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Examiners' Report  
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Pearson Edexcel International A-Level  
In English Language (WEN03)

Unit 3: Crafting Language

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## Introduction

The source booklet consisted of four texts relating to the topic of Fairy Tales and Folk Stories taken from a range of sources, and most candidates clearly engaged with the task of producing a script for a spoken presentation on this subject. Section A prompted a variety of valid approaches to the task and a number of skilled pieces that used the material creatively and demonstrated insight into writing for a listening audience. There were very few responses that did not manage to produce a convincing presentation of some kind, although at all levels some candidates showed less skill when selecting and editing material from the source texts.

The second task required the candidates to produce an analytical commentary on the text produced in Section A. This commentary should explore the intended audience, purpose and context of the presentation script and how this influenced the candidates' choice of register, tone and language techniques, as well as discussing structure, organisation and how the original sources were adapted to create a new text. For many candidates, comments on audience, purpose and context proved to be more insightful than analysis of language techniques.

Candidates continue to find Section B more of a challenge than Section A, although more are now timing their responses more carefully to allow enough time for the thirty mark commentary.

Overall, candidates produced work which was often engaging and sometimes highly convincing as a presentation to a listening audience. Similarly, many commentaries at all levels included carefully considered ideas about audience, purpose and context and comments on these ideas that showed some insight. Centres continue to prepare candidates for the exam in a way that enables them to demonstrate their ability to write both creatively and analytically.

## Section A

At all levels, candidates showed the ability to write with engagement and flair, often alongside some understanding of the genre and the potential audiences for their presentation. However, where candidates made better use of the source materials, achievement was much higher. Centres should continue to work on their candidates' ability to select key information from the source texts and use that information to create a completely original new text. Some candidates used only a little material from the sources, resulting in presentations that were often well expressed and entertaining, but

relying too much on material from the candidates' personal knowledge of fairy tales or Disney movies.

Equally, significant direct "lifting" from the source texts, even with some attempt to reorganise, reframe or paraphrase the material, is not a productive approach to this question. Inevitably, the writing can lack originality and flair and the responses can be quite long, as candidates struggle to be selective with the information. Even at the higher levels, where candidates were often able to adopt a fluent and lively voice when writing sections entirely from their own imagination or experience, many included passages that were lifted from the source with only minor amendments.

At the lower levels, this kind of reliance on the language of the source texts can be quite significant. In particular, many students had adopted the approach of just editing the British Library education pages or the newspaper article about ancient origins of fairy tales, so that whole sentences or paragraphs were retained; essentially copying the original text word for word in an abbreviated form. Inevitably, this limited achievement as the style, tone and register of the source material had not been adapted to suit the new audience, purpose and genre. More successful responses managed to combine their additional creative ideas and original language with facts, stories and people mentioned in the source texts.

It should be noted that candidates do not need to reference the source texts in their own original writing and can present paraphrased or quoted material as their own ideas. For example, rather than explaining that they had read a newspaper article about the research of the cultural anthropologist from Durham University, more successful responses might actually adopt the persona of Dr Jamie Tehrani and present information from their own research to an audience of students from the university.

Many candidates chose to adopt this kind of specific persona for their presenter, such as a teacher, lecturer or museum curator. This approach tended to be successful and enabled candidates to write in an appropriate style and potentially engage their stated audience more successfully. At all levels, many candidates showed a subtle understanding of audience, purpose and context, which was very encouraging. Responses were aimed at a variety of appropriate listeners and delivered by many different types of speakers. This led to a range of relevant styles and registers and often helped candidates to focus their writing effectively.

Where candidates had identified a specific audience, purpose and context for their presentation (including who the speaker was) and then adapted their language in an appropriate way, they were able to transform the material in the source texts

convincingly throughout. However, where there was over-reliance on the source texts, there was little change in register and tone in the new text from those of the source material, which tended to result in less realistic responses.

