



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority

National Examinations Test Specifications

English Language – Grade 12

Date Issued: October 2024

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Please ensure you refer only to the most current version.

1 Construct

1.1 Test Purpose

The main purpose of the examinations is to measure the students' performance in Grade 12 based on the learning goals in the Secondary Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain and international level of proficiency.

Additional purposes of the National Examinations are to provide:

- a beacon of good assessment practice.
- robust information for the monitoring of standards over time.

1.2 Aims of the Grade 12 English examinations

The aims of the Grade 12 English examinations are to:

- measure core areas of literacy (defined as Writing, Reading, and Listening).
- help develop the ability of Grade 12 students to use English effectively for the purposes of practical communication.
- form a sound base for the skills required for further study or employment using English as the medium.

1.3 Relationship with International Standards

The Grade 12 examination level is designed to be comparable to the level described in the Common European Framework, Level B2.

In assessing English language skills at this level, there is a strong focus on assessing higher order thinking skills in comprehending texts (and recordings) and ideas, as well as the ability of students to produce appropriate written responses to stimuli which may take the form of textual or visual input.

2. Definitions

2.1. Major skills

The major skills at Grade 12 are:

- Writing
- Reading
- Listening

2.2. Competencies

Within each major skill, a number of competencies will be assessed.

2.2.1. The Writing will assess the following competencies:

- writing a formal transactional letter or email to cover functions specified according to the context, for example advising, complaining, enquiring, etc.
- writing a discursive essay in order to present an argument for and/or against a point of view.

2.2.2. The Reading will assess the following competencies:

- locating specific information.
- focusing on organisation, cohesion and coherence.
- demonstrating comprehension of detailed information.

2.2.3. The Listening will assess the following competencies:

- identifying gist, detail, function, purpose, attitude, opinion etc.
- identifying main points (including attitude or opinion) in an extended conversation/ interview on a general topic.

2.2.4. While the emphasis in every task will be on meaning and communication, grammar is a skill which is assessed in the English language examinations. Students who know how language is used to achieve effect or express meaning will be strongly placed to perform well in this examination. Correct spelling is also considered very important for successful communication and is therefore assessed in the English language examinations.

2.3. Questions and items

A task (or question) is a collection of items which is linked by a common written or spoken text. An item is the smallest separately identified testing point within an assessment to which a mark is allocated. Each item must assess one (and only one) major skill, and must also assess one (and only one) competency. A question may consist of several items or just one item.

3. Test Construction

3.1. Balance of Marks

The Writing, Reading and Listening skills are equally weighted to produce a final total for each student.

The allocation of marks in the individual parts of the skills is shown in the table below:

Skill	Part				
	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	40%	60%			
Listening	57%	43%			
Reading			37.5%	31.25%	31.25%

3.2. Description of papers

There will be 2 question papers assessing the major skills: Writing, Reading and Listening. Students answer Paper 1 questions on the question paper and Paper 2 parts on a separate answer sheet.

The purpose of these examinations is to focus on content and communication, and on what learners can do with the language rather than on what they know about the language. Therefore, grammar is not tested directly but indirectly through the writing tasks as well as through the processing that the students need to do in order to successfully complete the reading and listening tasks.

4. Paper 1: Writing

4.1. Paper Overview

Duration:	75 minutes
Marks:	20 marks
Tasks Type	Essay questions
Format:	Students read and answer questions on the question paper.

4.2. Writing Competencies

Students have to complete two questions. The marks are awarded for content and language according to a banded criterion-based mark scheme. The language objectives have been grouped under competencies headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

- W1** Write clear detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to the student's field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.
- W2** Write clear detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of genre concerned.
- W3** Write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail (including giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view, and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options).
- W4** Write letters conveying degrees of emotion and highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences and commenting on the correspondent's news and views.

4.3. Writing Test Specifications

Question	Competency	Competency objectives	Marks	Description
1	Writing a formal transactional letter/email	W1, W2, W4	8	This will always be discursive in nature and involves writing a letter/email in 120 - 150 words.
2	Writing a discursive essay	W1, W3	12	This will always involve presenting an argument for and/or against a point of view in 170 - 200 words.

4.4. Mark Schemes

Examiners mark the Writing paper following coordination sessions which set the standard and ensure the correct application of the mark schemes. The mark schemes may be expanded, revised or amended as required from one session to the next.

There is no penalty for over-length responses, but digression (or failure to address the content points) is penalised according to the mark scheme.

