

# LEVEL 1 AND 2 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN **ENGLISH**

(8720/8725)

## Marked responses Component 1 Reading

See a range of responses to questions from the sample papers with commentaries from an examiner to demonstrate how to apply the mark scheme.

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# EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Whilst every attempt has been made to show a range of student responses, the following responses and examiner comments provide teachers with the best opportunity to understand the application of the mark scheme. They are not intended to be viewed as ‘model’ answers and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

# Specimen paper 8720R

## Source A

### Source A

*Housing Department Manager  
Southampton City Council*

Dear Sir

Apparently, there are 11.1 million cats in the UK and I think most of them visit my garden, bringing their fleas with them! I need the council to do something about this problem.

Cats are a nuisance. They leave their mess in other people's gardens and their owners do not seem to care at all. I am a dedicated gardener and I am fed up of standing in cat mess or, even worse, putting my hand in it! This causes a serious health risk to myself and my grandchildren who sometimes play in my garden. Cats can trigger an asthma attack and I worry about my four-year-old grandson who suffers from asthma.

All cats dig to bury their mess but I hate it when a cat digs in my vegetable plot. Sometimes they disturb the seeds or pull out my young strawberry plants.

Cats may look cute, but they should be kept indoors and their owners should be held responsible if the cat gets out. I took this photograph and spoke to my neighbours about the problem but they just say "Oh, it's impossible to keep him in."

It is really unfair that I have to tolerate this and I would like to know what the council can do to help.

Yours faithfully

Mrs P Barkley



## Source B

### Source B

## Thinking of getting a cat?

Some people want a cat to cuddle and sit on their lap. Others are happy to live with a very independent cat which spends most of its time outside and doesn't want too much fuss. Whichever of these is for you, you will find great love and joy in your cat companion.



### "Do all cats hunt?"

You may hate the idea of your cat hunting outside. Perhaps you are a bird lover, or simply don't fancy a gift of a small dead mouse. Hunting is normal behaviour for cats. But if you want a cat to keep rats away, you won't want to find yourself with a couch potato cat!

### "Can I keep a cat indoors?"

Being outdoors brings a huge variety to a cat's life and allows it to use all its hunting behaviours. Of course there are risks outside for cats, but cats also need space to run around and express natural behaviour.

### "Can I keep a cat on vegetarian food?"

If you really want a vegetarian pet, get a rabbit - a cat needs some of the nutrients found in meat. It would be unfair and dangerous to its health to keep it as a vegetarian.

Your cat needs:

- plenty of human companionship
- regular meals with a constant supply of fresh water
- a clean and comfortable bed
- regular grooming
- outdoor access or a litter tray
- a safe, stimulating environment.

### Question 10

Identify two similarities between Source A and Source B.

You might want to look at:

- the format and layout
- the language used
- the kind of information, ideas and opinions given in the texts.

[2 marks]

### Mark scheme

Accept	Do not accept
<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• both contain a photograph of cats/containing cats</li> <li>• both are fairly informal</li> <li>• both use direct address/second person/ sound as though they are speaking directly to the reader</li> <li>• both are about cats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• both contain pictures/images/photographs</li> <li>• both contain paragraphs.</li> </ul>

### Student response 1

Similarity 1 – they both use pictures with cats in them

Similarity 2 – they are both talking about cats

### Examiner commentary

There will always be a thematic link such as noted in point 2. There will not necessarily be a picture in each, therefore students must be taught to look at the source texts and not assume both will contain an image.

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 2

Similarity 1 – They are both about cats

Similarity 2 – They both say negative things about cats

### Examiner commentary

Point 1 uses the thematic link; Point 2 notes something specific about the general subject.

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 3

Similarity 1 – Both texts talk about cats

Similarity 2 – Both texts are persuasive – incorrect

### Examiner commentary

Point 2 feels like more of a guess on the candidate's part. Source B is very clearly informative, with no elements of persuasion.

