

AQA • GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE 8700

Paper 2 — Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

June 2025 exam series

MARK SCHEME

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GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE 8700/2

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Mark scheme

June 2025

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Introduction

The information provided for each question is intended to be a guide to the kind of answers anticipated and is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. **All appropriate responses should be given credit.**

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes for GCSE English Language are broken down into four levels (where appropriate). In the first column each level is identified with one or two key words that represent the differences in the skills then described. These key words show the progression from Level 1 to 4 and are:

Level 4	Perceptive, detailed
Level 3	Clear, relevant
Level 2	Some, attempts
Level 1	Simple, limited.

This is followed in the second column by a description of the different qualities required in the student's answer for that level. These are called the skills descriptors. In order to reach a given level, a student must fulfil one or more of the skills descriptors for that level.

The third column of the mark scheme is the Indicative Standard. This is an important feature of the mark scheme for GCSE English Language. It provides exemplification of the skills descriptors at each level and offers a small number of different comments at the required standard to give an indication of the quality of response that is typical for that level. It shows the progression from Level 1 to 4.

The Indicative Standard is not intended to be a model answer nor a complete response, and it does not exemplify required content. Students may reach a given level by making **one or more** comments of the quality demonstrated by the Indicative Standard and do not have to meet all the skill descriptors at that level.

The standardising scripts will further exemplify each of the levels. You must refer to the standardising material **throughout your marking**.

Step 1 Annotate the response

When marking a response you should first read through the student's answer and annotate each section using the comments from the statement bank to show the qualities that are being demonstrated, as instructed during standardising. You can then award a level and a mark.

Step 2 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptors for that level. The descriptors for the level indicate the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

The Indicative Standard column in the mark scheme will help you determine the correct level. Remember, students may reach a given level by making **one or more** comments of the quality demonstrated by the Indicative Standard and do **not** have to meet all the skill descriptors at that level. It is not the number of references, but the quality of the comments that will determine the level. The annotation you added to the script at Step 1 will help you determine the correct level.

Step 3 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. This requires you to fine tune within the level to see how well each of the skills descriptors for that level has been met. A student only has to meet a skills descriptor at a given level **once** to be awarded that level. Since responses rarely match a level in all respects, you need to balance out the range of skills achieved and allow strong performance in some aspects to compensate for other skills that may be only partially fulfilled. Again, the annotation added at Step 1 will help you determine the mark.

Reference to the standardising scripts throughout the marking period is essential. This will help you apply the level descriptors accurately and consistently. There will usually be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Advice

In fairness to students, all examiners must use the same marking methods. The following advice may seem obvious, but all examiners must follow it closely.

1. Refer constantly to the mark scheme and standardising scripts throughout the marking period.
2. Always credit accurate, relevant and appropriate responses that are not necessarily covered by the mark scheme or the standardising scripts.
3. Use the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks if the response merits it.
4. Remember the key to accurate and fair marking is consistency.
5. If you have any doubt about how to allocate marks to a response, consult your Team Leader.

SECTION A: READING – Assessment Objectives

AO1	• Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. • Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
AO2	• Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.
AO3	• Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.
AO4	• Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

SECTION B: WRITING – Assessment Objectives

AO5	• Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. • Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.
AO6	• Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole).

Assessment Objective	Section A
AO1	✓
AO2	✓
AO3	✓
AO4	n/a
	Section B
AO5	✓
AO6	✓

0 1Read again the first part of **Source A** from **lines 1 to 10**.Choose **four** statements below which are **true**.

- Shade the **circles** in the boxes of the ones that you think are **true**.
- Choose a maximum of **four** statements.
- If you make an error cross out the **whole box**.
- If you change your mind and require a statement that has been crossed out then draw a circle around the box.

[4 marks]

- A** The peregrine falcon looks like the ruler of his lands.
B It is uncertain whether the peregrine falcon is the best predator in its area.
C All peregrine falcons live in the woods.
D Tate Modern is on the edge of London.
E The people on the ground do not realise that the peregrine falcon is there.
F The pigeons are more than 500 metres away from the peregrine falcon.
G One of the pigeons is vulnerable to attack.
H The peregrine falcon rises quickly and easily from its perch.

