

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, FREESTONE
English Language (1128)
Mid-Year Examination Revision Summary
Paper 1 (Writing)

1. Examination Framework (Based on the SEAB Syllabus)

Paper 1: Writing (1 hour 50 minutes, 70 marks)

This paper is divided into three sections.

Section A: Editing (10 marks)

In a given text of continuous prose of not more than 250 words, candidates identify and then edit grammatical errors by writing the corrections in the spaces provided. Errors in punctuation and spelling will not be tested in this section.

Section B: Situational Writing (30 marks)

Candidates write a text of 250 – 350 words based on a given situation which will involve viewing a visual text. Candidates are required to write the text (e.g., an email, a letter, a report or a speech) to suit the purpose, audience and context.

Assessment Criteria

- Awareness of purpose, audience and context
- Relevance
- Development and organisation of information/ideas
- Appropriate use of given information and visual stimulus

Assessment Rubrics – Task Fulfilment (Band 1, 9 – 10 marks)

- Good understanding of purpose.
- Clear awareness of context and audience.
- Organisational structure and format entirely appropriate.
- All required points developed in detail, fully amplified and well organised.
- Given information and visual stimulus well-used to justify personal opinion and interpretation.

Assessment Rubrics – Language (Band 1, 18 – 20 marks)

- Highly accurate, apart from very occasional slips.
- Sentence structures varied for particular effects.
- Verb forms largely correct and appropriate tenses consistently used.
- Vocabulary wide and precise.
- Punctuation accurate and helpful.
- Spelling accurate, apart from very occasional slips.
- Paragraphs have unity, are linked, and show evidence of planning.
- Tone and register entirely appropriate.

Section C: Continuous Writing (30 marks)

Candidates choose one out of four topics to write a text of 350 – 500 words in continuous prose. The topics set may cover different types of texts, e.g., narrative or exposition.

Assessment Criteria

- Accuracy of language in terms of sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Appropriate use of varied vocabulary.
- Clarity of expression and organisation.
- Relevance of content.
- Appropriateness of register and tone.

Assessment Rubrics (Band 1, 27 – 30 marks)

- Highly accurate, apart from very occasional slips.
- Sentence structures varied for particular effects.
- Verb forms largely correct and appropriate tenses consistently used.
- Vocabulary wide and precise.
- Punctuation accurate and helpful.
- Spelling accurate, apart from very occasional slips.
- Paragraphs have unity, are linked, and show evidence of planning.
- Consistently relevant; interest aroused and sustained.
- Tone and register entirely appropriate.

2. Content – Unit 12: Editing

There are many types of grammar rules that can be assessed in editing.

2.1 Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject-verb agreement states that the subject and its verb must be both singular or both plural.

2.2 Tenses

Tenses include base, singular present, present participle, past and past participles.

2.3 Preposition

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between an object.

2.4 Articles

Definite article – '*the*', and the indefinite articles – '*a*' or '*an*'.

2.5 Determiners

Determiners includes demonstratives, possessives and quantifiers.

2.6 Pronouns

A pronoun is a reference to a noun, such as '*he*', '*she*' or '*they*'.

2.7 Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word that connects similar words or groups of words such as phrases, clauses and sentences.

2.8 Infinitives

The infinitive is the base form of a verb.

2.9 Word Forms

Examples of word forms include verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs

2.10 Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are verbs that indicate likelihood, ability, permission or obligation (e.g., can / could).

Example 1

Animals are savagely used and subjected to a considerable amount of unnecessary suffering in the name at necessity, or under the title of progress and civilization. But does progress have to involves the needless suffering of animals? Do we, in the name of technological advance, have to destroy the animal kingdoms? There is no doubt that humanity is inflicting massive suffering on animals who is totally at our mercy. Animals and birds are blinded with acids, subjected to repeated shocks, being poisoned, injected with diseases, frozen, starved and amputated and this are all carried out in the name of 'human progress'. Every day of the year, millions of animals are slowly blinded, tortured, frozen to be revived and re-frozen, starve or left to die of thirst, often only after various glands have been entirely or partially destroyed. The victims' reactions are recorded. There suffering may last for weeks, months or years, before death (the only relief) comes at them. Often, they are brought back to life and then subjected to other tortures.

