

H

National Qualifications

2025

ESOL

Reading

Thursday, 29 May

Instructions to Candidates

Candidates should enter their surname, forename(s), date of birth, Scottish candidate number and the name and level of the subject at the top of their first answer sheet.

Total marks – 35

Read the THREE texts and attempt ALL questions.

You must NOT use a dictionary.

You must clearly identify the question number you are attempting on your answer sheet.

Marks are shown in square brackets at the end of each question or part question.

An owl in the margin indicates a new question.

[Braille page 2] Read the THREE texts and attempt ALL questions.

Text 1 Read the article below and attempt the questions that follow.

1. I lay on my sofa looking at the shadows on the ceiling, feeling like I was in a teen movie. My phone buzzed and I picked it up to respond to the last text of a potential boyfriend — except this time it wasn't a text, but a voice note, a short audio file you send via Facebook, Instagram or WhatsApp. It was the first time I'd actually heard his voice. He asked me how my day had gone. My stomach fluttered because I knew this meant he wanted to get to know me better, yet I was also nervous because there was so much pressure to get my response right. It was exciting but also nerve-racking. Thinking about it, I'm better off texting. I hate phone calls, with their awkward silences and long, drawn-out endings ('Yeah, speak soon, good to chat, bye, love you, yeah bye, bye, bye ...'). But whether I use voice notes or not, among my peers they are becoming ever harder to avoid.

2. When WhatsApp introduced them in 2013, receiving a voice note felt like a novelty — something more human in a sea of **[Braille page 3]** emojis and abbreviations — now, around 200 million are sent every month. Instead of the simple 'I'll meet you outside the station' text, friends now send long rambles about how they were going to catch such and such train, but then they realised the bus would drop them outside, and while they were on the bus they thought about this idea for a novel ... It's like having to sit through an unedited podcast.

3. For voice note fan Maddy Reid, 23, who sends 10 to 50 a day over WhatsApp, much of the appeal lies in how efficient they are to send, particularly when you're on the move. 'It's like a phone call, except you don't have to rely on both parties being free at the same time. Text messages don't convey nuance in the same way a voice note can, Maddy says. If you're broaching a sensitive topic, a lot can get lost in translation over text. That's why if I'm cancelling a date or telling a friend something tricky, or anything else that could be misconstrued, I will almost always do it via voice note so the other person can hear how I'm actually feeling.

4. Silke Paulmann, a research psychologist, thinks similarly: 'Vocal cues alone can communicate our internal **[Braille page 4]** state (emotions, attitudes, motivations) without the need for additional words.' When we hear people talk, she says, any 'discrepancies', such as someone who insists they're fine but doesn't really sound fine, 'can be picked up within a couple of milliseconds', regardless of any prior relationship, forcing the listener to 're-evaluate' the message. So for Paulmann, if cancelling a date via voice note, the other person would be able to decipher from the tone whether the speaker really is busy or losing interest. Whereas with a 'something's come up' text, it is harder to work out the sender's true feelings, especially if it includes kisses, emojis and multiple characters ('I'm soooo sorry') to warm up the mood of the message.

5. This is less of an issue with older generations, who tend to interpret text messages at face value. If someone replies 'OK', they assume it means they actually are. Whereas a person my age is more likely to think the brevity of the response

means the sender is annoyed. Voice notes bypass the slightly exhausting code of texting etiquette that can make it a minefield.

[Braille page 5] 6. However, there are many voice note sceptics. 'It makes me paranoid that I'm wasting someone's time,' says Issey Gladston, photographer, 23. She likens the feeling of sending a voice note to making a point in a university seminar. 'I just want to get out what I'm saying as quickly as possible so as not to annoy anyone, but then there are these other people, who go on these long tangents for five minutes which don't have anything to do with the question because they feel they have the space to do it. I don't feel I have the space.' And yes, there's something quite self-indulgent about thinking people care to listen to you talking for a long time — indeed, any length of time — without interruption.

7. In any case, I need to learn to get used to voice notes, because ever more variations of them are being developed. Bernie Hogan, senior research fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute, thinks the next big thing will be a feature that allows us to sound like someone else, say, cartoon character Bugs Bunny or pop star Britney Spears, 'like a filter but on sound rather than image'. But Reid says her main reason for using voice notes is 'fostering closeness with people I don't get to see'. With a fake voice you'd no longer hear the **[Braille page 6]** ripple of nerves as they talked about a job interview or the high-pitched squeal as they recalled a great date. It wouldn't be a voice note at all, would it?

Questions 1 to 4: Complete each gap with NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the text.

ow 1. The writer's _ with anticipation when she got a voice note from a potential boyfriend. [1 mark]

ow 2. The writer feels _ when no one's speaking on a phone call. [1 mark]

ow 3. In the early days of voice notes, it was a/an _ to get one. [1 mark]

ow 4. With the appearance of voice notes, communication has become less _. [1 mark]

Questions 5 to 7: Choose the correct answer for each question and select one letter.

[Braille page 7] ow 5. For Reid, telling someone she can't go out with them is: [1 mark]

- A. most efficient when done by text message.
- B. difficult when another language is involved.
- C. usually going to be misread by the other person.
- D. best done by giving some emotional clues.

ow 6. Paulmann believes that understanding other people is helped by: [1 mark]

- A. hearing differences between what's said and how it's said.
- B. having knowledge of the speaker's character beforehand.
- C. making sense of kisses, emojis and multiple characters.
- D. seeking signs of a positive mood in a text message.

ow 7. The writer's parents would be more likely than her to: [1 mark]

- A. use text messages to tell people they're okay.
- B. read text messages literally.
- C. send messages that are short.
- D. interpret short messages negatively.