AO1

- Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.
- Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

This question assesses the first bullet point: identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| A The peregrine falcon looks like the ruler of his lands. | [T] |
| B It is uncertain whether the peregrine falcon is the best predator in its area. | [F] |
| C All peregrine falcons live in the woods. | [F] |
| D Tate Modern is on the edge of London. | [F] |
| E The people on the ground do not realise that the peregrine falcon is there. | [T] |
| F The pigeons are more than 500 metres away from the peregrine falcon. | [F] |
| G One of the pigeons is vulnerable to attack. | [T] |
| H The peregrine falcon rises quickly and easily from its perch. | [T] |

0 2You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.The birds in **Source A** and **Source B** live in different habitats.Use details from **both** sources to write a summary of what you understand about the different places where the birds live.**[8 marks]**

AO1	- Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. - Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.	
This question assesses both bullets		
Level	Skills Descriptors	Indicative Standard
		This indicative standard provides an exemplification of the skills descriptors at each level. It is not a model answer, nor a complete response, nor does it seek to exemplify any particular content.
Level 4 Perceptive, detailed summary 7–8 marks	Shows perceptive or detailed synthesis and interpretation of both texts: • makes perceptive inferences from both texts • selects judicious references/use of textual detail relevant to the focus of the question • statements show perceptive differences between texts.	In Source A, the “tall buildings” offer the falcons a habitat that ironically suits them as predators and “serve[s]” their needs. The height of the buildings gives the birds an advantage, to monitor their environment, spot their prey, and launch their attack - despite the fact that these buildings are designed by humans for human use. The falcon in Source A has been affected by human interference but adapted effectively to a changing habitat, whereas in Source B their habitat has remained natural and almost untouched by humans for hundreds of years, allowing a greater diversity of species to thrive than just the falcon. “If there was a hollow in the oak, a pair of starlings chose it.” The different types of birds in Source B are aware of their vulnerability and take advantage of different natural features such as long grass, hedges or hollows in trees as safe places to hide their nests, each instinctively protecting their young from any danger.
Level 3 Clear, relevant summary 5–6 marks	Shows clear synthesis and interpretation of both texts: • makes clear inferences from both texts • selects clear references/textual detail relevant to the focus of the question • statements show clear differences between texts.	The birds in Source A are birds of prey and they take advantage of the height of buildings in their habitat, “we have erected tall buildings that serve just as well.” The height of the buildings allows the birds to look down on their environment as they search for prey. However, unlike the falcons, the birds in Source B need a habitat where they can be protected from predators and keep their eggs safe. “If there was a hollow in the oak, a pair of starlings chose it.” The tree is an ideal environment for them because its natural shape, the hollow, offers them somewhere safe above ground to hide their nests and protect their fledglings.

Level 2 Some attempts at summary 3–4 marks	Shows some interpretation from one/both texts: • attempts some inference(s) from one/both texts • selects some appropriate references/textual detail from one/both texts • statements show some difference(s) between texts.	In Source A, the birds live high up on buildings. “We have erected tall buildings that serve just as well.” This shows that the birds use the buildings as their homes because they have got a good view. However, the birds in Source B live in trees, not buildings because trees are more natural. “If there was a hollow in the oak a pair of starlings chose it.” The tree has a hollow in it which means the birds have somewhere to hide.
Level 1 Simple, limited summary 1–2 marks	Shows simple awareness from one/both texts: • offers paraphrase rather than inference • selects simple reference(s)/textual detail(s) from one/both texts • statements show simple difference between texts.	In Source A it says “we have erected tall buildings that serve just as well” which shows that the birds live on buildings. This is different from where the birds live in Source B because it says, “If there was a hollow in the oak a pair of starlings chose it.” This shows that the birds live in trees.
Level 0 No marks	Nothing to reward.	

Note

- If the quality of the response is L1 but only deals with one text, the mark must be 1 not 2.
- If the quality of the response is L2 but only deals with one text, the mark must be 3 not 4.
- A candidate has to deal with both texts and address the correct focus of the question to achieve L3 or above.

The focus of this question is the differences between the habitats of the birds.

