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**FUNCTIONAL SKILLS**

English Level 2



**Area: Reading**

Criterion: Analyse texts, of different levels of complexity, recognising their use of vocabulary and identifying levels of formality and bias

**Vocabulary use**

A writer will use **vocabulary** and language to engage their audience in a variety of different ways, depending on the **purpose** of their text.

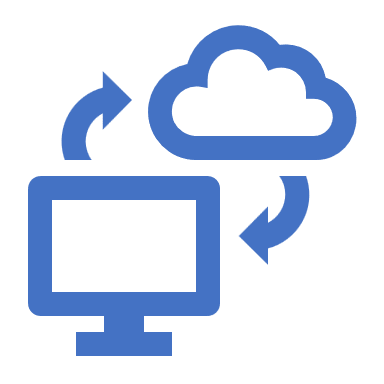
The 4 main purposes for writing are to:

* persuade
* instruct
* describe
* explain

**Text A: Let’s get brewing!**

1. Boil some water. Get that kettle singing or use your cooker to boil water. If you’re using a teapot, a little warm water swished around inside first will keep your tea nice and hot.
2. Throw your teabag in! Pop your teabag into the mug or teapot. If it’s a mug, just the one will do. Teapot? Chuck a couple of teabags in depending on how strong you like it.
3. Pour hot water. Carefully pour the boiling water over the tea bag. Fill it up but leave some room for milk if that’s your thing.
4. Let it brew. Patience is key! Let it steep for about 3-5 minutes. The longer it sits, the stronger your brew will be.
5. Remove the teabag. Give the teabag a gentle squeeze against the side of the mug with your spoon and then take it out. No one likes a soggy teabag in their drink, right?
6. Milk and sugar? Now’s the time. Add milk and, if you like your tea sweet, a spoonful of sugar or a splash of sweetener will do the trick.
7. Stir and enjoy. Give it a good stir, and there you have it: the perfect cup of tea.

**Text B: The marvels of the internet: connecting the world like never before**

Isn't it amazing how the internet has transformed our lives? Think about it: just a couple of decades ago, the idea of instantly connecting with someone on the other side of the globe was stuff of science fiction. Today, it's our everyday reality. The internet has turned the world into a global village, making it easier and faster to share information, learn new things, and stay in touch with friends and family, no matter where they are.

The internet has revolutionised the way we communicate. Social media platforms, email, and instant messaging have made it so simple to share moments and ideas, bridging distances and bringing people closer together. It's like having a magic window to the rest of the world, right there in your pocket!

Moreover, the internet has given rise to new forms of entertainment and ways to express creativity. From streaming your favourite shows to exploring digital art, and from playing online games with friends to sharing your own content, the possibilities are endless.

In essence, the internet is a remarkable tool that has brought about incredible advancements in how we live, learn, work, and connect. Its potential is limitless, and with each passing day, it continues to shape a more connected and informed world. Isn't it exciting to think about what the future holds with such a powerful resource at our disposal? Let's embrace the marvels of the internet and all the opportunities it brings our way!

**Text C: The internet: connecting people across the globe**

The internet is a vast network that connects computers all over the world. Since its creation, the internet has changed how we communicate, learn and interact with each other. This article will explore the ways in which the internet has connected people.

Communication made easy

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Before the internet, communicating with someone far away could take days or even weeks. Now, emails and instant messaging allow us to share messages across the globe in seconds. Statistics show that over 4 billion people use email globally, highlighting its popularity for personal and professional communication.

The challenges of connectivity

While the internet brings many benefits, it also has challenges. Not everyone has equal access to the internet, with around 40% of the world's population still offline. This digital divide means that millions of people are missing out on the opportunities the internet provides. Additionally, issues like cyberbullying and misinformation pose new challenges to internet users.

The internet has undeniably transformed the way we connect with others. It has made communication faster, education more accessible, and cultural exchange more widespread. Despite its challenges, the internet's potential to bring people together remains one of its greatest strengths. As we look to the future, the internet will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping our global community.

**Using the information provided above, answer the following questions.**

**Question 1**

Match the purpose of text to the type of vocabulary it typically uses.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Persuasive** |  | clear, formal, subject specific or technical vocabulary |
|  |  |  |
| **Instructional** |  | adjectives and adverbs, sensory language and figurative language |
|  |  |  |
| **Descriptive** |  | modal verbs, emotive words, 1st or 2nd person and positive or negative language |
|  |  |  |
| **Explanatory** |  | imperative verbs and adverbs |

**Question 2**

Read Text A ‘Let’s get brewing!’.

What is the purpose of the text?

Tick **one**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To describe how a good cup of tea should taste. |  |
| To explain how people can drink more cups of tea. |  |
| To persuade the reader to drink cups of tea. |  |
| To instruct the reader on how to make a cup of tea. |  |

**Question 3**

Look at Text A ‘Let’s get brewing!’.