Marks for language are awarded according to the descriptors in the mark scheme.

In addition to assessing lexical and structural knowledge as a key competency in the writing tasks, the need for grammatical accuracy/range (including lexical range) will be built into the marking criteria.

4.4.1. Question 1

The mark scheme is divided into bands; there are 2 marks available within each band. Markers should first decide which band the piece of writing fits into best, and then refine and adjust the mark further by deciding whether the performance merits the top mark within the band. It is essential that students communicate the required information presented in the task appropriately and effectively. Therefore, addressing content points is an important element as well as the successful communication of the message.

There is no penalty for over-length responses; however, failure to address the content points is penalised according to the mark scheme.

Marks	Content	Communication
7 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• points addressed with expansion.• Target reader would be fully informed.	Message is communicated effectively at Grade 12 level (B2) with few or no errors of spelling, punctuation, vocabulary or grammar.
5 - 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 points addressed.• Target reader would be simply informed.	Message is generally communicated effectively at Grade 12 level (B2) but with some errors of spelling, punctuation, vocabulary or grammar which may hinder communication.
3 - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 - 3 points addressed.• Target reader would be partially informed.	Message is partially communicated but errors of spelling, punctuation, vocabulary or grammar hinder communication.
1 - 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 - 2 points addressed or little relevant content.• Target reader would be inadequately informed.	Message is inadequate, and many errors of spelling, punctuation, vocabulary or grammar hinder communication.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No relevant content.• Target reader is uninformed.	Message is incomprehensible and possibly illegible.

4.4.2. Question 2

Markers should begin by looking at the Task Achievement criterion and decide on a mark for this before considering the other 3 criteria. A mark should be given for each of the 4 criteria, which are then added up to get the complete mark for each student. Students may have a very flat profile, scoring 3 marks for each of the criteria for example, or may have a more uneven profile, scoring higher marks for some criteria and lower marks for others.

There is no penalty for over-length responses; however, failure to address the content points is penalised according to the mark scheme.

Band	0	1	2	3
Task Achievement	Insufficient sample at Grade 9 level/completely incomprehensible and/or illegible/irrelevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to address the requirements of the task. Fails to present a clear discussion and the conclusions reached are unsatisfactory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to address the requirements of the task but does not fully succeed. Discussion may be confused in places and/or the conclusion is unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All requirements of the task are addressed. Discussion is clear and concise and there is a comprehensible conclusion reached.
Lexical Range		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited evidence of vocabulary at Grade 12 level. Vocabulary is used inappropriately. Little attention paid to spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory evidence of vocabulary at Grade 12 level. Vocabulary is appropriate for the task with occasional errors. There are some spelling errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of vocabulary appropriate at Grade 12 level. Vocabulary is fully appropriate to the task. Spelling is mostly accurate throughout.
Grammatical Range		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitive, simplistic structures marred by basic, frequent errors. Lack of control impedes communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory range of structures at Grade 12 level is present with some noticeable errors. The argument is communicated despite errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of structures at Grade 12 level with few or no errors. The argument is communicated successfully through effective use of structures.
Organisation and Coherence		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is lacking in organisation. Incoherent in places. Little attention paid to punctuation. Requires effort from the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is generally well organised and coherent. Basic linking devices used. There are some punctuation errors. Requires some effort from the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is effectively organised and coherent. Linking devices used to effect for Grade 12 level. Punctuation is mostly accurate throughout. Requires no effort from the reader.

5. Paper 2: Listening and Reading

5.1. Paper Overview

Duration:	90 minutes
Marks:	30 marks
Tasks Type	Multiple-choice question (MCQ)
Listening Format:	Students listen to a series of recordings while answering the questions on the question paper and then transfer their answers onto a separate answer sheet.
Reading Format:	Students read and answer questions on a separate answer sheet.

5.2. Listening Competencies

The listening consists of two parts, each focusing on a different text. Students have approximately 30 minutes to complete both listening tasks, worth a total of 14 marks. Each recording is heard twice. Each part begins with an example for the students and is then followed by the questions.

The language objectives have been grouped under competencies headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

- L1 Understand spoken language, live or broadcast (e.g. radio documentaries), on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life.
- L2 Understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, identifying the speaker's mood, tone, opinions etc. expressed directly or implied in what is being said.
- L3 Follow the essentials of lectures, talks and reports and other forms of academic/professional presentation which are propositionally and linguistically complex.
- L4 Understand announcements and messages on concrete and abstract topics spoken in standard dialects at normal speed.
- L5 Identify and select relevant detail from a set of options.

