



Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint

ENGLISH

0861/02

Paper 2 Fiction

October 2025

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Markers were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at a Markers' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the End of Series Report. Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

This document has **10** pages.

Section A: Reading

Question	Answer	Marks
1	Award 1 mark for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (the cold English) (sun)light / the first ray of light in the morning 	1

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Award 1 mark for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain what she means. 	1
2(b)	Award 1 mark for an answer that recognises that Dhikilo disagrees with Mariette, and 1 mark for recognising that she doesn't openly express her disagreement, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dhikilo disagrees with Marietta / Dhikilo <i>sounds or seems</i> like she agrees with her. She avoids saying so (because she doesn't want to offend her). 	2

Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)	Award 1 mark for any of the following (in any order), up to a maximum of 2 marks : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both sentences begin with a name of a person. Their relationship with Dhikilo is mentioned (in parenthetical commas). Both sentences are complex. The name of place / home / their country (of origin) / where they come from is given / says they both 'came from' different places 	2
3(b)	Award 1 mark for each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how close each country is to Cawber what each country seems like to Dhikilo 	2

Question	Answer	Marks
4	Award 1 mark for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the contrast/difference (between Dhikilo’s country of origin, and where her friends are from). nobody / not many people had heard of it / it was never on television 	1

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5	Award 1 mark for each of the following: <table border="1" data-bbox="327 633 1316 1137"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>How inspectors classified the school</th> <th>The development of Cawber</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>To begin with</td> <td>‘Excellent’</td> <td><i>seaside resort for people from London</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Later</td> <td>‘Poor’</td> <td>funfairs and ballrooms closed down / houses got shabby and crumbly</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Now</td> <td>‘Improving’ / second-best / much better</td> <td>lots of rich people were moving there / high-speed train / handsome architecture / People from all over the world, making a fresh start.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		How inspectors classified the school	The development of Cawber	To begin with	‘Excellent’	<i>seaside resort for people from London</i>	Later	‘Poor’	funfairs and ballrooms closed down / houses got shabby and crumbly	Now	‘Improving’ / second-best / much better	lots of rich people were moving there / high-speed train / handsome architecture / People from all over the world, making a fresh start.	4
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6(a)	Award 1 mark for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a new topic change the direction of the narrative The writer is about to describe why food is important in Dhikilo’s life. 	1
6(b)	Award 1 mark for each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to quote something that someone says to tell the reader what someone is thinking 	2


Question	Answer	Marks										
7	<p>Award 1 mark for a relevant quotation, and 1 mark for any appropriate explanation.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quotation</th> <th>Explanation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(Frying onions was just) the best fun ever / actually the tastiest part / as delicious as anything you'd get in a restaurant.</td> <td>Gives Dhikilo's personal opinion of something / uses less formal language / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking</td> </tr> <tr> <td>If you fried them slow / if you fried them fast / And if you had a mushroom you could / as anything you'd get in a restaurant</td> <td>Uses 'you' / explains/describes something in a more personal way / uses less formal language / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking</td> </tr> <tr> <td>the best fun ever / the tastiest part</td> <td>Use of superlatives to express a personal/Dhikilo's opinion</td> </tr> <tr> <td>soft and golden and caramelly / crispy and brown with burnt curly bits</td> <td>Uses less formal language / language typical of someone Dhikilo's age / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quotation	Explanation	(Frying onions was just) the best fun ever / actually the tastiest part / as delicious as anything you'd get in a restaurant.	Gives Dhikilo's personal opinion of something / uses less formal language / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking	If you fried them slow / if you fried them fast / And if you had a mushroom you could / as anything you'd get in a restaurant	Uses 'you' / explains/describes something in a more personal way / uses less formal language / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking	the best fun ever / the tastiest part	Use of superlatives to express a personal/Dhikilo's opinion	soft and golden and caramelly / crispy and brown with burnt curly bits	Uses less formal language / language typical of someone Dhikilo's age / it sounds like Dhikilo speaking	2
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8(a)	<p>Award 1 mark for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (doing her) grown-up best 	1
8(b)	<p>Award 1 mark for an answer recognising that the first remark suggests that Dhikilo can be anything she wants to be;</p> <p>Award 1 mark for recognising that the second remark suggests that some things may be out of her reach, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First the adviser says Dhikilo can be anything she wants to be. (But) in the next phrase she says Dhikilo should be realistic or reasonable. 	2