**1 mark awarded**

From November 2020, the layout of this question will be amended to assist candidates by clarifying what they are expected to write and provide more space for the answers. See below:

Identify **two** similarities between **Source A** and **Source B** by completing the sentences below.

Both sources \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Both sources \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Question 11

Identify two differences between **Source A** and **Source B**

You might want to look at:

- the format and layout
- the language used
- the kind of information, ideas and opinions given in the texts.

[2 marks]

### Mark scheme

Accept	Do not accept
<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Source A</b> is a letter, <b>Source B</b> is a Q&amp;A format (and uses bullet points)</li> <li>• <b>Source A</b> sounds very angry, <b>Source B</b> is detached/impersonal</li> <li>• the writer of <b>Source A</b> does not like cats, the writer of <b>Source B</b> just gives information about cats/seems more positive about cats</li> <li>• <b>Source A</b> is mainly opinions whereas <b>Source B</b> is largely factual.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Source A</b> is written by a woman; we don't know who wrote <b>Source B</b>/<b>Source B</b> was written by a man</li> <li>• <b>Source B</b>'s photo has a man in it; <b>Source A</b>'s doesn't / has no humans in it</li> <li>• The writer of <b>Source B</b> loves cats.</li> </ul>

### Student response 1

Difference 1 – One's a letter and one's an information sheet

Difference 2 – One's giving advice (Source B) and Source A is complaining

### Examiner commentary

It is not necessary to identify each source, as seen in Point 1, as long as the difference is clear.

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 2

Difference 1 – Source B are telling you facts about cats

Difference 2 – Source A she is telling you her problems

### Examiner commentary

This is an example of a common error candidates make in this question by writing an observation about each source in each space. Point 2 is rather vague but considered sufficiently different from the content of Point 1 to constitute one correct answer straddling both spaces.

**1 mark awarded**

### Student response 3

Difference 1 – Source B has sub-headings whereas Source A does not– Not valid

Difference 2 – Source A is persuading and Source B is informing

### Examiner commentary

Point A simply reiterates that the two sources are different, rather than identifying what is different. Students should be encouraged not to write such responses.

**1 mark awarded**

From November 2020, the layout of this question will be amended to assist candidates by clarifying what they are expected to write and provide more space for the answers. See below:

Identify two differences between **Source A** and **Source B** by completing the sentences below.

Source A \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Source B \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Source A \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Source B \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Source C

### Source C

## *A Magical Winter Experience*

We saw the Festival of Light as part of a full day out at Longleat Safari Park with our girls aged two and four. It was the pinnacle of our visit. It went dark before 4 pm so we didn't need to push our girls too far beyond their energy limits to see all the lanterns.

There's a one-way system around the formal gardens but the rest of the lanterns can be viewed in any order. The lights started to switch on from 3.45 pm outside Longleat House so this is where we began the trail.



The whole lantern trail is outdoors so wrap up warm. The trail is buggy friendly, but if you decide to go into Longleat House, remember to leave your pushchair outside.

There are plenty of places to sit down to eat indoors or at food stalls outside, but these will get very busy around dusk. Arrive early, leave yourself plenty of time to dine or bring some snacks. We ate in the Piazza at 1 pm and didn't have problems getting a table. But by 4.30 pm there were long queues.

This truly is a magical event. It was a sell-out on the Sunday we visited but the crowds were manageable. Get there in good time and take a slow walk around to admire the illuminations and soak up the atmosphere.

### Question 17

A family friend is thinking of taking his young children to Longleat Festival of Light. He has asked you to look up information about the event.

From Source C, make a list of useful instructions to help your friend enjoy the visit.

[3 marks]

NB: the task asks for ‘**useful instructions**’ so we would expect these to be presented as such, using imperatives. Full marks cannot be gained without at least some of the relevant points being expressed in this way. All errors are those of the candidates.