5.3. Listening Test Specifications

Part	Competency	Competency objectives	Marks	Description
1	Identifying gist, detail, function, purpose, attitude, opinion, etc. in a series of short monologues on everyday topics.	L1, L2, L3, L4, L5	8	Four short monologues 8 x 3-option MCQ (2 items per monologue); 4 items plus an example, Each monologue is (130 – 150 words)
2	Identifying main points and specific information (including attitude or opinion) in an extended conversation/ interview on a general topic.	L1, L2, L3, L4, L5	6	An extended conversation/ interview. (550 – 600 words) 6 x 3-option MCQ. 1 example plus 6 items

5.4. Reading Competencies

The reading consists of three parts, each focusing on a text. Students have 60 minutes to complete all the tasks, worth a total of 16 marks. Each part begins with an example for the students and is then followed by the questions.

The language objectives have been grouped under competencies headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

- R1** Read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes.
- R2** Scan quickly through long complex texts (including news items, articles, reports and correspondence) on a wide range of topics, readily grasping the essential meaning, identifying content and locating relevant details.

- R3** Use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including reading for main points, checking comprehension by contextual clues identifying the writer's tone, opinions and attitudes when expressed directly or indirectly.
- R4** Identify and select relevant detail from a set of options.
- R5** Locate information in a given text and match it to a set of options.
- R6** Analyse text structure, cohesion and coherence.

5.5. Reading Test Specifications

Part	Competency	Competency objectives	Marks	Description
3	Locating specific information	R1, R2, R3, R5	6	4 related texts (250 words in total) with 6 statements. Multiple matching. 1 example plus 6 items
4	Focusing on organisation, cohesion and coherence of paragraphs	R1, R3, R5, R6	5	1 long text (380 – 400 words, 5 – 6 paragraphs). 7 options. Gapped text – sentences.
5	Demonstrating comprehension of detailed information	R1, R2, R3, R4	5	1 long text (450 – 500 words). 4-option multiple-choice, variety of focus. 1 example plus 5 items.

6. Exam Sample

6.1. Paper 1

Question 1

You have seen an advertisement in an English language newspaper, looking for young people who are interested in working at the museum on a part-time basis, during the summer holidays. You decide to apply for the job.

Write a letter **(120 - 150 words)** to the director of the museum.

In your letter:

- explain why you are interested in the job
- describe what relevant experience you have
- say why you should be chosen for this position.

Do NOT write any addresses.

Question 2

Some people think that smart phones are an essential tool that they couldn't live or work without and others believe that they are a problem in today's society.

Write an essay **(170 - 200 words)** for your teacher discussing both these views and give your own opinion.

6.2. Paper 2

Listening

Part 1

Questions 1 – 8

You will hear a series of four short extracts.

For each extract there are two questions.

Choose the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C**.

Example

You hear an advertisement on the radio.

0 Who is the advertisement for?

- A** parents
- B** teachers
- (C)** students

According to the speaker, the UniTrip card would be useful to someone who wants to

- (A)** book tickets for a holiday.
- B** buy clothes for a holiday.
- C** borrow money for a holiday.

Extract 1

You hear a man talking about a holiday adventure in Botswana.

- 1** What did the man find surprising about hippos?
 - A** their amazing speed
 - B** their scary sweat
 - C** their strange sleep habits

- 2** The hippo became angry because it thought that
 - A** its baby was threatened.
 - B** its home was threatened.
 - C** its life was threatened.

Extract 2

You hear a radio presenter talking about a man called Paul Joan who makes works of art out of chocolate.

- 3** Paul is different from other chocolate artists because of
 - A** his amazing pace in creating chocolate sculptures.
 - B** his special skill in making chocolate objects.
 - C** his extensive use of luxury chocolate.

- 4** How does Paul feel about his chocolate events?
 - A** He is satisfied with his guests' reaction.
 - B** He is interested to earn more money.
 - C** He is keen to attract a bigger audience.

Extract 3

You hear a headmistress talking about the advantages of uniforms.

- 5** Parents prefer uniforms which help students to
- A** get used to dressing formally for work.
 - B** be relaxed when they are at school.
 - C** express themselves as individuals.
- 6** What is the main advantage of wearing a school uniform?
- A** It improves students' security.
 - B** It strengthens students' identity.
 - C** It develops students' pride.