AO1 content may include ideas such as:

- human-made or natural
- sustained by other natural features
- useful features
- open or concealed
- specific to one species or shared with others
- location – city or countryside
- adaptability or continuity.

0 3You now need to refer only to **Source A** from **lines 11 to 20**.

How does the writer use language to describe the peregrine falcon?

[12 marks]

AO2	Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.	
This question assesses Language ie: Words/Phrases/Language Features/Language Techniques/Sentence Forms.		
Level	Skills Descriptors	Indicative Standard This indicative standard provides an exemplification of the skills descriptors at each level. It is not a model answer, nor a complete response, nor does it seek to exemplify any particular content.
Level 4 Detailed, perceptive analysis 10–12 marks	Shows detailed and perceptive understanding of language: - analyses the effects of the writer's choices of language - selects a range of judicious textual detail - makes sophisticated and accurate use of subject terminology.	The writer uses a simile to describe the peregrine's attack: "Like a guided missile". The comparison with a destructive weapon suggests the aggression and violence of this aerodynamic bird. The adjective "guided" further creates the effect that the falcon, like a missile, has purpose and control, hitting its target with accuracy and precision.
Level 3 Clear, relevant explanation 7–9 marks	Shows clear understanding of language: - explains clearly the effects of the writer's choices of language - selects a range of relevant textual detail - makes clear and accurate use of subject terminology.	The writer uses a simile to describe the peregrine's movement: "Like a guided missile." Missiles are weapons which are designed to be streamlined like the falcon with his wings folded back, so the comparison suggests that the falcon can move through the air at extreme speed.
Level 2 Some understanding and comment 4–6 marks	Shows some understanding of language: - attempts to comment on the effect of language - selects some appropriate textual detail - makes some use of subject terminology, mainly appropriately.	The writer uses different kinds of language to describe the peregrine. He uses a simile, "Like a guided missile" which suggests that the peregrine looked like a rocket zooming towards the pigeon.

Level 1 Simple, limited comment 1–3 marks	Shows simple awareness of language: • offers simple comment on the effect of language • selects simple reference(s) or textual detail(s) • makes simple use of subject terminology, not always appropriately.	The writer says that the peregrine is “Like a guided missile”. This is a simile which the writer uses to describe how the peregrine flies towards the pigeon.
Level 0 No marks	Nothing to reward.	

Note

- If a student writes about language outside of the given lines or from the wrong source (but with the correct focus), the response should be placed in the appropriate level according to the quality of what is written, but placed at the bottom of the level.
- A student has to address the correct focus of the question to achieve L3 or above.

AO2 content may include the effect of language features such as:

- similes – like a guided missile, sharp as switchblades, like a rodeo whip
- action verbs in the present tense – powers, rises, brakes, extrudes, grabs, swoops
- listing – stops, turns, folds
- language of war and violence – guided missile, homes in, impact, explosive
- nouns relating to the falcon’s prey – straggler, target, fate, victim
- juxtaposition between predator and parent – plunder, hungry chicks
- statistics – 180 miles an hour
- onomatopoeia – ruffle, crack, whip, swoop
- sibilance – sharp as switchblades, into the sea-blue sky he swoops.

0 4

For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B**.

Compare how the writers convey their similar thoughts and feelings about nature.

In your answer, you could:

- compare the writers' similar thoughts and feelings about nature
- compare the methods they use to convey their thoughts and feelings
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.	
Level	Skills Descriptors	Indicative Standard
Level 4 Perceptive, detailed comparison 13–16 marks	Compares thoughts and feelings in a perceptive way: • analyses how writers' methods are used • selects a range of judicious supporting detail from both texts • shows a detailed and perceptive understanding of the similar thoughts and feelings in both texts.	This indicative standard provides an exemplification of the skills descriptors at each level. It is not a model answer, nor a complete response, nor does it seek to exemplify any particular content. The writer in Source A believes that human interference in the natural world can be detrimental or beneficial, depending on changing values. He seems proud of the change in attitude to peregrines which has increased their survival rates: "Instead of persecuting them, we provide protection." The alliteration emphasises the stark contrast between "persecuting" and "protection" reflecting a complete turnaround in attitudes. The writer includes all readers in this transformation, using the inclusive pronoun 'we' as a rhetorical device to convince all of us that we agree protecting wildlife is morally correct. In both sources, the writers explore the relationship between humans and the natural world, but whilst in Source A the writer suggests humans need to manage nature, in Source B the writer conveys the relationship as more equal and harmonious. "All life loved the brook." The writer uses a short, simple, sentence of single syllable words, linked by soft alliteration, and positioned at the end of a paragraph as if to deliberately highlight a fundamental truth. He believes in the essential interconnectedness of all natural things – human, animal, plant, soil and water – and portrays humans co-existing with other creatures, not seeking to dominate or control their natural environment.