### Mark scheme

Marks	Descriptor
3 marks	Appropriate information located and transcribed accurately. <b>Minimum of three accurate points, at least one of which presented as an instruction.</b>
2 marks	Some appropriate information located, but insufficient and/or non-essential and/or inaccurately transcribed.
1 mark	Limited information located, relevance is unclear. <b>Two paragraphs lifted.</b>
0 marks	Nothing written worthy of credit. <b>More than two paragraphs lifted.</b>

#### Indicative content

Answers must be specifically taken from the source text and may mention the following:

Accept	Do not accept
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wrap up warm</li> <li>• there is a one-way system <b>round the formal gardens / follow the one-way system in the formal gardens</b></li> <li>• arrive early / get there in good time</li> <li>• leave plenty of time to dine or bring some snacks // if you want to eat at Longleat, get there in good time / before it gets busy // the restaurants get busy after 4.30</li> <li>• there are plenty of food outlets there</li> <li>• <b>take a slow walk round // take your time to admire the illuminations //</b></li> <li>• soak up the atmosphere</li> <li>• trail is buggy friendly but you cannot take your buggy into Longleat House // you will need to leave your buggy/pushchair outside if you go into Longleat House.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the lantern trail is outdoors (alone)</li> <li>• both leave plenty of time to dine <b>AND</b> bring some snacks</li> <li>• admire the illuminations (alone)</li> <li>• remember to leave your buggy/pushchair outside (alone).</li> <li>• Any reference to 1pm, 4pm or going dark</li> </ul>

### Student response 1

The whole trail is outside, so **bring warm cloths**. Everywhere will be packed by 4.30 pm so **have dinner erly and/or bring snacks**. Only the formal gardens have a one-way system so you can see the rest of the trail in any order. **Get there erly** and **have a long slow walk around to realy capture the atmosphere and enjoy the sites**.

### Examiner commentary

The points in bold are valid in terms of the source and expressed as instructions. The rest of the response is presented as information, but there is nothing irrelevant. Despite largely being lifted, this fulfils the requirements for a “list of instructions”.

**3 marks awarded**

### Student response 2

1. The lights switch on at 3.45 so start the trail then – not valid
2. There is a one-way system so make sure to know where the starting point is. – BOD
3. Leave any buggies outside Longleat House.
4. Get food around 1pm to avoid queues or **bring snacks**.
5. **Make sure to take your time and soak up the atmosphere.**

### Examiner commentary

The points in bold are valid instructions. Point 1 is taken from the narrative account of the writer’s visit, rather than advice to the friend. Point 2 is information interpreted as an instruction by the candidate. It was given benefit of doubt. Point 3 looks promising but this stipulation applies only to visitors who want to go inside Longleat House – vital information missed. The first part of Point 4 is a misinterpretation of information about the business of the on-site restaurants.

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 3

Dear Mrs Castro, I heard that you want to go at Longleat Festival of Light. This is the following you can do there:

- The light started to switch on from 3.45 pm outside Longleat House – information only
- Leave yourself plenty of tme to dine or bring some snacks

### Examiner commentary

This response suffered from the attempt to present it as a letter as there is evidence that the candidate may have run out of time on this final question. Only the second and final point is a valid “useful instruction”.

**1 mark awarded**

# Specimen paper 8725R

## Source A

### Source A



### Calling Discerning Cats!

Do you need a holiday from your owners?

Then ask them to check out Cranborne Cattery.

We have been offering a top-class, superior and personalised service from our family-run business since 2005. Our collection and delivery service is available free of charge to DE17 postcodes. Why not drop in and inspect our premises? Small is beautiful and you won't find better cat accommodation anywhere!

David and Sarah have worked in various catteries previously and have a wealth of knowledge and experience in cat care, including administering medicines. If your pet has specific needs, please discuss these with us. A range of delicious menu choices will ensure that even the most diet-conscious guest will find something to their liking.