Extract 4

You hear a man talking about going back to college.

- 7** Why did the man decide to go back to college?
- A** to get a new job
 - B** to improve a work skill
 - C** to earn a deserved promotion
- 8** What is the main difficulty the man thinks he will face?
- A** not seeing his family very often
 - B** not being able to afford his studies
 - C** not going to have much free time

Part 2

Questions 9 – 14

You will hear an interview with Owen Jenkins who became rich from a childhood invention. Choose the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C**.

Example

- 0** When Owen Jenkins was a child, he was
- A** an owner of a profitable company.
 - B** a student at the same school as the audience.
 - C** a member of a sports team.
- 9** What encouraged Owen to come up with his invention?
- A** He wanted to observe sea animals better.
 - B** He wanted to study the sounds of sea life better.
 - C** He wanted to communicate underwater better.
- 10** How did Owen feel about starting a business?
- A** relieved that his official papers would be organised
 - B** confident that his invention would be a success
 - C** nervous that his school work would suffer

11 Which of Owen's latest inventions was the most successful?

- A** Splash-Goal
- B** Scooba-Doober
- C** Floaty-Boaty

12 Owen was embarrassed when he

- A** gave a presentation on a block.
- B** spoke to journalists at school.
- C** had to cancel sports activities.

13 In 2001, Owen's company was worth

- A** \$ 8 million.
- B** \$10 million.
- C** \$12 million.

14 What will Owen do after his break?

- A** start a new company
- B** complete a book about himself
- C** sponsor a youth programme

Reading

Part 3

Questions 15 – 20

Read the texts by four women about how they learnt to drive.

Match each question (15 – 20) to one of the texts (A – D).

Choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Which woman

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 0 | changed her driving instructor more than once? | A B C D |
| 15 | needed to start practising in a place with no traffic to overcome her fear of driving? | A B C D |
| 16 | found only one skill hard to get right? | A B C D |
| 17 | gave up learning to drive for a period of time? | A B C D |
| 18 | drove better after changing the type of car? | A B C D |
| 19 | advises learners to try different instructors? | A B C D |
| 20 | took her driving test only once? | A B C D |

LEARNING TO DRIVE

A

When I decided to learn driving, every instructor I contacted was busy, so Mum persuaded Dad to teach me. My lessons were in an empty field behind our house. We never went farther than two streets around where we live. I found reverse parking difficult and I failed my first test once, but I took it again and passed.

B

I failed the test twice because of my changing gears and bad parking. So, I found an instructor with a smaller car, which I thought was easier, but I failed the test. Although I was advised to take a break from learning I continued, and I passed with a third instructor! Always use someone else if you're unhappy with whoever is teaching you.

C

Driving on busy roads scared me, so my instructor let me start in an empty car park opposite our house. I learned the basics there, which gave me confidence when we drove to other parts of the city. I went on to pass first time. It is worth telling your instructors exactly what you want from the lessons.

D

I had lessons in our manual car when I was 17 with Mum. We both got nervous, so Dad took over and things improved. I had to stop the lessons when I went to university, but when I began again it was in Dad's automatic jeep and I found that much easier to manage.

Part 4

Questions 21 – 25

Read the article about the benefits of being a ‘night owl’, a person who often stays up until late at night.

Five sentences have been removed from the article.

Choose from the sentences (**A – F**) the one which fits each gap (**21 – 25**).

There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

There is an example (**0**) at the beginning.

Why Night Owls are better than Early Birds

Most people are ‘early birds’, also known as ‘larks’ – they usually prefer to get up early and work in the morning. Fewer people are ‘night owls’, who prefer to get up late and stay up long past midnight. Night owls were once thought of as lazy, but it’s actually becoming an advantage to be a night owl as societies nowadays change from industrial to technological ones. (**0**) ____ **G** ____.

Morning people might be more reliable, but night-time individuals are cleverer. Researchers discovered that evening types scored higher than morning types in tests of logical thinking. (**21**) _____. It was also found that those who prefer to go to bed late have higher level jobs and incomes.

(**22**) _____. This characteristic makes night owls extremely creative. Programmer Swizec Teller explains that programmers generally like to code at night. That’s when they can engage in mentally challenging and freethinking work.