Finally, the most successful scripts produced in response to this task were designed to accompany a planned presentation, one that may have had a visual element such as slides, pictures or objects in reality, with a clear sense that the spoken element of the presentation was scripted rather than spontaneous. Candidates are not expected to write dialogue or representations of spontaneous speech in tasks for Section A when the question specifies genres such as speeches, talks or presentations. Similarly, candidates would never be expected to draw slides or pictures, but they could make reference to them within their planned speech if appropriate.

## Section B

Where candidates had allowed sufficient time to produce a detailed commentary and had covered a range of features from their own writing, perceptive and accurate analytical commentaries were produced; if they prioritise planning and writing for Section B, candidates are more likely to cover a range of different methods and effects within the commentary. For a few candidates, writing over-long responses for Section A limited the time available to produce a meaningful response for Section B.

Many candidates were able to make some insightful and considered comments on audience, purpose and context and link these to register and tone. There was often a clear sense of who would be listening to their presentation and why they might be interested in the in the topic of fairy stories and folk tales. Moreover, this had enabled candidates to tailor their anecdotes, facts or details from the texts to build their listeners' interest in the origins and history of these stories, as well guiding decisions made about register and tone. It was encouraging to see that the majority of candidates at all levels had made specific decisions about audience, purpose and context before writing their speeches, enabling them to make detailed comments about these factors in their response to Section B.

However, at the lower levels, comments on audience, purpose and context were often not linked to specific effects or language choices. This is an area where candidates at all levels could achieve better results in their commentaries, by giving more detailed evidence and analysis of how they crafted their writing to meet the requirements of their stated audience, purpose and context. Many commentaries at the lower levels lacked

terminology, exemplification or close analysis of technique. This was particularly disappointing to see for those candidates who had produced an effective response for Section A.

Candidates at the higher levels were more able to describe the examples they provided using relevant terminology and to analyse the intended effect of their writing techniques. Similarly, the range and relevance of technical methods and terminology explored were often a discriminator between the lower and higher levels. For the commentary, candidates need a toolkit of a range of terminology and techniques to discuss and this is an area where centres can continue to develop their candidates' knowledge.

Some candidates devoted a significant proportion of their commentary to a detailed explanation of where and how they had used the material from the source texts. This type of discussion can be helpful when combined with an exploration of methods and techniques, or to explain how choosing which information to use was influenced by the audience, for example. However, it is not helpful to include a great deal of this kind of descriptive comment unless it is used to explain or analyse language choices made when reshaping the material.

## Paper Summary

The candidates were able to take inspiration from the source materials, producing engaging work at all levels. The task was accessible for all and many candidates had clearly enjoyed the topic and showed confidence when writing their presentation script. Where candidates managed their time well and had a clear sense of audience, purpose and context, detailed commentaries were produced in Section B to explore the writing process and analyse the language choices made.

Centres can continue to help their candidates by developing their skills in selecting relevant information from the source materials and then using that information in a completely original new text. For the commentary, candidates would benefit from a more comprehensive range of technical methods and terminology with which to comment on their own writing. Similarly, encouraging candidates to make consistent links with a specific audience, purpose and context enables them to make more insightful comments about the choices they have made in their writing. For this unit, candidates should build

on the skills and techniques first studied for WEN01, applying these analytical and evaluative methods to their own original writing.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

#### Section A

- Take the time to decide on a specific audience, purpose and context before you start writing and try to adopt an appropriate register, tone and language techniques.
- Be selective with the material you use from the source texts, combining it with your own original writing; avoid any direct “lifting” of whole sentences or sections from the material, unless deliberately quoting an individual
- Plan your response, paying close attention to structure and organisation; you do not have to follow the same structure as the source material.
- Think about your commentary when planning your response to Section A, noting down any decisions you have made or techniques you have used that you could explore in Section B.
- Time your response and make sure you leave enough time for Section B.

#### Section B

- Explain why you chose the language methods and techniques you used in your response to Section A, and evaluate their effect on your new audience, purpose and genre.
- Link technical features to audience, purpose and context; explain why the language used was appropriate and be as specific as you can.
- Develop a flexible “toolkit” of frameworks that can be applied to a variety of texts and techniques, along with a range of linguistic terminology.
- Always supports your points with examples from your writing, or from the source materials, as appropriate.





