

CIE 0500

**IGCSE FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH
EXAMINATION**

Study Guide

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Paper 3: Directed Writing & Composition

Section 1: Directed Writing

The first question on Paper 3 is a Directed Writing question. It usually consists of a series of documents or a script of some kind. An example is given below:

Sample script

Hala Mohammadi is a 16-year-old student at Qatar International School (QIS) where she is an enthusiastic member of the Drama Club. However, the school does not have a theatre. Hala has arranged a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss this in the hope of persuading the school authorities to provide money towards the building of a drama studio.

Hala: Thank you for taking the time to see me, sir.

Headteacher: That's perfectly all right. Now what is it that you'd like to discuss?

Hala: Well, as you know, the Drama Club is a very popular activity here at QIS – we regularly get between 20 and 30 students turning up every week to practise and rehearse. But the problem is space.

Headteacher: What do you mean 'space'?

Hala: At the moment most of our drama sessions take place up in the English department. We go into the biggest room, rearrange the desks and chairs to create an acting area and then we start to practise. But the problem is it's not the same as a real stage.

Headteacher: Why not?

Hala: For a start it's very difficult to get things like entries and exits right. Getting the correct pitch for our voices is difficult too, plus we can't do our blocking very well since...

Headteacher: Wait a minute Hala! I'm not a drama expert. What does 'blocking' mean?

Hala: Sorry sir. It means sorting out where the actors stand on stage while the dialogue and action takes place.

Headteacher: Okay. But we have a stage in the sports hall. Why can't you use that?

Hala: Because we can't get access to it. The hall tends to be booked out every day after school by the sports clubs like football and basketball and badminton. Then there's the primary school as well and their activities. At the moment we can get in there once every two weeks for about an hour. It's just not enough to rehearse a major production.

Headteacher: And so your solution would be to...?

Hala: We'd like a small extension built to the school or, better still, a dedicated theatre.

This script is continued on a separate sheet.

Paper 3: Directed Writing & Composition

Section 1: Directed Writing

Sample script continued

Headteacher: All right, let's consider some of your points first. Space, as you're no doubt aware, is a problem throughout the school. Our numbers in both primary and secondary school are high. We hardly have the room to fit all our teaching classes in never mind cater for all the activities on offer at the moment.

Hala: True, but we feel drama should be a special case. After all, the productions we put on give a lot of publicity to QIS. Last year our play made the pages of *The Gulf Times*.

Headteacher: I totally agree with you. They are a very important part of school life. But the same goes for sporting clubs and music, the school newspaper and all the others. Why shouldn't they have money spent on specialist facilities?

Hala: I see your point but I'd argue that drama is a special case. Those after school clubs you've mentioned all have existing facilities. Drama has none. Plus if Drama had its own dedicated space it would free up places like the hall for the sporting activities that it was designed for in the first place. And then there are the spin-offs. Drama is great for developing physical and intellectual skills – it demands discipline, creates confidence and then there's the memory and expression part of it too. Added to that is the fun factor. Our students love acting and people enjoy coming to watch our shows.

Headteacher: Yes, there's not much I can disagree with there. But building, say, a hundred-seat theatre would cost a lot of money, probably more than we have in budget right now. Could your drama group do anything to help raise some funds?

Hala: Well, the ticket money from the productions we put on now could go some way towards helping with that. We made quite a lot of money from our last show. There's also little things we can do like cake sales and sponsored walks. Maybe even a Dramathon where we could act for 24 hours in a row or something like that.

Headteacher: All right, I'll put your idea to the governors. I'll make no promises mind, but I am sympathetic to your cause. In the meantime what do you propose to do next?

Hala: I was going to ask you if I could attend the next governors' meeting and make a presentation saying why the school needs a theatre.

Headteacher: That's a good idea. I look forward to hearing your speech.

Hala: Thank you for taking the time to listen sir.

