C2
Annotated responses

This document can be used for exam preparation for Skills for English: SELT at C2 level.

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Contents

Introduction

About Skills for English

In a Skills for English test, test takers can show their knowledge of the English language for a range of purposes, including working, studying, or living in an English-speaking country. The test is available in 6 levels, from A1 (Basic user) to C2 (Proficient user). The qualification is assured by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), an international leader in education and qualifications development, and powered by PSI, a global leader in workforce solutions with over 75 years' experience delivering testing programs to help people achieve success in their academic, personal, and work lives.

The one-session test is entirely computer based, and booking is simple with a choice of delivery channels and locations. Reading and Listening tests are automatically marked during the test session; Speaking and Writing tests are marked by trained and qualified examiners after test takers have finished the test.

About the C2 test

Tests at C2 level are made up of 4 separate tests: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing.

The result for the C2 test is simple: Pass or Fail for each test and overall.

Test takers must receive a Pass in all 4 tests to achieve an overall result of Pass.

How to use this document

This document can be used to help test takers prepare for the Skills for English: SELT Speaking and Writing tests at C2 level. It includes samples of C2 Speaking and Writing tests with transcripts showing examples of test taker responses to each question. The test taker responses also have comments from senior examiners to explain how each test taker performed. You can see the kind of questions and tasks that test takers can expect at C2 level, but please remember that in the actual test they may be asked about other topics.

These sample questions and tasks are taken from Practice Test 2, which is available on our website as an online practice test and a downloadable pdf:

https://skillsforenglish.com/test/selt/selt-practice-tests/

The C2 Speaking Test

There are 3 parts to the Speaking test.

In Part 1, test takers will answer questions about themselves (not assessed).

In Part 2, test takers will answer questions on 2 topics.

In Part 3, test takers will respond to prompts set around a specific scenario, such as giving advice to a friend.

There is no live interlocutor or examiner present; the computer delivers the questions as pre-recorded audio clips and the test taker's answers are recorded.

Examiners listen to the test takers' performance in both Parts 2 and 3 and allocate a mark based on their whole performance across both parts of the test.

Test takers are permitted to take notes during the Speaking test.

C2 Speaking sample test and performances

Overall comment about test takers' performances

Test taker A:
In the responses below, test taker A does not provide sufficient evidence of C2 language. See responses and comments from senior examiners for more information.
Test taker B:
In the responses below, test taker B is an example of a good C2 test taker. See responses and comments from senior examiners for more information.

C2 Speaking: Part 1

In Part 1, there are 5 questions about the test taker. These 5 questions are the same for all levels (A1 to C2).

In Part 1, the test taker responses are recorded but not assessed. Part 1 transcripts are not included in this document.

The questions in Part 1 are as follows:

1. What is your name?
2. Can you spell your first name, please?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your date of birth?
5. What do you do?

C2 Speaking: Part 2

In Part 2 there are questions about 2 topics. Test takers will answer 5 questions about each topic. Test takers have 30 seconds to answer questions 1 to 4 and 40 seconds to answer question 5 in both topic areas. Test taker responses are recorded. Test takers will hear each question once, followed by a beep.

> **TEST TAKER TIP:** Practise speaking with friends on topics of general interest so that what you say flows naturally. Practise forming constructive and relevant arguments and ideas. Remember to answer the questions fully and expand on information and ideas.

Questions and Responses: Transport and travel

Note: the words in the blue boxes are recorded instructions the test taker hears.

> Now I am going to ask you some questions about transport and travel. Remember to answer the questions after each beep. You will hear each question once. You will have up to 40 seconds to answer each question.

1. How could people in your hometown or region be encouraged to use public transport more often?

Test taker A:
In my wegion [region] now … well, the government, the … [unclear word], is doing a lot of improvements in terms of the public transportations. They are extend the lines of the train station improving the better more access for all kind of peoples.