Worked Answer 1

Animals are savagely used and subjected to a considerable amount of unnecessary suffering in the name at necessity, or under the title of progress and civilization. But does progress have to involves the needless suffering of animals? Do we, in the name of technological advance, have to destroy the animal kingdoms? There is no doubt that humanity is inflicting massive suffering on animals who is totally at our mercy. Animals and birds are blinded with acids, subjected to repeated shocks, being poisoned, injected with diseases, frozen, starved and amputated and this are all carried out in the name of 'human progress'. Every day of the year, millions of animals are slowly blinded, tortured, frozen to be revived and re-frozen, starve or left to die of thirst, often only after various glands have been entirely or partially destroyed. The victims' reactions are recorded. There suffering may last for weeks, months or years, before death (the only relief) comes at them. Often, they are brought back to life and then subjected to other tortures.

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REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INSTEAD OF UNDERLINE. FOR LINES WITH NO ERROR, PLEASE TICK. THE EXAMPLE SHOWN HERE IS ONLY FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES.

Adapted from 2019 BPGHS English Language Mid-Year Examination S4EXP/S5NA Paper 1

Example 2

The numerous bans on plastic shopping bags have arisen due to new findings regarding the extend of harm caused by plastic in our environment. Since plastic is not biodegradable, it ends up either in landfills and as litter. Plastic can take hundreds of years to decompose, releasing toxins into the soil and water on the process. Additionally, littered plastic are also a threat to the health of wildlife, as much animals ingest it thinking it is food and can have problems thereafter breathing and digesting. The Worldwatch Institute reports that above 267 species of marine wildlife are known to have suffered from entanglement or ingestion of marine debris, most of which is compose of plastic, causing tens of thousands of marine wildlife to die every year. It is hard to measure an impact of pre-existing plastic bag bans, but environmental groups continue to push for more of such bans. They suggest a ready alternative: the reusable bag.

Worked Answer 2

The numerous bans on plastic shopping bags have arisen due to new findings regarding the extend of harm caused by plastic in our environment. Since plastic is not biodegradable, it ends up either in landfills and as litter. Plastic can take hundreds of years to decompose, releasing toxins into the soil and water on the process. Additionally, littered plastic are also a threat to the health of wildlife, as much animals ingest it thinking it is food and can have problems thereafter breathing and digesting. The Worldwatch Institute reports that above 267 species of marine wildlife are known to have suffered from entanglement or ingestion of marine debris, most of which is compose of plastic, causing tens of thousands of marine wildlife to die every year. It is hard to measure an impact of pre-existing plastic bag bans, but environmental groups continue to push for more of such bans. They suggest a ready alternative: the reusable bag.

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Adapted from 2016 CHIJ St. Nicholas English Language Prelim Examination S4EXP Paper 1

Example 3

If you enter a department store carrying a bag of candy, an umbrella or wheeling a baby carriage you will become an object of suspicion. After you have entered, if a clerk or floorwalker calls out “Two-Ten” you know that the suspicion had crystallized and that you are regarded as a potential shoplifter. Shoplifting is one bigger problem for the merchandiser; apparently, department stores lose three percent from their sales through thieving from the counters. In the operation of the candy bag, the woman stands at the counter displaying rings and cheap jewellery as though she is waiting for someone and dips into her candy bag. Her hand goes from the candy bag to her mouth. But on the downwards trip something from the counter goes into the bag. The movement is so simple and insuspicious that it is almost impossible to detect. On the other hand, there is nothing subtle about the umbrella method.