Paper 3: Directed Writing & Composition

Section 1: Directed Writing

Activity 1

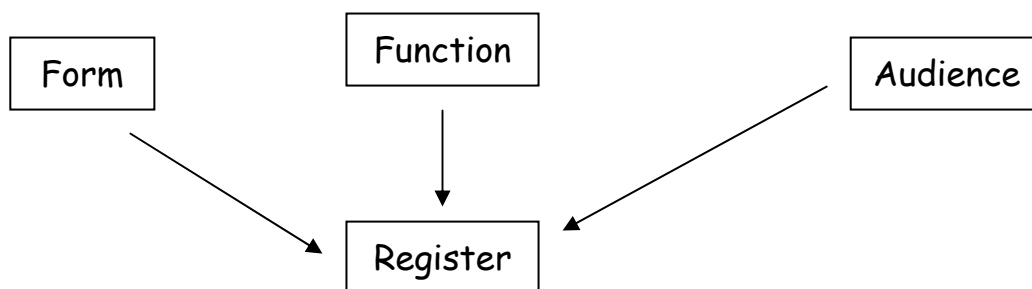
- You are Hala Mohammadi. You are now going to write the speech she is going to give to the governors of QIS proposing a new theatre at the school.

You should:

- start with a clear account of the problems faced by the Drama Club at the school.
 - persuade the governors that a theatre is something the school should invest in.
- Select your material from the script above.
 - Pay attention to the order in which you use it.
 - You may include your own ideas to improve drama at the school but they must be related to what you have read.
 - Write about one and half to two sides depending on the size of your handwriting.
 - Up to 10 marks will be given for the content of your answer, and up to 15 marks for the quality of your writing.

Use the FFAR technique

What this question is testing is your knowledge of **FORM**, **FUNCTION** and **AUDIENCE** and how these three things affect the **REGISTER (FFAR)**. Broadly speaking, the register can be FORMAL or INFORMAL. The form and function of a piece of writing, as well as the audience at which it is aimed, all have a direct influence on register.



The question gives directions which guide you towards writing in a specific form for a specific purpose and audience. You need to be able to spot these directions. This is where FFAR comes in. Here are five easy steps for you to follow:

Step 1: Before reading the text, read the question.

Step 2: Pinpoint the FORM you are being asked to write in.

Step 3: Do the same for the FUNCTION.

Step 4: Who is the AUDIENCE you are being asked to write for?

Step 5: Work out what type of REGISTER you will need to write in – formal or informal?

Paper 3: Directed Writing & Composition

Section 1: Directed Writing

Speech writing – a 13-point guide

1. Rhetorical use of questions

Example:

‘What will happen to the Drama Club if no theatre is built? Who will be the next generation of actors at QIS?’

2. Addressing the audience directly

Example:

‘You must act on this advice...’

3. Using concrete details not vague ones.

Example:

‘A theatre at QIS would mean increased participation in drama activities.’

4. Using shorter, simpler sentences rather than over complicated ones.

5. Using factual detail, statistics and quotations *they help, but use them sparingly).

Example:

‘The play’s the thing...’ (a quote from *Hamlet*.)

6. Using the ‘problem-solution’ structure.

Example:

‘At the moment drama at QIS is slowly becoming less popular. A new theatre would reverse this trend.’

7. Beginning with an effective introduction

8. Using ‘the hook’- a brief anecdote or a hard-hitting fact to capture the audience’s attention.

Example:

‘A new theatre would not only enhance the school it would also enhance the individuals who act in it.’

9. Get to the point – don’t ramble.

10. Repeat words – repetition can be effective but don’t repeat ideas too much.

11. Make strong transitions between one point and the next

Example:

‘Another argument in favour of a theatre...’

12. Use three-part lists (they help to give a speech rhythm)

Example:

‘A theatre will make plays, assemblies and other gatherings more memorable occasions.’

13. Remember the function of a speech – they usually inform AND persuade.

Teacher Notes

Extension activities for Paper 3

3. Argumentative & Discursive writing.

To show some of the techniques of this type of writing I have used:

- The 'I have a dream speech' by Martin Luther King
- The 'Friends, Romans, countrymen' speech by Mark Antony in Act 3 Scene 2 of *Julius Caesar*.

A useful website with many examples of this type of writing can be found at:

<http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/index.html>

As well as numerous examples of argumentative technique, the site may also give students ideas for a piece of coursework if they are following that assessment pathway.

Other websites

A very useful resource is the Cambridge International Examination board website:

www.cie.org.uk.

A variety of resources can be found here including up to date syllabuses, past papers, mark schemes and examiners reports. The mark schemes are especially invaluable when used in conjunction with past papers. These can be accessed via the Teacher Support site although this does require registration by your centre.