The spacious cat pens measure 2.1 metres × 1.8 metres, and are licensed to accommodate up to three cats. The double-glazing and fly-screen make our pens uniquely secure and comfortable. Also, each delightful pen contains a cosy, heated sleeping box. In fact, our pens are the cat-version of a penthouse suite! We want your cat to feel at home with us, so you are welcome to bring favourite blankets, scratching posts or toys.

#### DAILY TARIFF FROM 1ST JANUARY 2019

1 cat - £12.50

2 cats - £23.00

3 cats - £30.00

**Minimum charge:** Our minimum charge is 3 days or £38, whichever is the greater.

Payment is by cash, cheque or bank transfer as we are not able to accept debit or credit cards.

[cranbornecats@email.com](mailto:cranbornecats@email.com)

Orchard Close, Cranborne, Derby DE17 3PG.

David and Sarah Simpson – Managers

### Question 6

Explain how the writer of **Source A** uses words and language techniques to **persuade** cat owners to use the services of Cranborne Cattery.

You should provide examples from **Source A** in your answer.

[3 marks]

Marks	Descriptor
3 marks	Persuasive words and techniques are identified, with appropriate support from the text and a clear explanation of the intended impact.
2 marks	Identifies relevant material from the text, with an attempt to explain the intended effect.
1 mark	Fragmented points / simple comment / relevant material identified
0 marks	Nothing written worthy of comment.

#### Indicative content

Mark for quality not quantity

Answers may mention the following:

- Persuasive words: *“spacious; discerning; top-class, superior and personalised service; (triplet/rule of three) delightful pens; delicious menu choices”; “uniquely secure”; “cosy”; “small is best”*
- Detail: lots of detail about the cat accommodation – spacious pens – precise size given; three cats per pen maximum; heated sleeping boxes; double glazed for security, varied menu
- Language to reassure cat owners / provide confidence about staff: - *“wealth of experience and knowledge; can administer prescription medicine; happy for owners to bring...; “licensed”* – gives sense of official approval

Indicative standard:

*The staff are described as having “a wealth of experience and knowledge”. This would reassure cat owners that their cat would be looked after expertly by people who have cared for many different cats before.* = Clear explanation of effect

*The staff are described as having “a wealth of experience and knowledge”. This would tell the cat owners that their cat would be safe here.* = Attempt to explain effect.

### Student response 1

The writer persuades people to use Cranborne Cattery by using **language that makes people think of luxury and comfort**, for example: 'penthouse suite, delicious menu, spacious cat pens and double glazing'. **The word 'penthouse' suggests the best and most expensive room in a hotel.** They let us know that experts will be looking after your cat and they're telling people that they won't find better accommodation anywhere.

### Examiner commentary

The response contains a list of appropriate persuasive phrases and the comment 'language that makes people think of luxury and comfort' is an attempt to explain the intended effect (Level 2 of the mark scheme). The additional comment on the word 'penthouse' is sufficient to constitute a 'clear explanation' which secures the mark of 3. The final sentence is simply a paraphrase of further attractive aspects of the cattery but does not focus on language use.

**3 marks awarded**

### Student response 2

The writer used words like 'beautiful' and 'delightful' to persuade cat owners **as they'll be most interested in a cattery that can provide an attractive environment for their cats.**

### Examiner commentary

This very short response demonstrates a focus on language use by careful selection of two individual appropriate words and a limited attempt to explain the effect. It clearly does more than simply identify relevant material (Level 1). Such an approach is far more likely to be successful than an indiscriminate lifting of a large chunk of text.

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 3

'We have been offering a top class, superior and personalised service'.

'pens are the cat version of a suite'.

The writer want people to use his buisness by using eye catching title and bold lettering also the prices of the accommodation.

### Examiner commentary

This response gains a mark for identifying two relevant pieces of persuasive language but makes no attempt to explain the effect of these. The final sentence is more focused on presentational elements and is not relevant to what is being tested in this question.