Test taker B:
I believe they could be encouraged to use public transport more often if there was more public transport available to them! And, after that, potentially by advertising the fact that there are more options for them to use … I think the bottom line is that if you don't have sufficient public transport, it is very hard to rely on it. This is the problem we have in … where I live, in the area I live in, as it is quite rural. There might be different issues in other more developed areas, like overcrowding or not feeling safe.

2. What are the consequences if people continue using their own vehicles for transportation?

Test taker A:
Well, I would say that depend of which kind of behicles [vehicles] because nowadays it's getting more and more popular to use electric cars. If it's the normal fuel or diesel cars, yes you still have all the pollution that they produce, but as well it's the space they take because I would say that is a problem, too much cars.

Test taker B:
The consequences if people keep using their own transport would be increased traffic jams, I guess … an increased number of people on the roads, so harder to commute and longer commuting times. This also means increased usage of gas – petrol – and the negative environmental impact that comes with it. So, not only does people using their own cars more have a negative effect on the population and infrastructure, but also on the planet and impacting the temperature.

3. What environmental responsibilities should vehicle manufacturers have?

Test taker A:
The problem with electric cars is the batteries are no friendly at all, but at least they don't burn fuels, so you don't have that problem in the air, no air pollution affecting really to humans. But I would say that electric cars are better to the environment for peoples to buy than others behicles [vehicles].

Test taker B:
They should make sure that they provide low emission – low gas emission – cars, including making sure that they offer hybrid, cheaper alternatives to gas and petrol cars. By offering hybrid or electrical vehicles at a decent price and making sure there is a network to charge your electric cars, that would go some way to satisfying the car companies' responsibilities. I think that would have to come down from regulations from the government, though.

4. What could individuals do to become more environmentally friendly?

Test taker A:
Well, it's to use public transports, but most of the excuse of people to don't use public transport is because it's no good or it's no enough, so it have to be … it's a huge proyect [project] that has been going on and on for the last decades, so … but I would say that from the side of the user.

Test taker B:

First of all, people should vote for politicians who care about a better environment and have policies that will actually improve the environment. That's on a systemic level. On a personal level, I guess it's trying to use public transport more, and trying to avoid having a petrol car. People should take recycling seriously, limit their carbon footprint, and eat less meat because meat is one of the biggest producers of CO_2.

5. What actions could governments take to reduce their country's carbon footprint?

Test taker A:

I don't understand the words 'carbon footprint'.

Test taker B:

They can make laws which provide incentives to their people to acquire electric cars or hybrid options. National governments also need to make sure that they provide support to local governments and local entities, to ensure they actually have decent public transport options available to their population, Also, they should focus campaigns on things like eating more locally and avoiding, you know, unnecessary travel.

Questions and Responses: Being competitive

Now I am going to ask you about being competitive. Remember to answer the questions after each beep.

1. Would you describe yourself as a competitive person? Explain your answer.

Test taker A:

Yeah, I think so. Ummm ... I fink [think] anyways it's a good thing to be ... but yeah, I would describe myself as a competitive person in terms of the actions that I take for ... yeah, I think it's a word you can use to describe myself.

Test taker B:

Yes, I'd say I'm fairly competitive. It's probably ... it probably stems from the fact that I've got two younger brothers, into sports or games, so from a young age I was always in competition with family members. I also played sports like tennis in competitions. So, it was pretty much ingrained in me from a young age that to challenge yourself, you had to compete against others to see what your level is. Knowing how to improve is important, and you learn more from your defeats than

from your victories. So, competing is a good way to lose a lot, and you learn from that and improve.

2. Do you think it is important for schools to encourage competition between students? Why or why not?

Test taker A:
I would say yes. If you encourage competition in a healthy way, in kind of a positive way, yes, it will be very good because you create kids or students or teenagers. To be competitive doesn't mean to fight or to reject what the other person is thinking or doing, or if they are different … it's no about that … it's just to try to pursue it.