Worked Answer 3

If you enter a department store carrying a bag of candy, an umbrella or wheeling a baby carriage you will become an object of suspicion. After you have entered, if a clerk or floorwalker calls out “Two-Ten” you know that the suspicion had crystallized and that you are regarded as a potential shoplifter. Shoplifting is one bigger problem for the merchandiser; apparently, department stores lose three percent from their sales through thieving from the counters. In the operation of the candy bag, the woman stands at the counter displaying rings and cheap jewellery as though she is waiting for someone and dips into her candy bag. Her hand goes from the candy bag to her mouth. But on the downwards trip something from the counter goes into the bag. The movement is so simple and insuspicious that it is almost impossible to detect. On the other hand, there is more of such bans. They suggest a ready alternative: the reusable bag.

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REMEMBER TO CIRCLE INSTEAD OF UNDERLINE. FOR LINES WITH NO ERROR, PLEASE TICK. THE EXAMPLE SHOWN HERE IS ONLY FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES.

Adapted from 2016 MGS English Language Prelim S4EXP Paper 1

3. Situational Writing – Unit 5 to Unit 11

Situational writing is a key component of the English assessment. It involves application of writing into real-life contexts.

3.1 Requirements for Situational Writing

When approaching a situational writing question, you should first analyse the prompt. A prompt is the brief passage of text (first few paragraphs) in the question paper and the visual stimulus that paints the scenario. Within the prompt, you should identify the **Purpose, Audience, Context, Persona** and **Tone** (PACPT) and apply the 5W1H brainstorming principles.

You can use the following planning framework for your situational writing:

1. Identify **format of writing** (e.g., letter, report, speech, etc. – Refer to Section 3.2)
2. Identify the **persona** (Who are you portraying in this task?)
3. Identify the **purpose** (What are you trying to achieve?)
4. Identify the **audience** (Who are you writing to?)
5. Identify the **context** (What is the situation? What prompted you to write this piece?)
6. Identify the **tone** (Is this a formal or informal piece? Are you requesting for something?)
7. Identify the **task requirements** based on the prompt and stimulus (refer to Worked Example)

In general, you should stick to the following language features in your writing for situational events:

- Write in **predominantly present tense** unless you are **citing a past event**.
- Be **persuasive, respectful** and **polite**.
- Be **clear** and **precise** (describe with **details** your activity e.g., how you will be conducting the event).
- **Vary** your **sentence structure** and **vocabulary**.
- Each **paragraph** should have a **clear topic sentence** and **connectors** to make your writing more **fluent** and **coherent**.

You must refer to the context, prompt and information in the stimulus in your writing! The formatting given is only a guideline. You need to adapt the format into the situation presented.

In general, you should also use the **Point, Amplify** and **Justify** format to write and structure your paragraphs in response to the task requirements.

- **Point:** State the **topic sentence** clearly by rephrasing the task requirement you are addressing.
- **Amplify:** Answer the **WHAT** and **HOW** by building on given details and your own details.
- **Justify:** Answer the **WHY** by providing logical arguments with evidence and elaboration.

Example 2 (Analysis of Question)

You are advised to write between 250 and 350 words for this section.

You are a graduating student of Dunman High School. You have been selected as the **valedictorian of your cohort representing the students of 2016 (Persona)**. This ceremony is scheduled to take place on the Saturday morning immediately after the GCE 'O' level examinations.

Write a **speech (Format)** to be delivered during the **Year-End Farewell Ceremony (Context & Tone)** to be attended by the **parents of the graduating students, principal, teachers and fellow students (Audience & Tone)**.

In your speech, you should address the following points **(Purpose)**:

- **Mention the mission of the school, the school's Vision and Motto and how they have influenced you as a student. [TR1]**
- **Reflect on the memorable moments that you shared with your peers in class and the Co-curricular Activity (CCA) you participated in. [TR2]**
- **Highlight the achievements and traditions of the school that you will treasure. [TR3]**
- **Express words of gratitude to individuals from the school, its staff and students who have contributed to your success throughout your years as a student. [TR4]**
- **Inspire your peers to prepare to begin the next phase of their lives. [TR5]**

Your speech should cover all five points in detail. You should include the **necessary greetings and thank the respective personnel involved for organising this memorable event for you and your cohort [TF6]**.

