a person's lack of education and that has therefore influenced the appropriateness of punctuation in contexts, that rely on our education ability it is thought standard punctuation is far more sophisticated than non-standard punctuation, and judgements about it being inferior to have mistakes in writing is quite medieval on the subject. However mistakes like apostrophes are far less likely to be used in essays as it portrays a lack of education and all the connotations surrounding that.

This is associated with the immediacy of texting and social media and that is far quicker to miss out apostrophes and commas but still communicate clearly, such as using 'good to know I'll have to watch' instead of with punctuation 'that's good to know, I'll have to watch'. The instantaneous of technology, has meant non-standard punctuation is far more common, as it takes less time and therefore benefits us in that way. Non-standard punctuation can also be thought as more appropriate in particular contexts such as private writing because it is a comfortable and informal atmosphere this could be a consequence of the lack of negative.

In the particular context of a letter like a complaint the aim is to gain respect, be taken seriously and have an authority approach. All these things are part of standard punctuation demonstrating how stigmatised mistakes are and you won't be taken seriously by using non-standard punctuation.

AO1: TRYING
TO ENGAGE

AO2: EXAMPLE
TEXT TYPE

AO1: FOCUS
ON QUESTION

AO1: FOCUS
ON QUESTION

AO3: CONTEXT

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE
(ATTITUDES)

RESPONSE 2

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO3: CONTEXT

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO3: MEANING

AO1: TERMS

AO3: CONTEXT

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO2: EXAMPLE

AO3: MEANING

In a book called 'Examine Your English', the writers argue that punctuation should not be considered 'a mere nuisance' or a 'necessary' evil because it is essential to get your ideas down correctly. For them, muddled punctuation is a reflection of a muddled mind. They could be seen as strong **prescriptivists** because they suggest punctuation is critical to success: accurate punctuation makes sure written language can be understood by any reader and it is widely accepted as the **appropriate** in education and in **formal** contexts like government and the media. **Non-standard** punctuation, however, differs from the conventions established by the eighteenth and nineteenth century grammar writers who saw any deviation as wrong and wrote rhyming picture books like 'Punctuation personified' with a character called Mr Stops to help young children learn the rules of where to put full stops. Now attitudes are a bit more flexible. The linguists Greenbaum and Nelson state that some of the rules are 'obligatory' making you wrong if you do not follow them, but that some are 'optional' because writers can make choices depending on the effect they wish to create. For example, **commas** can change the meaning of a sentence. David Crystal uses this example: 'Snakes, which are poisonous, should be avoided' and 'Snakes which are poisonous should be avoided.' Commas around the **relative clause** make it **parenthetical** and therefore not an essential part of the meaning. This **nonrestrictive clause** suggests that all snakes should be avoided because they are all poisonous. The sentence without commas is described as **restrictive** because it says only some snakes are poisonous.

In fact, **non-standard** punctuation can depend on the context and in certain situations it may be acceptable. Novelists can use non-standard punctuation to create effects. The poet E.E. Cummings often completely ignored the rules of punctuation and **capitalisation** and the novelist James Joyce finished his novel 'Ulysses' with a chapter where there were only 2 **full stops**. This is a stream of conscious monologue and the **loose sentence structure** is meant to reflect the character of Molly Bloom because the reader is experiencing her thoughts. A PDE writer like Cormac McCarthy chooses not to use **speech marks** in his novels because he believes that they are not necessary if you write your dialogue very well. The effect is dramatic because it makes the conversation seem more spontaneous. This reflects the fact that both Robert Lowth in 1762 and Greenbaum and Nelson in the twenty-first century call punctuation an 'art' which suggests writers can experiment.

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO2: EXAMPLE

AO3:
MEANING

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO3:
MEANING

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

AO2: WIDER
KNOWLEDGE

RESPONSE 3

AO1: FOCUS ON QUESTION

AO3: CONTEXT

AO2: EXAMPLE TEXT TYPE

AO3: MEANING

AO2: EXAMPLE

AO1: TERMS

AO3: MEANING
AO1: TERMS

AO2: EXAMPLE TEXT TYPE

AO1: TERMS

Writers use different punctuation for the kind of text they are writing, the target audience and the purpose. In an **informal** context where writer and receiver know each other, there is not so much need to use conventions. This is really clear in texting because the message is more important than the technical issues. This is partly to do with speed and communicating on the move and partly to do with no judgements being made. Because the context is shared for both people the message can be less precise for example 'mine randomly turned itself off earlier when it turned back on battery wasnt even empty'. This message sent by a teenager to his mum uses no punctuation, the **pronoun references** (mine/it) are vague and it is **elliptical** (no **determiner** before **noun** 'battery'), but will still be understandable. It has no **initial capital**, no **full stops** after the first **main clause** ('mine ... turned ... off earlier'), no **apostrophe for the contracted negative verb 'wasnt'** and no **full stops** but the message is clear. In a letter of complaint about a faulty phone battery the style and punctuation would have to be more **formal** for a more public context e.g. punctuation between clauses, a capital for the **possessive determiner** 'My' and a **comma** after the **adverbial** 'when ...'

AO2: WIDER KNOWLEDGE

AO3: CONTEXT

AO1: FOCUS ON QUESTION

AO3: CONTEXT

Writing the essay

This is an opportunity for learners to put into practice all the things they have considered so far. Writing the essay could be:

- a timed task
- a 'walking, talking' exam
- an individual homework assignment
- group work in which a class plan is created and groups work on different elements of the essay (the ultimate aim being to create a model answer by using class/teacher comments to improve the individual segments).

Where this is an individual task, feedback should aim to consider how well learners have assimilated the knowledge gained from working through the exercises, as well as their ability to meet the AOs.