Level 3 Clear, relevant comparison 9–12 marks	Compares thoughts and feelings in a clear and relevant way: - explains clearly how writers' methods are used - selects relevant detail to support from both texts - shows a clear understanding of the similar thoughts and feelings in both texts.	The writer in Source A admires the peregrine falcon and takes pleasure and pride in its survival in a new environment, thanks to a change in public attitudes to protect these birds of prey: "Instead of persecuting them, we provide protection" He uses inclusive pronouns such as 'we' to show that together people can make a difference to the survival of some endangered species. Similarly, in Source B, the writer takes great pleasure in nature and he also shows how humans can interact peacefully with the natural world, by focusing on the brook. "All life loved the brook." The alliteration in the phrase "all life loved" creates a soft tranquil sound, including all birds, animals and plants in their love for the water source. The writer is aware that the brook is essential for keeping the creatures alive and that they depend on the brook for their survival, providing water for the country girls too.
Level 2 Some attempts at comparison 5–8 marks	Attempts to compare thoughts and feelings - makes some comment on how writers' methods are used - selects some appropriate textual detail/references, not always supporting, from one or both texts - shows some understanding of similar thoughts and feelings.	The writer in Source A thinks nature is important and is pleased that peregrine falcons are doing well in the city and that they are not being killed. He says, "Instead of persecuting them, we provide protection." He uses the word 'we' to show that lots of people are protecting them, not just him. The writer in Source B also thinks nature is important but he focuses on the brook. "All life loved the brook." He uses the word "all" to show that everyone thinks the brook is important. He seems to enjoy being near the brook because he has lots of memories there.
Level 1 Simple, limited comment 1–4 marks	Makes simple cross reference of thoughts and feelings: - makes simple identification of writers' methods - selects simple reference(s)/textual detail(s) from one or both texts - shows simple awareness of thoughts and/or feelings.	The writer of Source A thinks it is good that the peregrine falcon lives in the city. He says, "Instead of persecuting them, we provide protection." This is an example of alliteration to show that they are being protected. The writer in Source B also likes nature and he thinks the brook is nice. "All life loved the brook" which is also alliteration to show how people felt about it. The writer thinks all the animals and birds love the brook.
Level 0 No marks	Nothing to reward.	

Note

- If the quality of the response is L1 but only deals with one text, the maximum mark is 2.
- If the quality of the response is L2 but only deals with one text, the maximum mark is 6.
- A student has to deal with both texts to achieve L3 or above.
- References to the writers' methods may be implicit without specific mention of the writer.

AO3 content may include the comparison of ideas such as their thoughts and feelings about:

- Appreciation and admiration for the natural world
- Positive relationship between natural world and humanity
- Troubling relationship between natural world and humanity

and comments on methods such as:

- first person narratives/observation of nature
- descriptive approach – literary style
- whole text structure – shifts between observation and description
- use of verb tenses – switching between past and present
- tone – objective also but with personal enthusiasm
- language features – sensory and figurative language
- word choices.

0 5

'Being in touch with plants, animals and birds is good for our health and wellbeing. Schools and colleges should provide outdoor spaces where students and staff can connect with the natural world.'

Write an article for your school or college website in which you argue your point of view on this statement.