Your speech should be written in clear, accurate English and in a tone appropriate for the occasion.

You should use your own words as far as possible.

You should look at the printout on the next page, study the information carefully and plan your answer before beginning to write.

DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL



School Mission:
To nurture our students to Care,
to Serve, and to Lead.

School Vision :
To be the premier school of
Leaders of Honour.

School Motto:
Honesty, trustworthiness, moral
courage and loyalty.

Programmes

Co-Curricular Activities



Through participation in CCA, we hope to develop in our students a sound body, a disciplined mind, good character, leadership qualities and sportsmanship.

Biculturalism



The Bicultural Studies programmes are designed to build a strong language foundation in students and broaden their horizon to prepare them for the challenges of an increasingly complex world.

Values in Action



We develop students who care deeply for others, have a heart to serve and take the lead to change the world for the better.

Highlights of the year

Chinese New Year Celebration



Year 3 Orientation



Year 3 Malacca Overseas Learning Journey to Malacca



Teachers' Day Celebration



Adapted from 2016 DHS English Language Prelim 4SAP Paper 1

3.2 Unit 5: Formal Emails / Formal Letters

Formal letters are generally written to **people in authority** to express your **opinions**, give **proposals** or **explanations**. These include letters to the Editor, to Town Council, to a corporation, etc. These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a letter...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such an email / letter:

Sender's Email / Address

Date

Recipient's Name

Designation

Recipient's Email / Address

TITLE

Dear Mr XXX / Mrs XXX (Sir / Madam) [*Formal Salutations*],

Paragraph 1: Introduction (State objective and purpose of Email / Letter)

Paragraph 2: TR1

Paragraph 3: TR2

Paragraph 4: TR3

Paragraph 5: TR4

Paragraph 6: TR5

Paragraph 7: Conclusion (Highlight important points and request specific actions)

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Full Name

Your Full Name

Important Note:

It is considered incorrect to use 'Dear Sir' as a salutation and 'Yours sincerely' in an email.

Also, this format can be used with the other formats if the question explicitly states, '*write an email / letter to...*', for example, '*write a letter to give an account on...*'.

3.3 Unit 6: Informal Emails / Informal Letters

Informal letters are generally written to **your peers, friends or family** to express your **opinions**, give **suggestions** or **respond to issues**. These include letters to your friends, relatives, etc. These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a letter...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such an email / letter:

Sender's Email / Address

Date

Recipient's Name

Recipient's Email / Address

TITLE

Dear XXX [*Informal Salutations*],

Paragraph 1: Introduction (State objective and purpose of Email / Letter)

Paragraph 2: TR1

Paragraph 3: TR2

Paragraph 4: TR3

Paragraph 5: TR4

Paragraph 6: TR5

Paragraph 7: Conclusion (Highlight key ideas and continued actions)

Well wishes. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

3.4 Unit 7: Proposal Writing

Proposals are reports that are written to **propose to authorities a particular plan or program**. These are usually addressed to teachers-in-charge, the principal, or a government agency or association.

These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a report to propose... / Write a report to describe your plans...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such a report:

Date

Attention: Mr XXX / Mrs XXX

Designation

TITLE (Proposal on ...) [Underline and capitalise content words]

Dear XXX,

Paragraph 1: Introduction (Introduce yourself, set the context and explicate purpose of report)

Paragraph 2: Objectives of proposed programme

Paragraph 3: TR1

Paragraph 4: TR2

Paragraph 5: TR3

Paragraph 6: TR4

Paragraph 7: TR5

Paragraph 8: Closing remarks (Express confidence in your efforts to make the project a success)

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to organise... I look forward to your comments and feedback to make this project / event a success. [*Thank them for their time and effort.*]

Proposed by:

Your Full Name

Designation

3.5 Unit 8: Eye-Witness Report Writing

Eye-witness reports are reports that are written to **give an account or explanation of an event or situation**. The register of such a piece such be **objective (factual without opinion)** and **formal**. It should also be **specific and detailed**. These are usually addressed to teachers-in-charge, the principal, or the police. These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a report to give an account... / Write a report to explain...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such a report:

Date

Attention: Mr XXX / Mrs XXX / Sergeant XXX

Designation

TITLE (Report on ...) [*Underline and capitalise content words*]

Dear XXX,

Paragraph 1: Introduction (Introduce yourself, set context and give details of incident – location, date, time (DD/MM) – and explicate purpose of report)

Paragraph 2: TR1

Paragraph 3: TR2

Paragraph 4: TR3

Paragraph 5: TR4

Paragraph 6: TR5

Paragraph 7: Closing remarks (Express confidence in your effort to share and offer further assistance if needed – you may include contact details/email address if given)

Thank you for your attention. [*Thank them for their time and effort*]

Proposed by:

Your Full Name

Designation

3.6 Unit 9: Speech Writing

Speeches can be **persuasive, informative, entertaining, congratulatory** or **appreciative** in purpose.

These should be written in **short, clear sentences** with **appropriate tone depending on context**.

These are usually addressed to a large group (e.g., assembly or school/community event). These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a speech...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such a speech:

Greeting: A very good morning / afternoon / evening to [Name], [Designation], [group]...

Your greeting should be according to seniority (e.g., Guests → Principal → Teachers → Parents → Students → Friends).

Paragraph 1: Introduction (Introduce yourself, set the context and purpose of speech)

Paragraph 2: TR1

Paragraph 3: TR2

Paragraph 4: TR3

Paragraph 5: TR4

Paragraph 6: TR5

Paragraph 7: Closing remarks (Highlight key points and call to action – short but impactful statements should be used as a conclusion)

Well wishes. Thank you and have a great day / week ahead.

3.7 Unit 10: Information Report

Information reports are written to provide information about an event or activity. These are **NOT** eye-witness reports. The content in these reports should be **specific and detailed** with **appropriate organisational structures (using topic statements)**. These are usually addressed to teachers-in-charge, the principal or parents. These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write a report on your experience... / Write a report to compare...*'.

You can follow the following format to write such a report:

Date
Attention: Mr XXX / Mrs XXX
Designation
<u>TITLE (Report on ...) [Underline and capitalise content words]</u>
Dear XXX,
Paragraph 1: Introduction (Introduce yourself, your capacity to set context (what you did) and explicate purpose of report)
Paragraph 2: Objectives of proposed programme
Paragraph 3: TR1
Paragraph 4: TR2
Paragraph 5: TR3
Paragraph 6: TR4
Paragraph 7: TR5
Paragraph 8: Closing remarks (Express gratitude for opportunity and offer to share learning)
Thank you again for this opportunity to.... I look forward to your reply and comments.
Reported by:
Your Full Name
Designation

3.8 Unit 11: Newsletter Article Writing

Newsletter articles are lively and persuasive write-ups about events, programs that have already happen, or significant people and their contributions. The content in these reports should be **descriptive and uplifting** and written in a **less formal and engaging manner**. These are usually addressed to a large audience (especially readers within the publishing organisation). These questions are typically phrased using the starter '*Write an article... / Write a newsletter...*').

You can follow the following format to write such an article:

TITLE *[Underline and capitalise content words, ensure title is attractive to hook readers]*

By [Your Name]

Paragraph 1: Exciting summary of the event or person

Paragraph 2: State theme and objective of the programme or contribution

Paragraph 3: TR1

Paragraph 4: TR2

Paragraph 5: TR3

Paragraph 6: TR4

Paragraph 7: TR5

Paragraph 8: Closing remarks (Short but impactful remarks or call to action)

4. Continuous Writing – Unit 1 to 4A

Continuous writing is a key component of the English assessment where ideas in writing are wholly defined and expressed by the student themselves.

4.1 Planning of Ideas

The first step in planning a piece of writing is **question analysis**. Use the following questions to help you in your planning:

- Identify the **question type** (Is it argumentative, expository, or narrative writing?)
- Identify the **task words** (What do you have to do or describe?)
- Identify the **topic words** (What should you focus on?)
- Identify the **contextual words** (What is the limit of discussion?)