Test taker B:
It depends on the subject that they are trying to learn. I don't think academic learning should be evaluated against other people, but if you're talking about subjects like sport, yes, I think that competition might be a good way to promote improvement. However, at the same time you don't want to … you don't want students to lose their confidence in their ability to learn, and then they could totally lose interest, and that would have a negative impact on the desired outcome. So, yes and no. It depends really on the topic and subject.

3. To what extent is it necessary to be competitive in order to succeed professionally?

Test taker A:
I would say that, to the whole of the … [unclear word] but maybe we would imply … depending on which kind of position you have, job or activities you have to do. Because sometimes you have to give way or meet the other half … to be competitive at some point can create some kind of bad reaction from the other one, so it's until you can get … it's just … but no pass over the other person, I would say that would be the extent.

Test taker B:
I don't think it really matters that much. I think that to be good at what you do, you should have strong ethics. So, you can be competitive with yourself, in the sense of always striving to improve yourself, but that shouldn't mean that you are always in competition with other people. If you compare yourself too much to other people, then you might always have a skewed idea of your worth, and that might impact negatively, on both your work and your self-confidence. So, actually, I would even say that being competitive is probably a negative thing when it comes to career progression. You might put barriers in front of yourself and not apply yourself to

certain things because you think you're not good enough or not as good as other people.

4. In which situations can a competitive nature be a disadvantage? Explain your answer.

Test taker A:
That is a hard question. I would say, ummm, with situations where you are talking in some country … I think you may have some troubles and even legal troubles … I'm against of that still that exists around the world. I think where you will have a restrict of being yourself, you will have problems if you are competitive.

Test taker B:
If you're too competitive … again, as I mentioned in the question earlier … it can actually impact your self-worth, in a sense that if you are always comparing yourself to others, it may make you feel bad about yourself as there is always someone stronger and better than you at something. So, if you think that they deserve something more than you do, for example a promotion, you'll never apply yourself or reach your full potential, So, I think it's an advantage if you're competitive within yourself, striving to improve yourself and push yourself on a daily basis in whatever you're trying to achieve, be that sports or career. However, if your competitive nature means that you start to obsess over beating others, that can have a negative impact.

5. Competition between companies is desirable. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Test taker A:
I would say one hundred per cent. Competition between companies is bery [very] good. If you have just one company that is supplying or providing services or products to one group, that company get lazy or no … reduce the quality of the delivery. When you have two more companies, they start work more hard to satisfy them clients and I think, in overall, the market get benefits from that.

Test taker B:
It is desirable in a sense. It means that the public will get better products … I guess the public will ultimately choose who the winner is, you know, in the competition between the companies in terms of the products they are offering. So, intrinsically, there is an element of competition in business in terms of who is going to buy a product from company A or B. So perhaps it's not exactly desirable, but it just happens in business regardless of whether you want it or not. And it will actually

foster innovation and the survival of the fittest, meaning the better products will remain on the market.

Comments

<table>
<tr><td colspan="1">Test taker A:</td></tr>
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The test taker's answers do not always relate fully to the questions, for example when asked what environmental responsibilities vehicle manufacturers should have, they talk about why electric cars are better for the environment. They also misunderstand one of the questions, so their answer is minimal in length.

They are able to use straightforward grammatical structures accurately, for example, *you still have all the pollution that they produce, I would describe myself as a competitive person*. However, when they try to use more complex structures, they make errors which makes their message difficult to follow, *it's until you can get … it's just … but no pass over the other person.* At times even simple grammatical structures are inaccurate, *To be competitive doesn't mean … (*<u>being</u> competitive), *they are extend (*they are <u>extending</u>*), too much cars* (too <u>many</u> cars).