(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)
[40 marks]

AO5	- Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. - Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.	
Content and Organisation		
Level		Skills Descriptors
Level 4 Compelling, convincing communication	Upper Level 4 22–24 marks	Content - Communication is convincing and compelling. - Tone, style and register are assuredly matched to purpose and audience. - Extensive and ambitious vocabulary with sustained crafting of linguistic devices. Organisation - Varied and inventive use of structural features. - Writing is compelling, incorporating a range of convincing and complex ideas. - Fluently linked paragraphs with seamlessly integrated discourse markers.
	Lower Level 4 19–21 marks	Content - Communication is convincing. - Tone, style and register are convincingly matched to purpose and audience. - Extensive vocabulary with conscious crafting of linguistic devices. Organisation - Varied and effective structural features. - Writing is highly engaging with a range of developed complex ideas. - Consistently coherent use of paragraphs with integrated discourse markers.

Level 3 Consistent, clear communication 13–18 marks	Upper Level 3 16–18 marks	Content • Communication is consistently clear. • Tone, style and register are consistently matched to purpose and audience. • Increasingly sophisticated vocabulary and phrasing, chosen for effect with a range of successful linguistic devices. Organisation • Effective use of structural features. • Writing is engaging, using a range of clear, connected ideas. • Coherent paragraphs with integrated discourse markers.
	Lower Level 3 13–15 marks	Content • Communication is generally clear. • Tone, style and register are generally matched to purpose and audience. • Vocabulary clearly chosen for effect and appropriate use of linguistic devices. Organisation • Usually effective use of structural features. • Writing is engaging, with clear, connected ideas. • Usually coherent paragraphs with range of discourse markers.
Level 2 Some successful communication 7–12 marks	Upper Level 2 10–12 marks	Content • Communicates with some sustained success. • Some sustained attempt to match tone, style and register to purpose and audience. • Conscious use of vocabulary with some use of linguistic devices. Organisation • Some use of structural features. • Increasing variety of linked and relevant ideas. • Some use of paragraphs and some use of discourse markers.
	Lower Level 2 7–9 marks	Content • Communicates with some success. • Attempts to match tone, style and register to purpose and audience. • Begins to vary vocabulary with some use of linguistic devices.

		Organisation • Attempts to use structural features. • Some linked and relevant ideas. • Attempt to write in paragraphs with some discourse markers, not always appropriate.
Level 1 Simple, limited communication 1–6 marks	Upper Level 1 4–6 marks	Content • Communicates simply. • Simple awareness of matching tone, style and register to purpose and audience. • Simple vocabulary; simple linguistic devices. Organisation • Evidence of simple structural features. • One or two relevant ideas, simply linked. • Random paragraph structure.
	Lower Level 1 1–3 marks	Content • Limited communication. • Occasional sense of matching tone, style and register to purpose and audience. • Simple vocabulary. Organisation • Limited or no evidence of structural features. • One or two unlinked ideas. • No paragraphs.
Level 0 No marks	Students will not have offered any meaningful writing to assess. Nothing to reward.	

AO6	Students must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole.)
Technical Accuracy	
Level	Skills Descriptors
Level 4 13–16 marks	• Sentence demarcation is consistently secure and consistently accurate. • Wide range of punctuation is used with a high level of accuracy. • Uses a full range of appropriate sentence forms for effect. • Uses Standard English consistently and appropriately with secure control of complex grammatical structures. • High level of accuracy in spelling, including ambitious vocabulary. • Extensive and ambitious use of vocabulary.
Level 3 9–12 marks	• Sentence demarcation is mostly secure and mostly accurate. • Range of punctuation is used, mostly with success. • Uses a variety of sentence forms for effect. • Mostly uses Standard English appropriately with mostly controlled grammatical structures. • Generally accurate spelling, including complex and irregular words. • Increasingly sophisticated use of vocabulary.
Level 2 5–8 marks	• Sentence demarcation is mostly secure and sometimes accurate. • Some control of a range of punctuation. • Attempts a variety of sentence forms. • Some use of Standard English with some control of agreement. • Some accurate spelling of more complex words. • Varied use of vocabulary.
Level 1 1–4 marks	• Occasional use of sentence demarcation. • Some evidence of conscious punctuation. • Simple range of sentence forms. • Occasional use of Standard English with limited control of agreement. • Accurate basic spelling. • Simple use of vocabulary.
Level 0 No marks	Students' spelling, punctuation etc is sufficiently poor to prevent understanding or meaning.