Because of their higher IQs, creative and risk-taking abilities, some night owls achieve astonishing success. **(23)** _____. For example, multimillionaire author Michael Lewis prefers to write between 7 p.m. and 4 a.m. "Late nights are wonderfully tranquil, no phone calls, no interruptions", says Lewis, "I like the feeling of knowing that nobody is trying to reach me."

Night owls have extra brainpower that early birds lack. Also, it is commonly believed that larks are as lively in the morning as owls are at night. **(24)** _____. Night owls on the other hand, become energetic around 9 p.m. and can maintain their focus until early morning.

Everyone needs to take advantage of their best working hours **(25)** _____. Early birds should take jobs that require being up early to get ahead of the group. Night owls should make good use of night-time productivity, and consider flexible businesses that can make the happiest and wealthiest owls possible.

- A** The truth, however, is that early birds only stay consistently productive until mid-afternoon when their energy falls considerably.
- B** It's important for people to know what time of the day suits them best.
- C** Studies show that people working at night are better at thinking than those working in the morning.
- D** New research suggests being early to rise will not make you wealthy or wise.
- E** This skill is linked to creativity and higher IQs in young people.
- F** Certainly, some of the most successful people internationally are night owls.
- G** This new working environment is perfect for night owls to achieve success and wealth.

Part 5

Questions 26 – 30

Read the text about a newly qualified vet who is travelling to a job interview.

Choose the correct answer **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

There is an example **(0)** at the beginning.

Memories of a Vet

It was a crowded little bus to Darrowby. I was on the warm side where the sun shone on the windows. I moved uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar of my shirt. I felt it was a foolish suit for this weather. There was still some distance to go to where my potential employer was waiting for me.

- 5 Some of my happiest years had previously been spent back in that **old building in Glasgow**, storing bits of knowledge like a squirrel with its nuts. I began with plant science and the study of the smallest forms of life, working up to lectures and experiments on animals. Then I was introduced to different diseases and their secrets, followed by exams in surgery and drugs, and then finally, using my new knowledge to help sick animals.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Being a newly qualified vet usually meant being unemployed. I had almost given up any hope of actually working as a vet. Unlike me, friends who had graduated with me were now applying for jobs in the shipyards. Many tried to join the army, but the government said “NO” to a career in the army for new graduates.

There were usually only two or three vacant job positions advertised weekly in the newspaper and over eighty people applied for each one! I thought it was a mistake when the letter came from Darrowby, Yorkshire. Unexpectedly, Mr. Siegfried Farnon, an experienced vet, wanted to meet me on Friday. I was to come to tea, and, if we got

on well I could start as his assistant.

I had never been in Yorkshire before, but the name had always created the image of a region that was dull and unromantic. I was prepared for loneliness and a lack of charm, but as the bus struggled its way higher, I began to wonder. We moved from dark mountains to beautiful grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, lonely pale grey stone farmhouses stood in the green fields. Darrowby was described in guidebooks as a little town on the river Darrow, with an old fashioned market place and little of interest except its two ancient bridges.

From the square, I had my first sight of the well-constructed Skeldale House. Like most houses in the village, it had fine, white-painted windows wide and attractive on the ground floor but small and square far above. I could tell it was the right place before I was near enough to read “S. Farnon M.R.C.V.S.” on the door. It was because what the letter had said — the only house with ivy, the dark green untidy leaves which climbed to the highest windows. This could be where I would work for the first time as a real vet.

Example

0 On his way to Darrowby, what mistake did the writer believe he had made?

- A taking the wrong means of transport
- ☒ B wearing the wrong clothes
- C choosing the wrong seat
- D travelling in the wrong destination

26 The “old building in Glasgow” in line 5 refers to a

- A college.
- B laboratory.
- C hospital.
- D pharmacy.

27 Before receiving the letter, the writer felt he was very likely to

- A work in the shipyards.
- B remain unemployed.
- C join the army.
- D become a vet.

28 What had surprised the writer about the letter he received?

- A He was given the wrong job.
- B He was contacted by post.
- C He was invited to tea.
- D He was chosen for an interview.

- 29** What was the writer's impression of Yorkshire as the bus drove through it?
- A** It was more appealing than he had expected.
 - B** Fewer people lived there than he had imagined.
 - C** Travelling around it was more difficult than he had thought.
 - D** The landscape was as boring as he had predicted.
- 30** How did the writer first identify Skeldale House?
- A** by the architecture of the building
 - B** by the name written on the sign
 - C** by the plant growing on the walls
 - D** by the colour and shape of the windows

Listening Script

**Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain National Examinations**

[Grade 12

English Language Listening Test.