The test taker uses simple straightforward expressions accurately (*burn fuels, a huge project, legal troubles*), but choices of complex vocabulary and expressions are often imprecise, which makes it difficult to understand the meaning, for example, *meet the other half* (meet the other person halfway), *bad reaction* (bad feelings?), *pass over* (ignore? upstage?) *have a restrict of* (place restrictions on).

The test taker expresses some ideas clearly, for example, *The problem with electric cars is the batteries are no*(t) *friendly at all, but at least they don't burn fuels, so you don't have that problem in the air.* However, cohesive devices tend to be simple (*the problem with, but, so*). Lack of structure and problems with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation mean the message is sometimes difficult to follow, for example, *I would say that, to the whole of the …* [unclear word] *but maybe we would imply … depending on which kind of position you have, job or activities you have to do.*

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The test taker's responses are focused and relevant at all times. They give fully extended answers, developing their ideas and opinions effectively. For example, when talking about what individuals could do to be environmentally friendly, they talk first about voting for politicians who care about the environment, and then move on to talk about individuals' responsibilities in terms of recycling and limiting their carbon footprint. They also mention eating less meat and explain why consuming meat is an issue.

The test taker uses a wide range of complex grammatical structures accurately, for example, *You might put barriers in front of yourself and not apply yourself to certain things because you think you're… not as good as other people.* (modal expressing possibility, modal + negative, verb + verb, present simple, comparative). On occasions, they make minor errors, for example, *you had to compete … to see what your level is* (your level <u>was</u>), *they can make laws* (they <u>could</u> make laws).

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This test taker demonstrates excellent control over a wide range of language. They show that they are able to use collocations, less common vocabulary and idiomatic expressions successfully, for example, *pretty much ingrained in me, a skewed idea, striving to improve yourself, impact your self-worth, obsess over beating others, foster innovation.*

The test taker's responses are always well structured and coherent. They occasionally hesitate in order to reformulate their ideas, for example, *it's probably … it probably stems from the fact that…,* but this has no impact on the clarity of their response. They use a range of cohesive devices to good effect for example, *the bottom line is …, this also means …, that would go some way to …, on a personal level …, however at the same time …, so actually I would even say that…*

C2 Speaking: Part 3

In Part 3, the test taker will talk about a subject on a role card. The words on the role card will help them.

They can talk about more points if they like, but they must say something about each point on the role card.

They have 1 minute to look at the role card, then they will have up to 5 minutes to respond. Test taker responses are recorded.

TEST TAKER TIP: Read, think about, and discuss topics of general interest in English. Practise talking about concrete and abstract issues and giving advice.

Task

> **Role Card: Giving advice to a friend about their time management.**
>
> - Explain why some people find it difficult to manage their time effectively.
>
> - Describe how your friend's poor time management has affected you.
>
> - Point out the consequences of poor time management in a work or study context.
>
> - Give advice and suggestions about how your friend can improve their time management.
>
> - Explore the benefits of improving their time management on a personal and professional level.

Responses

Test taker A:
Well, the first question: *explain why some people find it difficult to manage their time effectively*, if I will be talking with my friend, I will be explaining that manage … everybody has some or certain level. I would say that is the main point, when you don't ending up saying 'I don't have time' and so on. Umm, *describe how your friend's poor time management has affected you*. Well, sometimes it's … if it will be like some people arriving late, or when you are

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discussing a social proyect [project] and they don't have the deliveries, it lates your work as well. The overall result of the proyect [project] and the team.

Ummm, *point out the consequences of poor time management in a work or study context*. The consequences of that in terms of work is that you don't deliver your tasks and proyects [projects] on time, so can affect the whole company or your co-workers, and ending up affecting your clients as well. In a study context, if you have a group of students … some of them will be, talking about the last topic of being competitive, some people will want to be the best ones.

Give advice and suggestions about how your friend can improve their time management. I think I mentioned before, is clear objects and clear deadlines, and as well the … [unclear word]. Sometimes you have objectives, but sometimes you need the … the objectives. Some people need the result more than what we to do, and probably that will help them to do their often things. I think, it's not that people doesn't have time. So, I would say to conbince [convince] your team members keep objectives very clear.