Find **two** examples of sentences that use **second person perspective**.

|  |
| --- |
| Example 1:  Example 2: |

**Question 4**

Read Text B ‘The marvels of the internet: connecting the world like never before’.

What is the purpose of the text?

Tick **one**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To describe how people use technology. |  |
| To explain why people need the internet. |  |
| To persuade the reader that the internet positively impacts our lives. |  |
| To instruct the reader on how to use technology to access the web. |  |

**Question 5**

Look at Text B ‘The marvels of the internet: connecting the world like never before’.

Find **one** example of **positive or negative language**.

How does this vocabulary impact the reader?

|  |
| --- |
| Example:  Impact on the reader: |

**Imperative verbs and adverbs**

Imperative verbs are action words that tell the reader to do something.

*For example,* ***beat*** *the eggs,* ***add*** *some water and* ***knead*** *the dough.*

Adverbs can also be used to demonstrate how to carry out an imperative verb.

*For example,* ***quickly*** *beat**the eggs,* ***carefully*** *add 150ml water and knead the dough* ***thoroughly****.*

**Question 6**

Look at Text A ‘Let’s get brewing!’.

Find **two** examples of sentences that use **imperative verbs**.

|  |
| --- |
| Example 1:  Example 2: |

**Figurative language**

Figurative language can add depth to writer’s descriptions and further engage the reader.

**Similes** – using ‘like’ or ‘as’ to compare.

*He is as sly as a fox.*

*I ran like the wind.*

**Metaphors** – describing something as being something else.

*He has a heart of stone.*

*He is a sly fox.*

**Question 7**

Decide whether each sentence uses a **simile** or a **metaphor**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sentence** | **Figurative language** |
| She is as sly as a fox. |  |
| I avoid the town centre like the plague. |  |
| Life is a journey. |  |
| He is an open book. |  |
| They are like two peas in a pod. |  |
| My children are as bright as buttons. |  |
| She is an early bird. |  |
| My car is as clean as a whistle. |  |

**Question 8**

The writer of Text B has used a metaphor. ‘The internet has turned the world into a global village’.

What does this suggest?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Formality**

Formality refers to the way a writer uses language. A text can be either formal or informal.

Informal writing includes the following features.

* Chatty or conversational
* Use of humour
* Personal tone
* Slang and colloquialisms (‘kids’, ‘mum’ or ‘telly’)
* Informal greetings and closes (‘thanks’ or ‘cheers’)
* Contractions (‘wouldn’t’ or ‘didn’t’)
* Idioms (‘over the moon’)
* Abbreviations (‘ASAP’)
* Exclamations (!)

Formal writing includes the following features.

* Standard English
* Serious, polite and professional tone
* No humour
* Formal greetings and closes (‘Dear’ and ‘Yours sincerely’)
* No contractions (‘won’t’ becomes ‘will not’)
* No idioms
* No abbreviations
* No exclamations

**Question 9**

Read each sentence below and identify whether it is informal or formal.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sentence** | **Formality** |
| I was a cleaner before that, but that was gross and I don’t wanna do that again. |  |
| I have experience of working in a bar where I was responsible for handling money and operating the till. |  |
| A couple of kids were larking around when they came across an epic find. |  |
| Shouldn’t you be getting ready for work? |  |
| The noise last night was unacceptable. |  |

**Question 10**

Look at Text A ‘Let’s get brewing!’.

Analyse the vocabulary used in Text A to state whether the text is formal or informal.

Give **two** examples from the text to support your answer.

|  |
| --- |
| Formal or informal:  Example 1:  Example 2: |

**Exam practice 1**

Look at Text B ‘The marvels of the internet: connecting the world like never before’.

Analyse the vocabulary used in Text B to state whether the text is formal or informal.

Explain your answer.

(2 marks)

|  |
| --- |
| Formal or informal:  Explanation: |

**Bias**

Bias occurs when a writer attempts to influence a reader by showing their support or opposition. Biased texts may contain:

* persuasive language
* one point of view
* opinions of the writer or quotations from other people
* humour or forceful language
* statistics to prove their beliefs or viewpoint

A less biased text will:

* cover a range of viewpoints
* examine the positives and negatives
* not try to persuade the reader
* contain more facts than opinions from the writer

Please note that learners are expected to refer to **all 3** texts in their exam when answering a question about bias. Learners cannot achieve full marks unless all 3 texts are referenced.

**Exam practice 2**

Look at Text B and Text C.

Explain why Text C is the **least** biased. Justify your answer using **both** texts.

(2 marks)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Answers**

**Vocabulary use**

**Question 1**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Persuasive** |  | clear, formal, subject specific or technical vocabulary |
|  |  |  |
| **Instructional** |  | adjectives and adverbs, sensory language and figurative language |
|  |  |  |
| **Descriptive** |  | modal verbs, emotive words, 1st or 2nd person and positive or negative language |
|  |  |  |
| **Explanatory** |  | imperative verbs and adverbs |

**Question 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To describe how a good cup of tea should taste. |  |
| To explain how people can drink more cups of tea. |  |
| To persuade the reader to drink cups of tea. |  |
| To instruct the reader on how to make a cup of tea. | ✓ |

**Question 3**

Please note there may be other answers that use second person perspective.