**1 mark awarded**

## Source C

### Source C

Right Honourable Sefton Harris MP  
Houses of Parliament

Dear Mr Harris

I am approaching you, as my MP, to request you to seek a change in the bylaws referring to cats. Many people are troubled by cats encroaching on their gardens and doing their business wherever they please. There is no way of keeping them out and many cat owners are irresponsible and just ignore the nuisance to their neighbours.

The law currently cannot take any action against cat owners when their pets stray into other people's property, but surely the owner should be held responsible for any damage the cat does? The biggest menace is cat mess, but why is the cat owner not fined when their cat uses someone else's garden as its toilet? It is quite outrageous that the law has the power to fine the owner of the garden for uncleared cat mess but not the owner of the cat!!

Who is going to compensate me for all the vegetables ruined by cats digging up the young plants? I recently had to take time off work owing to a bad asthma attack which was probably caused by a cat. Who is going to make up my lost earnings?

We need a change in the law to shift the responsibility for cats on to the people who choose to keep them as pets! Please support me in this.

Yours faithfully  
Mrs A Barkley

The paper contains three questions which ask candidates to list three things relating to the source texts. The level of difficulty varies across these questions (Q10, 11 and 13). Guidance to examiners in the mark scheme for this series clearly states ‘Responses must be specific actions against cat owners’. The following three scripts demonstrate reasons why marks were withheld.

**Question 13**

From reading **Source C**, list **three** actions Mrs Barkley would like the law to take against irresponsible cat owners.

**[3 marks]**

**Award 1 mark per valid point made, up to a maximum of 3 marks**

**Accept one valid point per space.**

**NB: Responses must be specific actions against cat owners**

**Indicative content**

Accept	Do Not Accept
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take action against cat owners when pets stray into other people’s property / go into other people’s gardens.</li> <li>• Make cat owners responsible for / pay for any damage their cat does // fine cat owners for any damage their cat does.</li> <li>• (change the law to) shift responsibility for cats on to their owners / people who choose to keep them as pets.</li> <li>• <b>Fine cat owners if their cat messes in someone else’s garden.</b></li> <li>• Make cat owners compensate people for loss of home-grown vegetables.</li> <li>• Make cat owners compensate people for loss of income due to cat-induced illness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make cat owners keep their cats indoors/ in their own house / property.</li> <li>• Do not fine the person whose garden has been fouled / hold the garden owner responsible for cat mess from someone else’s cat.</li> <li>• Change the bye-laws re cats</li> </ul>



### Student response 1

- Pay for the damage that the cats have caused.
- **Make the irresponsible cat owners recieve a fine.**
- Shift the responsibility for cats on to the people who own them.

### Examiner commentary

Need to specify for what the fine is issued

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 2

- The owner should be held responsible for any damage the cat does.
- **Cat owner should be fined for their cat mess from their cat outside.**
- **Paying to make up for their lost earnings.**

### Examiner commentary

Need to specify that the mess has been done in someone else's garden.

'Paying' without the clarification of 'owners' would be accepted as 'owners' is in the question, but it is not clear who has lost earnings, nor how.

**1 mark awarded**

### Student response 3

- Fine people wthey they don't clear up their cats mess in someones garden
- Fine people when the cat has caused damage.
- **Fine people when there cat uses someone elses garden as a toliet.**

### Examiner commentary

The third point is a repetition of the first point

**2 marks awarded**

### Student response 4

- **She doesn't want them to go into anyone else's garden**
- Wants the owner of the cat to be fined for the cat pooping in someone else's gardens
- **Cats to stop digging up her vegetables**

### Examiner commentary

The first point is true but it is not an action Mrs Barkley wants taken against cat owners.

The third point is also true, but not answering the question.

**1 mark awarded**

## Question 14

Compare **Source A** and **Source C** in terms of what they say and how the material is conveyed.

You may wish to refer to the level of detail, presentation and language, formality, possible bias and how the writers come across.