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9	<p>Award 1 mark for each suitable quotation, plus 1 mark for each appropriate explanation:</p> <p>If 'Yes' is ticked:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="328 443 1318 1263"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="328 443 823 495">Quotation</th> <th data-bbox="823 443 1318 495">Explanation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 495 823 678">Dhikilo liked food. / In fact, Dhikilo <i>loved</i> food. Not just eating it, but making it.</td> <td data-bbox="823 495 1318 678">Dhikilo would be motivated to do well in a job involving food / would enjoy a job working with food / Dhikilo likes cooking as much as eating food</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 678 823 795">she made different things each time</td> <td data-bbox="823 678 1318 795">She would be prepared to try new recipes / she would be creative / imaginative / versatile</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 795 823 947">she would make a delicious meal / Dhikilo would be proud of making the flavours all work together.</td> <td data-bbox="823 795 1318 947">She can already cook some things successfully / She had opportunities to practise / She knew what flavours worked well</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 947 823 1064">Malcolm's eyes would widen with pleasure / 'Well, <i>this</i> makes a lovely change, doesn't it?'</td> <td data-bbox="823 947 1318 1064">Her food tastes good to others / Her food makes people happy / She gets praise for her food</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1064 823 1180">Frying onion was just the best fun ever / as delicious as anything you'd get in a restaurant</td> <td data-bbox="823 1064 1318 1180">Dhikilo has real enthusiasm for cooking / she takes pride in her cooking</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1180 823 1263">She cooked as often as Ruth would allow her</td> <td data-bbox="823 1180 1318 1263">She practised as much as she was able / learning through experience.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If 'No' is ticked:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="328 1364 1318 1888"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="328 1364 823 1415">Quotation</th> <th data-bbox="823 1364 1318 1415">Explanation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1415 823 1500">She cooked as often as Ruth would allow her</td> <td data-bbox="823 1415 1318 1500">Dhikilo doesn't always get many opportunities to practise cooking</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1500 823 1653">it didn't work out / the leftovers would go into a plastic container at the back of the fridge and grow mould</td> <td data-bbox="823 1500 1318 1653">Sometimes the things she cooks are inedible/unsuccessful Sometimes she cooks too much / she wastes food</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1653 823 1805">carefully picking out any bits of onion that were even slightly burnt / eating a totally different thing from the thing Dhikilo had prepared</td> <td data-bbox="823 1653 1318 1805">She is not careful with her cooking / she makes mistakes</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="328 1805 823 1888">happy fantasies of something that was never really going to happen</td> <td data-bbox="823 1805 1318 1888">It may not be possible for her to realise her dream</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quotation	Explanation	Dhikilo liked food. / In fact, Dhikilo <i>loved</i> food. Not just eating it, but making it.	Dhikilo would be motivated to do well in a job involving food / would enjoy a job working with food / Dhikilo likes cooking as much as eating food	she made different things each time	She would be prepared to try new recipes / she would be creative / imaginative / versatile	she would make a delicious meal / Dhikilo would be proud of making the flavours all work together.	She can already cook some things successfully / She had opportunities to practise / She knew what flavours worked well	Malcolm's eyes would widen with pleasure / 'Well, <i>this</i> makes a lovely change, doesn't it?'	Her food tastes good to others / Her food makes people happy / She gets praise for her food	Frying onion was just the best fun ever / as delicious as anything you'd get in a restaurant	Dhikilo has real enthusiasm for cooking / she takes pride in her cooking	She cooked as often as Ruth would allow her	She practised as much as she was able / learning through experience.	Quotation	Explanation	She cooked as often as Ruth would allow her	Dhikilo doesn't always get many opportunities to practise cooking	it didn't work out / the leftovers would go into a plastic container at the back of the fridge and grow mould	Sometimes the things she cooks are inedible/unsuccessful Sometimes she cooks too much / she wastes food	carefully picking out any bits of onion that were even slightly burnt / eating a totally different thing from the thing Dhikilo had prepared	She is not careful with her cooking / she makes mistakes	happy fantasies of something that was never really going to happen	It may not be possible for her to realise her dream	4
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Section B: Writing