Example 1: ‘Use your cooker to boil water.’

Example 2: ‘Throw your teabag in!’

**Question 4**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| To describe how people use technology. |  |
| To explain why people need the internet. |  |
| To persuade the reader that the internet positively impacts our lives. | ✓ |
| To instruct the reader on how to use technology to access the web. |  |

**Question 5**

Please note that there are other possible answers in the text.

Example: ‘The internet is a remarkable tool that has brought about incredible advancements in how we live, learn, work, and connect.’

Impact: This vocabulary evokes a sense of admiration for the internet. Words like ‘remarkable’ and ‘incredible’ highlight the positive aspects of the internet, making the reader more likely to view it as beneficial.

**Imperative verbs**

**Question 6**

Please note that there are other examples of sentences using imperative verbs in the text.

Example 1: ‘Throw your teabag in!’

Example 2: ‘Remove the teabag!’

**Figurative language**

**Question 7**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sentence** | **Figurative language** |
| She is as sly as a fox. | Simile |
| I avoid the town centre like the plague. | Simile |
| Life is a journey. | Metaphor |
| He is an open book. | Metaphor |
| They are like two peas in a pod. | Simile |
| My children are as bright as buttons. | Simile |
| She is an early bird. | Metaphor |
| My car is as clean as a whistle. | Simile |

**Question 8**

Accept answers referring to people around the world being brought together.

For example:

* the internet has made it possible for people from all over the world to connect
* people across the globe can communicate as though they live in a small, tight-knit community
* geographical barriers, like living far away from someone, are no longer a problem when trying to contact someone
* information, ideas and relationships can be formed, shared and maintained with ease because of the internet, as though someone is just living next door
* the internet is important for fostering a sense of closeness and unity among people, regardless of where they live

**Formality**

**Question 9**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sentence** | **Formality** |
| I was a cleaner before that, but that was gross and I don’t wanna do that again. | Informal |
| I have experience of working in a bar where I was responsible for handling money and operating the till. | Formal |
| A couple of kids were larking around when they came across an epic find. | Informal |
| Shouldn’t you be getting ready for work? | Informal |
| The noise last night was unacceptable. | Formal |

**Question 10**

Text A is informal.

Example 1: ‘Get that kettle singing.’

Example 2: ‘Chuck a couple of teabags in depending on how strong you like it.’

Please note that there are other examples in the text which show Text A is informal.

**Exam practice 1**

Text B is informal.

Please note that there may be other examples of informal writing in the text.

* The text uses contractions, like ‘Isn’t it amazing’.
* Text B uses exclamations, such as ‘It's like having a magic window to the rest of the world, right there in your pocket!’.
* The use of a rhetorical question in ‘Isn't it amazing how the internet has transformed our lives?’ and the word ‘amazing’ adds a casual, conversational feel and gives the text a personal tone.

**Bias**

**Exam practice 2**

Please note that there may be other accepted answers.

* Text C is the least biased because it gives a more balanced perspective of the internet. It states the benefits, such as ‘share messages across the globe in seconds’, as well as the challenges, such as ‘cyberbullying and misinformation’.
* Text B focuses on the positive aspects of the internet, such as the internet ‘making it easier and faster to share new things’. It does not recognise challenges of using the internet.
* Text B uses positive, persuasive language to make the reader see the writer’s point of view, such as ‘the possibilities are endless’.
* Text C has a more neutral tone to present factual information, such as ‘Not everyone has equal access to the internet, with around 40% of the world’s population still offline’.

**Your functional skills exam**

Your functional skills exams will consist of 2 papers.  
These papers will take place over the following time periods:

* Reading – 60 minutes
* Writing – 60 minutes

Further information on the format that your test will take can be obtained from your training provider.

**Hints and tips**

* Find out what format your exam will be in. It may be paper-based   
  or on-screen.
* Plan what you are going to revise in advance. Don’t leave it until the last minute.
* Do as many past papers as you can so you are prepared for the day. If possible, try to complete the past papers following the same format as the actual exam.
* Find a quiet place to study and revise. It helps to sit at a table or a desk, don’t revise in bed.
* Don’t stay up all night revising the night before your exam. It’s important to have a good rest so you feel refreshed and ready to go.
* Read the question 3 times. The first time to ensure you understand what is being asked, the second time to get an understanding of what you need to do, and a third time to figure out exactly what maths techniques you should be applying.
* If you are struggling with a question, skip it and come back to it later. Try not to sit getting worked up about a difficult question, it will only waste exam time. Move on and come back to it after you have answered the other questions.
* Take note of the number of marks available. This will give you an indication of how much working out you must show. For example, 1 mark will need an answer only and more marks will need you to show your working out.
* When you’ve finished the exam, go back and check your answers. If you still have time remaining, use it to check your answers and when you have checked your answers check them again.