You have two papers, the question paper and the answer sheet.

Do not open the question paper until you are told to do so.

Now you will hear the instructions for the listening test.

There are two parts to the test.

You will hear each part twice.

At the beginning of each recording you will hear this sound (beep).

For each part of the test there will be time for you to look through the questions and time for you to check your answers.

Remember while you are listening, write your answers on the question paper.

When you have completed all parts of the listening test, you will have 5 minutes to copy your answers onto the separate answer sheet.

You must not speak during the test.

Open your question paper now.

The test is about to begin.]

Grade 12 Listening Test 2026

(5 second pause)

Part 1

Questions 1 – 8

You will hear a series of four short extracts.

For each extract there are two questions.

Circle the correct letter A, B or C.

Pause 2''

Before we start, here is an example.

Pause 2''

The end of term's coming up and it's time to relax. But we know that money can be a problem so, if you're in full time education, we can help! The UniTrip card will give you a bundle of savings whether you're grabbing a bite to eat, catching a movie, or packing your clothes into a suitcase to get out of the classroom, away from your family for a while and fly round the world. You can really start enjoying life! Just fill in the form on our website at www.youth..... [fade]

Pause 2''

The advertisement is for students, so there is a circle around the letter C.

Pause 2''

The UniTrip card would be useful for someone who wants to book tickets for a holiday, so there is a circle around the letter A.

Pause 2''

You now have one minute to look at Questions 1 – 8.

Pause 60''

Now we are ready to start. Listen carefully.

Pause 2''

Extract 1

Pause 5''

(beep)

*

I've always thought of hippos as ugly animals running at great speed with their big bodies and short legs, and I've heard stories that they sweat blood, but until we visited Botswana, I'd never realised they could sleep underwater. We saw a baby hippo sunbathing by the river. Mike, our guide, drove closer to the animal so we could take some photos. Suddenly, we saw a huge hippo crashing angrily past our minibus. It then dived into the water and was gone. We all know they'll attack if they feel threatened and you would have thought it was the mother hippo protecting its little one. However, Mike told us it was in fact a male hippo acting nervously because we got between him and the water where he lives. **

**

Pause 5"

Now listen again.

*Repeat from * to * **

Pause 10"

Extract 2

Pause 5"

(beep)

*

Paul Joan is well known as a chocolate artist of genius. He uses his talent and easily creates unusual life-size objects like chocolate bicycles or robots. He uses generous amounts of the most expensive chocolate. He can quickly complete his outstanding chocolate artwork in less than 30 minutes, which makes him the only speed-sculpting chocolate artist in his country. Because of his passion, he now earns thousands of dollars and attracts huge crowds to his chocolate tastings and sculpture events. Paul has been approached by many television programme producers offering to take his profession to a wider audience but he isn't a man of high ambitions. He is perfectly happy just to see his guests admiring his creations down to the last delicious bite. **

Pause 5''

Now listen again.

*Repeat from * to * **

Pause 10''

Extract 3

Pause 5''

(beep)

*

Most parents believe that uniforms are about standardizing things rather than encouraging students to develop their own styles and look different from each other. But parents think it's more important to have comfortable clothes which allow their children to concentrate on studies. Parents doubt that wearing a uniform prepares students for what they need to wear when they start work, because young people tend to break the rules by wearing their own accessories. For many students wearing a uniform is a badge of pride of belonging to the school. For others, it's a source of identity in the community. However, more than anything, requiring uniforms increases the school security as anyone trying to enter the school who's not a student is easy to spot. **

Pause 5''

Now listen again.

*Repeat from * to * **

Pause 10''

Extract 4

Pause 5''

(beep)

*

I was thinking of going back to college and starting on an evening and weekends professional development course. Then, as everybody expected, I got a different post. My company offered me a higher position as a personnel manager in their new London branch. So now I'm going to take a course in time management which I have

little experience of. I'm really looking forward to it and I hope to learn a lot. I have already arranged for a small loan to pay for my studies. Though my family support me and I'm sure will tolerate my being away from them most of the time, I'm not sure if I can cope with the schedule of all the lectures and homework and not having time to myself. **

**

Pause 5''

Now listen again.

*Repeat from * to * **

Pause 30''

Part 2

Questions 9 – 14

You will hear an interview with Owen Jenkins who became rich from a childhood invention.