Question	Answer	Marks
<p>Notes to markers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the marking grids on the following pages. • Marking should always begin from the lowest mark in each row and work across: start from the left-hand side. • Award 0 marks where the performance fails to meet the lowest criteria. • A 'best fit' judgement should be made in judging first in which box to place the response and then, within that box, which mark is appropriate. • The lower mark within a box should be given if some criteria have been met but not all. <p>Note on extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award 0 marks for 20 words or fewer. • Award a maximum of 7 marks for responses of between 21 and 60 words. • You need not count the words unless you think there will be fewer than 60. In normal-sized handwriting 60 words will be approximately 8 lines. 		
10	Creation of texts (Wc)	5
	Vocabulary and Language (Wv)	3
	Structure of texts (Ws)	7
	Grammar and punctuation (Wg)	7
	Word structure [Spelling] (Ww)	3
		[Total 25]

			
Creation of texts (Wc) [1]	Creation of texts (Wc) [2]	Creation of texts (Wc) [3]	Creation of texts (Wc) [4–5]
<p>Some material included that elaborates on basic information.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Some elements of the text type can be seen.</p> <p><i>A maximum of 1 mark can be awarded if not the given text type.</i></p>	<p>A relevant response with well-chosen ideas and content. Some ideas and material are developed.</p> <p>Purpose of writing is clear and appropriate to the given text type where some features are evident.</p> <p>A straightforward viewpoint which is generally consistent and appropriate for the purpose and the audience.</p>	<p>Relevant material has ideas and content with detail developed.</p> <p>Features of the text type are clear throughout.</p> <p>Consistent viewpoint with detail that sustains interest with writer's style / personal response which emphasises particular points.</p>	<p>Content is clearly aimed at a target audience with a good balance of coverage.</p> <p>Writing is well developed so that features of the text type are used consistently and successfully.</p> <p>A clear, consistent relationship between writer and reader is established and maintained throughout the text.</p>

		
Vocabulary and Language (Wv)	Vocabulary and Language (Wv)	Vocabulary and Language (Wv)
[1]	[2]	[3]
Sometimes uses appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning matched to the context.	Appropriate vocabulary is used that is suitable for the <u>specified</u> text type. Good attempts to use persuasive elements (word/tone/phrases).	Language is wholly relevant to the text type and purpose. Specialised vocabulary is used well, for effect, throughout the text. Words and phrases chosen to convey mood and feeling so that the writing sustains the reader's interest.

			
Structure of texts (Ws)	Structure of texts (Ws)	Structure of texts (Ws)	Structure of texts (Ws)
[1]	[2-3]	[4-5]	[6-7]
Structure is clear using paragraphs/sections with some attempts to organise the content.	Paragraphs/sections are evident with related points grouped together (and/or linked by time sequence). Some attempts to sequence relevant ideas logically. Cohesion between paragraphs/sections is achieved using devices such as simple connectives to establish links. <i>If either the context or text type is incorrect, the maximum is 3.</i>	Content is organised so that ideas are developed cohesively and logically throughout a piece of sustained writing. Paragraphs/sections are organised to achieve an <u>appropriate effect for the specified text type</u> , where included sentences add clarity to overall text. (There may be some use of organisational devices such as bullets, numbered lists, Q&A style.)	Development of ideas is managed throughout an extended piece of writing. Well-organised ideas in paragraphs and/or sections support overall cohesion and shaping of a text. Logical links between paragraphs help the development of ideas. Cohesion within and between paragraphs is achieved using devices such as connectives.