The second step in planning a piece of writing is **recalling the format of writing**.

For hybrid writing, the expected format is:

Paragraph 1 (Introduction)	Set the context of the story, address the topic in the question, and use literary techniques to interest readers.
Paragraph 2 – 4 (Body)	<p>Narrative Focus Orientation → Complication → Rising action → Climax → Resolution</p> <p>Descriptive Focus Use of modifiers, vivid vocabulary, five senses and varied sentence structures for descriptive effect in a scene.</p> <p>Reflective Focus Recollecting experiences Reliving thoughts and feelings Revealing attitudes and behaviour Reshaping ideas</p>
Paragraph 5 (Conclusion)	Brief summary of learning points and concluding remarks. Your introduction and conclusion should echo each other.

For argumentative or discursive writing, the expected format is:

Paragraph 1 (Introduction)	Hook (use of rhetorical questions, anecdotes, quotes, etc.) Set the context and address and define key terms State your three main discussion points clearly using topic, claim and direction at the end of paragraph 1.
Paragraph 2 – 4 (Body)	Follow the Point, Evidence, Explain, Link (PEEL) structure for each of the three paragraphs. Ensure your paragraphs have clear topic sentences. Your points should be supported by valid, clear examples . For argumentative writing, you should have either FOR or AGAINST points while for discursive writing, you should have FOR and AGAINST points.
Paragraph 5 (Conclusion)	Brief summary of key ideas and reiterate stand Concluding remarks

The last step in planning a piece of writing is **brainstorming**.

For **hybrid writing**, you can use the **4R Thinking Tool – Recollecting Experiences, Reliving Thoughts and Feelings, Revealing Attitudes and Beliefs and Reshaping Ideas** to guide the course of your writing and elaborating on your different paragraphs. Also, another thing to consider is the **organisational structure of your writing**:

- **Chronological order**
 - Past (looking back) → Present (thoughts and feelings) → Future (looking forward)
 - Young → Growing older → Present
 - Morning → Afternoon → Evening
- **Spatial order**
 - **Stationary:** To the left → In front of me → To the right
 - **Mobile:** Living room → Kitchen → My room

For **expository writing**, you can use **multiple perspectives** and **SPECTRAM** as a thinking tool.

- Society / Science / Sports
- Politics / Philosophy
- Economy / Education / Environment
- Culture / Creativity
- Technology
- Religion / Race
- Arts / Aesthetics
- Media / Medical / Military / Morality

Examples of Essay Questions

2021 'O' Level	
Describe the sights and sounds of a busy shopping mall. Make sure to describe some of the people and the place.	Descriptive
'I felt like I was on top of the world!' Write about a time you felt like this.	Reflective
'Youths are changing the world for the better.' What are your views?	Discursive
'A happy person is a healthy person.' Do you agree?	Argumentative
2020 'O' Level	
Describe ways to relax after you have been busy. Explain why it is enjoyable for you.	Descriptive
Write about a time when you did something to impress someone and regretted it.	Reflective
'Learning how to respond to mistakes is essential for success.' What is your opinion?	Argumentative
'There's no place like home.' Is it true to you?	Hybrid
2019 'O' Level	
Which person has the most positive impact on your life? Describe the individual's personality and in what ways he or she has influenced you.	Descriptive
'It was the proudest moment.' Write about a time when you felt like this.	Reflective
'Most young people today are obsessed with fame and imitating celebrities.' What are your views?	Discursive
'People can only be happy if they feel they are treated fairly.' Do you agree?	Argumentative
2018 'O' Level	
Describe an event that you looked forward to which turned out to be disappointing. Explain why you were excited about it and why it didn't live up to your expectations.	Descriptive
'I had never seen my friend laugh so much!' Write about a time when this happened.	Reflective
'Some people like to stand out from the crowd; others just want to be part of it.' Which do you prefer and why?	Hybrid (A + D)
Which modern invention is essential for you and your family and which one could you and your family live without? Explain your views.	Hybrid (D + D)