Choose the correct letter A, B or C.

Pause 2''

Before we start, here is an example.

Pause 2''

Interviewer: Good evening and welcome to our weekly programme 'Promising Steps'. Today our guest is Owen Jenkins, who, at a young age, has achieved a lot! Hi Owen, please tell us about yourself.

Owen: Hello, thank you for having me! I'm from Miami, and I was a student at a school, just like yours. In many ways, I was a typical, young boy, and a fan of my school's baseball team. On the other hand, I became an inventor and used to be president of a company boasting half-a-million dollars annually.

Pause 2''

Owen says that he was an owner of a profitable company when he was a child, so there is a circle around the letter A.

Pause 2''

You have one minute to look at Questions 9 – 14.

Pause 60''

Now we are ready to start. Listen carefully.

Pause 2''

(beep)

*

Interviewer: Good evening and welcome to our weekly programme 'Promising Steps'. Today our guest is Owen Jenkins, who, at a young age, has achieved a lot! Hi Owen, please tell us about yourself.

Owen: Hello, thank you for having me! I'm from Miami, and I was a student at a school, just like yours. In many ways, I was a typical, young boy, and a fan of my school's baseball team. On the other hand, I became an inventor and used to be president of a company boasting half-a-million dollars annually.

Interviewer: Wow! So you are a real millionaire? Please, tell us how did you become an inventor?

Owen: When I was 11, I went on holiday to Bermuda. I was diving underwater with my father, and was amazed by the underwater noises. I was excited to see the colours of the fish and the turtles swimming by and I wanted to tell my father about it but I couldn't. I became irritated, because we both had to come up to the surface. THAT gave me the idea for my invention 'Fishie-Talkie', a toy allowing people to talk to each other underwater.

Interviewer: And to start your business, how did that affect your life?

Owen: Well, my mother had concerns that my grades would drop at school. This was because I had to be absent while my father and I flew to Chicago to present my 'Fishie-Talkie' to a well-known toy store. This resulted in my toy being bought and placed in every branch worldwide. More than anything, I just knew that 'Fishie-Talkie' was a winner. My father felt comfortable that he could deal with the legal documents despite my worries.

Interviewer: That's an understandable concern. And, of course, you had other inventions?

Owen: Yes, three more – and all very popular. 'Scooba-Doober' allowed divers to see underwater and above water at the same time, this was quite popular. A toy store bought thousands of my 'Floaty-Boaty', a bouncy float with water gun paddles, and it won the "best-selling" award. My underwater hockey game named 'Splash-Goal' had about 45 agents fighting to buy it.

Interviewer: Of course, this made you a star. How did you cope with the media attention?

Owen: Yeah. I had some uncomfortable moments. Annoying reporters kept arriving at school asking for interviews which then appeared in international newspapers. But once, when I gave a speech at a charity event, I had to stand on a step, so the audience could see me, which made me feel shy. And there were times when I couldn't attend baseball matches because of events, and this upset me.

Interviewer: And then in 2001 you sold your company. If you don't mind me asking Owen, how much did you get for it?

Owen: No, I don't mind, over the years I earned a total of \$10 million in salary. I couldn't afford to devote more time to my company because of school. So, in 2001, I decided to sell it. I received a good offer from a toy store which had an annual income of \$12 million. I had to skip an exam at school but I signed a deal with them for \$8 million. I was sad to let it go, but it just kind of got too big for me.

Interviewer: What a story for someone so young! What are your plans for the future?

Owen: I'm currently taking a break. I have a dozen more ideas and may launch another business. Also, I might open a center to financially support young inventors, but that will all have to wait until after I've finished writing the story of my life.

**

Pause 10"

Now listen again.

*Repeat from * to ***

Pause 30"

Mark Scheme

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
Listening			
Part 1			
1	C	1	
2	B	1	
3	A	1	
4	A	1	
5	B	1	
6	A	1	
7	B	1	
8	C	1	8
Part 2			
9	C	1	
10	B	1	
11	C	1	
12	A	1	
13	A	1	
14	B	1	6
Reading			
Part 3			
15	C	1	
16	A	1	
17	D	1	
18	D	1	
19	B	1	
20	C	1	6
Part 4			
21	E	1	
22	C	1	
23	F	1	
24	A	1	
25	B	1	5
Part 5			
26	A	1	
27	B	1	
28	D	1	
29	A	1	
30	C	1	5