			
Grammar and Punctuation (Wg)	Grammar and Punctuation (Wg)	Grammar and Punctuation (Wg)	Grammar and Punctuation (Wg)
[1]	[2-3]	[4-5]	[6-7]
<p>Some simple sentence structures are used successfully.</p> <p>Some correct use of punctuation, such as full stops and capital letters.</p> <p>Note: do not discriminate if learners write with good English but there are punctuation errors. If ambitious structures are used, begin marking at 2–3 marks, provided there is variation in sentence openings.</p>	<p>Uses an increasing range of sentence types accurately and may include attempts at complex structures.</p> <p>Use of expanded phrases to develop ideas. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> noun, adverbial, adjectival, and verb phrases with a range of connectives. <p>Verb forms are generally used accurately, i.e. subject matches verb, consistency of tense, use of singular and plural.</p> <p>Punctuation is used consistently and accurately, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To demarcate sentences. Commas are always used in lists and sometimes to clarify meaning in sentences. Apostrophes correct for possession (sing./plural) (Direct speech punctuation includes other punctuation alongside speech marks.) <p>Note: if punctuation is totally lacking <u>and</u> other descriptors met then give the lower mark here</p>	<p>Grammar is almost always accurate throughout the text. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple, compound and complex sentences; multi-clause sentences combine simple sentences and/or re-order clauses modal verbs pronouns and possessive pronouns used accurately adjectives and adverbs used correctly (comparative/superlative) use of prepositions <p>Punctuation is used accurately to: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demarcate sentences (and for direct speech) Commas are always used in lists and often to mark clauses in complex sentences. Use of apostrophes is accurate. 	<p>Overall grammar and use of English is fully <u>appropriate for the text type</u>.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of simple, compound and complex sentences are chosen for effect. Relative pronouns may provide detail. <p>Punctuation is used accurately, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to clarify meaning in complex sentences. <p>(All speech punctuation, reported and direct, is correct).</p>

		
Word structure (Ww) (Spelling)	Word structure (Ww) (Spelling)	Word structure (Ww) (Spelling)
[1]	[2]	[3]
<p>Examples:</p> <p>Spelling of all high frequency words and common polysyllabic words, including compound words, is correct.</p> <p>Spelling of words with common letter strings, but different pronunciations is correct, e.g. <i>through, tough</i>.</p> <p>Spelling of a range of common prefixes and suffixes is correct.</p> <p>Spelling of common homophones is correct.</p> <p>Some correct spelling of long and short vowel phonemes.</p> <p>Spelling of plurals is usually correct, e.g. <i>-s, -es, -y/ies, -f/ves</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <p>Correct spelling of words with less common letter strings that are pronounced differently, e.g. <i>pour, hour, piece, pie</i>.</p> <p>Some successful attempts to spell exceptions to known spelling rules.</p> <p>Correctly spell words with silent vowels and syllables in a range of polysyllabic words, e.g. <i>library, interest</i>.</p> <p>Spell common homonyms correctly, e.g. <i>wave (gesture), wave (sea)</i>.</p> <p>Spell words with a wide range of prefixes and suffixes, including opposites (un-, im-) correctly.</p> <p>Spell words with double consonants correctly.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <p>Spell words with different suffixes that sound the same, <i>-tion, -cian</i>.</p> <p>Spell familiar homophones and commonly confused words correctly, e.g. <i>aloud, allowed, desert, dessert</i>.</p> <p>Spell a wide range of words, both regular and exception words correctly, including words where similar consonant sounds vary, e.g. <i>-ck, -k, -ch, -que, -k</i>.</p>