Ummm, *explore the benefits of improving their time management on a personal and professional level*. Well, the benefits are huge, are many, in terms of person … for example, your family if you have kids and, for example, you don't manage well your time to wake up early, before your kids because they have to go to the school. Well, wake up earlier, while they are sleeping, and do your exercise in this times or other things, and then you will available. And then, if you want to study something as well, you can always kind of … sometimes you can do it.

[3 minutes]

Test taker B:

Some people struggle with managing their time efficiently or effectively because they are badly organised. Perhaps they forget to write down appointments or to block time to actually achieve what they want to do, like for work or in their personal lives. So, I think it's usually just a lack of organisation that usually means people organise their time poorly. Maybe some people just don't allow enough time to do a certain task or get to a certain place, so they are always late.

In our case, your bad time management has affected me recently. My partner and I were trying to organise going out for an evening with other friends, but it was very hard to contact my partner and then when I asked what date and time would work for, they didn't really know because they are quite poorly organised and known as the late one!. That impacted us being able to book a restaurant and know which time, or even which day, everyone was going to get together. You were the main blocker.

Time management is important in your personal life, but also for work and study. I know you often handed in assignments late at school and consequently lost marks. And you didn't prepare very well for exams and then ended up staying up all night trying to revise the night before. At work, this poor time management can also impact your career progression or your ability to deliver your work and reach your goals on a weekly basis.

What you could do to improve your time management would be to keep your calendar neatly organised and write everything that you've got to do that day or that week into your calendar. Also, make sure that the calendar is visible to other people who share your life or need access to it to organise things around you. You should also block focus time in your calendar at work so that you actually have some protected time to do your administrative work without being interrupted by other colleagues.

I think the benefits will be that you'll have better social and work interactions, and better protected time so that you can actually feel like you're finishing what you want to. It's also less mental load if you write something down, as you don't have to think about it all the time and have it on your mind. It's a good little tip, I think, to write it down so it's out of your mind. Our brains are not meant to be keeping lists – they are meant to be creative and to think. And I think you'll feel better at work if you organise your time more efficiently, but also in your social and private life.

[4 minutes]

Comments

Test taker A:

The test taker addresses all the bullet points but they misunderstand the scenario of giving advice to a friend. As a result, they tend to read out a bullet point and then talk generally about it, rather than giving advice. This means that the response is not wholly relevant. Their argument is also often unclear, for example, *if I will be talking with my friend, I will be explaining that manage … everybody has some or certain level. I would say that is the main point …*

They use simple grammatical structures accurately. They try to use more complex structures, but there are frequent mistakes when they do so, for example, *if I will be talking with my friend, I will be explaining …* (If I spoke to my friend, I would explain …), can affect the whole company …, and ending up affecting … (it can

affect the whole company and <u>end</u> up affecting ...). These errors mean that the message is often unclear.

The test taker shows that they can use a range of simple and less common words and expressions accurately, for example, *end(ing) up, keep objectives very clear, the benefits are huge, wake up early*. However, mistakes and simplifications with vocabulary are noticeable, for example, *It lates your work* (it delays your work), *do that often things* (?), *want to be the best ones* (want to excel?), *you can always kind of ... sometimes you can do it* (?). These errors reduce the clarity of the test taker's response.

The test taker uses cohesive devices, but these are often simple, and repetition of these demonstrates a lack of range, for example, *well, or, I think, and then.* Their communication is often unclear as a result of errors and lack of structure.

Test taker B:

The test taker's responses are generally focused and relevant to the bullet points. They expand their ideas and arguments well and give fully developed responses.