[6 marks]

Marks	Descriptor
5–6 marks	<p>A range of similarities/differences are identified and explained in detail, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• level of detail in text (main points/specific details) / textual references / quotations)</li> <li>• the information, ideas or opinions and how these are conveyed</li> <li>• style of writing/writer's voice/tone/level of formality/potential bias</li> <li>• implicit and inferred meanings</li> <li>• use of textual features/devices</li> <li>• vocabulary.</li> </ul>
3–4 marks	<p>Either: At least one similarity/difference is identified and explained in detail</p> <p>Or: A number of similarities/differences are identified and set out clearly.</p> <p>Some reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• level of detail in text (main points/specific details)</li> <li>• the information, ideas or opinions and how these are conveyed</li> <li>• style of writing/writer's voice/tone/level of formality/potential bias</li> <li>• implicit and inferred meanings</li> <li>• use of textual features/devices</li> <li>• vocabulary.</li> </ul>
1–2 marks	<p>Fragmented points OR unclear whether these are similarities or differences OR Simple contrast identified</p>
0 marks	Nothing written worthy of comment.

**NB:** If only one source addressed OR a wrong source used, response should be capped at 2 marks.

Mark using ticks to identify valid points, contrasts, details, textual references etc  
Then select summative comment identifying level achieved from Related Parts Comment Bank

## Student response 1

Source A and C are completely different. Source A is an advert that persuades the reader and Source C is a letter of complaint. Source A uses a mix of fact like the size of the pens and positive adjectives such as delicious and beautiful these are used to encourage the reader to use there business. Source C is a letter from one person and it is mainly her opinion, she is making an argument and uses examples that she thinks will win her argument. She uses more negative language about cats and there owners. She uses words like menace, outrageous and irresponsible.

## Examiner commentary

A range of differences identified, dealing with text type and purpose, touching on theme/content and language, supported by a number of examples. Clearly in Level 3 but some explanation is needed to secure full marks

**5 marks awarded**

## Student response 2

In Source A, the writer uses language that offers a kind feel towards cats, the writer uses language like 'top-class' and 'comfortable', this makes the reader feel welcome and respectful of the company.

On the other hand in Source C, the writer uses quite harsh language to support the idea of hatred towards cats, the writer uses language like 'encroaching' and 'nuisance'. This shows quite a contrast between both of the sources due to the fact they have different opinions on cats.

In Source A, it is less formal which gives it a more laid back and relaxed feel to it, while on the other hand, Source C is very formal, displaying that the writer is not happy about the situation or is writing something extremely important.

In conclusion these are what I think make the sources different.

## Examiner commentary

This response focuses almost exclusively on language and tone/formality. There is clear explanation but insufficient range to merit full marks. It seems to lose energy and focus at the end, possibly running out of time.

**5 marks awarded**

### Student response 3

In Source A they are welcoming people's cats on to their property whereas in Source C he is wanting to stop cats from doing this. Source A is selling you something whereas Source C is asking something to change a specific thing. Source A is speaking to the reader in a nice way so that they buy what they are selling but Source C is speaking to you in an angry manner and is trying to get a point across. In Source A they are asking questions rather than in Source C where the writer is demanding a change of what cats do.

### Examiner commentary

This response includes a number of areas which could be fruitful in terms of comparison but lacks a clear focus on most elements identified. The first sentence gives a nice clear contrast of purpose, which would have benefitted from inclusion of text types. The second is too vague. The third point needs examples to support and the final point is again, too vague. Achieves the bottom of Level 2 "A number of similarities/differences identified and set out clearly". Greater clarity and more specific focus would have moved this script considerably

### Student response 4

In Source A the writer shows that who he is talking about loves cats and in Source C the writer obviously dislikes cats.

### Examiner commentary

This response appears to be just the beginning of what would have been a more substantial effort, possibly again indicating insufficient time on this final question of the examination. Here it achieves just a simple contrast worthy of one mark.

**1 mark awarded**

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You can talk directly to the English subject team

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