They use complex grammatical structures accurately and generally show good control, for example, *ended up staying up all night trying to revise ...* (past simple, verb + verb+-ing + verb+ing), *you'll feel better at work if you organise your time* (first conditional). The test taker makes some mistakes, but these do not affect the overall clarity of the message, for example, *our brains are not meant to be keeping lists* (our brains are not meant to <u>keep</u> lists).

This test taker uses a wide range of vocabulary and expressions. Word choice is usually precise, for example, *Struggle with managing their time, lack of organisation, the main blocker, lost marks, impact your career progression, keep your calendar neatly organised.* They also use idiomatic and colloquial language when appropriate, for example, *known as 'the late one', block focus time, a good little tip.*

The test taker's response is structured, clear and fluent. They use a good range of linking words accurately and these make the message easy to follow, for example, *in our case, time management is important in ... but also for ..., what you could do ..., It's also less mental load ... as you don't have to ....* There are occasional slips with cohesion, for example, in the second paragraph, it is unclear who was poorly organized, the speaker's partner or friend.

The C2 Writing Test

There are 2 parts to this test. Test takers must write a response to both parts.

In Part 1, test takers will write a short e-mail, forum or social media post, or a similar piece of communication. They should write between 150 and 200 words in Part 1.

In Part 2, test takers will write a discursive text in response to a given statement, point of view, problem, or argument. They may be asked to give their opinion or present an argument as well as describe or explain a view or position. They should write between 250 and 300 words in Part 2.

Test takers will have 1 hour for the C2 Writing test. We recommend spending 20 minutes on Part 1 and 40 minutes on Part 2.

C2 Writing sample test and performances

Overall comment about test takers' performances

Test taker A:
In the responses below, test taker A does not provide sufficient evidence of C2 language. See responses and comments from senior examiners for more information.
Test taker B:
In the responses below, test taker B is an example of a good C2 test taker. See responses and comments from senior examiners for more information.

C2 Writing: Part 1

Part 1 will always be a short e-mail, forum or social media post, or a similar piece of communication.

Test takers should aim to write between 150 and 200 words and spend about 20 minutes on Part 1.

TEST TAKER TIP: Practise writing in formal and informal styles. Show that you can use words and phrases appropriate to the style when you write. Make sure you write something about each bullet point. Always proof-read your answer to check for mistakes.

Task

Many shops have been closing in town centres due to the growth of internet shopping in recent years, with a corresponding impact on local facilities.
Write a forum post highlighting the importance of local shops to the communities they serve.

In your forum post:
- evaluate the effects of internet shopping.
- explain why you believe it is important to keep town centres alive.
- propose how traditional shops can contribute to that survival.

You should write between 150 and 200 words.

Responses

Test taker A:

To the local council,

Hi. I am owner of a small shop on the Market. I am writing to you in order address a serious issues within my shop and that relates to low level of audience and custumers visiting my dear shop during recent years.

I understand that nowadays people prefer buy online and that way may be cheaper and faster than visiting local shops. However, I believe that both local shop owners and the council can work together to fix this.

Among all ideas I have in mind, I believe that the ones that could give us immediate result is to have a common website which lists all the shops so all of us can promote and shoe our products and new products to the community so we can convince and motive people to come and visit us.

We could immediately address the decrese in visits to our local shops, and there are other activities we could do together in order to save local market, and propose *how traditional shops can contribute to that survival*. [italicised text copied from task]

Please let me know if we can arrange a meeting to discuss more and start to take actions together.

[197 words]

Test taker B:

In recent years, we have seen a decrease in activity at local independent shops and a significant increase in online shopping. Internet shopping has made it so easy to order goods at the click of a button. The impact is social, economic and environmental: social because online shopping doesn't promote meaningful social interactions, economic because it means that e-commerce companies are reaping the rewards at the detriment of our local shop owners, and finally environmental, as this new trend means that we are now importing goods from further and further away, meaning increased pollution.

Town centres need to be supported and nurtured as vital community hubs. Without them, we would be losing meaningful social platforms where people from all walks of life can mingle, exchange, and learn from one another. This could result in rising tensions between different socio-economic groups, and increased crime. Retail outlets on the high street also provide much-needed jobs for community members.

Traditional shops should organise events to promote and energise our town centres. If cultural activities are organised within the boundaries of our town

centres, this would renew the attractiveness of shopping locally. Local governments should provide grants for these kinds of initiatives.

[198 words]

Comments

Test taker A:

This test taker's response does not directly relate to the task. They have written a letter instead of a forum post. They focus on methods of addressing their decrease in business instead of evaluating, explaining, and talking about how shops can help keep town centres alive. The response is also below the word count. Paragraphing and coherence, however, are managed appropriately. The test taker shows some ability to use cohesive devices, for example, *I understand that…, However, among all ideas, have a common website which…*

Overall, grammar is reasonably accurate, but the test taker tends to rely on simple structures. Basic errors are also noticeable, especially with plurals and articles, *save local market* (save the local market), *a serious issues* (a serious issue / serious issues), *immediate result* (immediate results).

This test taker uses a limited range of vocabulary, and word choice is sometimes inappropriate and at times the message is unclear, for example, *low level of audience* (a restricted number of shoppers?), *common website* (shared website?), *motive people* (motivate people). Spelling errors in simple words are also noticeable, for example, *custumers* (customers), *shoe (*show*), decrese* (decrease).

The test taker has copied a section of one of the bullet points into their answer. This suggests, either that they were unable to fully understand the bullet point, or they lacked the ideas or appropriate language to address it.

Test taker B:

The test taker addresses all the bullet points, and their ideas and arguments are well-developed and relevant. For example, in response to the first bullet point, they mention three impacts then give details about who or what is impacted. The writing flows smoothly, and a range of cohesive devices are used to good effect, for example, *in recent years, and finally, without them, this could result in.*

This test taker consistently uses a varied range of grammar flexibly and accurately, for example, *Without them, we would be losing meaningful social platforms where people from all walks of life can mingle* (ellipsis – 'if we were without them', modal + continuous form, relative pronoun, modal – ability / possibility). Punctuation is always accurate.

The test taker uses a very broad range of relevant vocabulary, for example, *promote meaningful social interactions, vital community hubs, supported and nurtured*. Collocations and idiomatic language are used naturally and effectively, for example, *at the click of a button, reaping the rewards, rising tensions.* Their writing is error free, and spelling is accurate at all times.

C2 Writing: Part 2

The Part 2 task will always ask for a discursive response. Test takers will be given a statement, point of view, problem, or argument. They may be asked to give their opinion or present an argument as well as describe or explain a view or position.

Test takers should aim to write between 250 and 300 words and spend about 40 minutes on Part 2.

TEST TAKER TIP: Practise writing discursive pieces expressing your thoughts, opinions, and arguments clearly. Think about how your answer is paragraphed. Make sure you have an introduction, a main body, and a conclusion, and that your ideas are linked together well. You need to address <u>all</u> the elements of the task. Always proof-read your answer to check for mistakes.

Task

Some educationalists argue that the formal classroom education of children should start from when they are four years old. Others disagree.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of starting formal education at such an age?

What, in your view, is the best age to start formal education?

You should write between 250 and 300 words.

Responses

Test taker A:

On the one hand, many people believe that children in their early years should spend as much time as they can with their parents, they can develup a helthy and natural children-parents relationship. These parents may prefer their children to start formal education from five years old or even older then they can develop enough adult and avoid some damage in the future such as some syndrome.

On the other hand, there are other group of parents that believe that children should start formal education at four or even before. These parents argue that children have to learn to socialising with other kids and start to luarn different things from different people instead of parents. These parents believe that an early training will make their children quicker and stronger that just being at home with the same people all the time.

[141 words]

Test taker B:

The age at which a child starts school could arguably have an impact on their whole ability to survive and succeed in later life. Consequently, it is crucial that appropriate decisions are made regarding this.

 First of all, let's look at the advantages of children starting school at a young age. Children crave boundaries and camaraderie, and they develop faster and thrive when given a setting to explore, interact and learn how to behave as part of a wider group of individuals. This will ultimately assist them in developing confidence, managing disagreement with other children, and learning how to interact with adults. Patience is another virtue taught in a formal educational setting. This will develop a child's empathy and compassion in the long run. Schools are also trained to detect potential personality disorders; these are best tackled early on in an individual's life if flagged by teachers.

Now let's consider the disadvantages. Formal education can be an awful experience if taught by poorly trained or dispassionate people. Furthermore, not all children feel ready to be taken out of their comfort zone at the age of four as we know that not all children develop social skills at the same pace. The shock might be too great for some of them which could eventually result in a mild trauma.

To conclude, I believe that an ideal age to start formal education does not exist. In a sense, it really depends on the developmental stage of the child. It could be sensible for some three-year-olds to start their formal educational journey, yet a terrible idea for some five-year-olds with social or behavioural troubles. I truly

believe there isn't a 'one-size-fits-all' answer to this topic; however, I do understand why organisations have to set a minimum and universal age on the matter.

[299 words]

Comments

<table>
<tr><td>Test taker A:</td></tr>
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The test taker has not directly addressed all of the points in the task. In the second paragraph they mention three advantages of starting school at the age of four, but in the first paragraph, they also discuss reasons some parents might want their child to start school when they are older. This means that the disadvantages are only implied, and they do not give their own view about the best age. There are only two paragraphs, partly because the response is below the minimum word count. The test taker uses *on the one hand* and *on the other hand* at the start of the paragraphs. However, apart from this, the range of cohesive devices they use is limited, for example, *and, these parents* (repeated three times), *then, instead of.*

The grammar structures tend to be less complex. When they attempt to use more complex structures, errors are noticeable, for example, *have to learn to socialising* (have to learn to socialise). Basic errors with plural forms and articles are also noticeable, *some syndrome* (a syndrome), *other group of parents* (other groups of parents), *an early training* (early training). Errors with punctuation also make the message difficult to follow at times, ... *start formal education from five years old or even older then they can develop ...*(... start formal education from five years old or even older. Then they can develop ...).

This test taker uses a limited range of vocabulary. Inaccurate or imprecise word choice also means that the message is unclear at times, for example, *children-parents relationship* (parent-child relationship), *develop enough adult* (be more mature?), *damage ... such as some syndrome* (disorders such as mental health problems?), *different things from different people* (new skills and ideas from teachers and their peers?). Some basic spelling mistakes are also noticeable, *develop* (develop), *healthy* (healthy), *luarn* (learn).

</td></tr>
<tr><td>Test taker B:</td></tr>
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In this task, the test taker fully addresses both questions in the task. Their ideas are clearly communicated and well-developed at all times. They use a range of cohesive devices (*consequently, let's look at ..., this will ultimately ..., now let's consider ..., it really depends on ...,, I truly believe ... however ...),* and structure their answer into clear paragraphs.

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Grammar is flexible and fully accurate, for example, *Formal education can be* (modal of possibility) *an awful experience if taught by … (*ellipsis in passive – if <u>it is</u> taught by*), not all children feel ready to be taken out of their comfort zone (*verb + passive phrasal verb*), The shock might be too great … which could eventually … (*modal of possibility, relative clause with modal of possibility*). Punctuation is also consistently accurate.

The test taker displays a wide range of language and shows that they can always use this accurately and appropriately, for example, *children crave boundaries, camaraderie, develop empathy and compassion, detect potential personality disorders … if flagged.* There is also good evidence that they can use idiomatic language appropriately, for example, *taken out of their comfort zone, in the long run, a 'one-size-fits-all' answer.* Spelling is accurate at all times.