[Braille page 8] ow 8. Match each person (i to iv) to an opinion about voice notes (A to E). There is ONE opinion that you do NOT need.

- (i) Maddy Reid [1 mark]
- (ii) Silke Paulmann [1 mark]
- (iii) Issey Gladston [1 mark]
- (iv) Bernie Hogan [1 mark]

- A. They are now being used for academic purposes.
- B. They can be more concise than written ones.
- C. A further technological development is coming.
- D. They are especially useful when the speaker is travelling.
- E. People who use them can be self-important.

Question 9: Choose the correct answer and select one letter.

[Braille page 9] ow 9. How does the author feel about voice notes overall? [1 mark]

- A. People should minimise their use of the technology.
- B. People are going to improve in their use of the technology.
- C. They are inevitable but bring their own problems.
- D. They are best suited to romantic situations.

[Braille page 10] Text 2 Read the article below and attempt the questions that follow.

1. With his brother Peter and his father, John Senior, Johnny Broderick runs the vending machine empire Broderick's Ltd, its 2,800 units occupying some of the most sought-after corridors of the UK. As he led me on a tour of his headquarters, I told him about an early hours purchase I'd made that morning from a machine at the airport, having noted the Broderick logo in the corner. Talk about a smooth transaction, I said. No snagging! I imagined he would be pleased to hear this, but he twitched his head in frustration. Vending people hated it, he explained to me, this expectation of mechanical failure. Unlike some of the unreliable models of the past, modern machines contained many safeguards to protect against failed transactions. Despite this, the one time that Johnny could remember his beloved industry trending on social media, a cruel joke had done the rounds. 'About change being inevitable. Except from a vending machine,' he sighed good-humouredly.

2. Every one of his machines, he countered, has now been fitted with a contactless card reader. Big change was sweeping through **[Braille page 11]** automated vending, and the first thing given the boot was small change. As cash sales started to tumble, and contactless sales climbed, Broderick's had been the beneficiary of new and better information about their customers. In years gone by, not only did they have to go and fetch the coins, then count them — they had no indication of whose coins they were. Now these tycoons of vending understand us better. Johnny has even released a smartphone app that tempts people with discounts in return for permission to track their purchasing habits.

3. Every vending machine is a battleground. Profits are ruthlessly haggled over. Competition for spots is intense. Broadly speaking, the vending game is built on deals between operators (who own machines and have the skills to install them, fix them, constantly fill them with fats and sugars) and site owners (who have the rights to advantageous pieces of land). Either a machine is placed on private property — say, a factory, where the site owner surrenders the profits to the operator in return for keeping a workforce fed and present — or, a machine is placed somewhere public, inside a bustling airport, for instance. Here the site owner will expect a cut of each item sold, **[Braille page 12]** anywhere from 10% to 30%. The midnight snack at Manchester airport cost me £1.10. Though Johnny would not say how much of a cut went to the site owner, Manchester Airports Group, he did acknowledge that he made 22p in profit per packet of crisps. (And that Manchester Airport Group pocketed more.)

4. The more time I spent with Johnny, the more I saw how sincerely concerned he is for his fleet. He shared a horror story of having once inherited a pre-owned BevMax that had fungus growing in its corners, which he then spent days painstakingly restoring with bleach and a toothbrush. As well as regularly climbing down on his belly in malls or on airport concourses to clear out discarded cans and wrappers from beneath the machines, he also has to check inside the machines as some people seem to view the machines as deposit boxes rather than dispensers. He tells me he's lost count of the number of flip-flops he's come across lodged inside

— presumably from people attempting to reach up and get their hands on a free snack.

5. Incredibly, he also uncovered an engagement ring (complete with box) during **[Braille page 13]** one routine service check. So, what does he do with the discoveries? 'Well, most of it is junk which ends up in the bin. There may be a few things that I stick in the lost property in the hope they're reunited with their owners. I can't say it didn't cross my mind to keep hold of the ring, though — I'm sure my wife would've loved it,' Johnny winks. 'Of course, turning it in to the police was the only reasonable thing to do.' If, after a year, no one has come forward with proof of ownership, chances are it'll be taken to auction, and the proceeds will be donated to charity.

6. Over in Leeds, said Johnny, he owned an absolute beauty by the benches of the hospital waiting room. 'Insane on weekends ... the team have a never-ending battle on their hands trying to fill it fast enough.' And he loved his BevMaxes by the luggage belt in the local airport. 'Because if that belt breaks down, I've got you trapped.' But the machine he wanted to show me was in Manchester's Trafford Centre shopping mall. No gimmicks, just a quality dispenser in a prime location which rakes in thousands of pounds of revenue each and every month. A feat for which it has been awarded recognition as **[Braille page 14]** Broderick's' top-earner — but it may not hold on to that title for long. The last time we spoke, Johnny was about to take delivery of 25 new machines to facilitate an expansion into London Heathrow, 'where they still have the same substandard set-up they had cheaply installed 20 years ago. And you can print that.'

Questions 10 to 12: Choose the correct answer for each question and select one letter

ow 10. What was the cause of Johnny's irritation? [1 mark]

- A. The writer had made a purchase from his competitor.
- B. There was a problem with the machine the writer had used.
- C. People expect to have problems when using vending machines.
- D. Jokes about his company were being made online.

ow 11. What do the payment adaptations to the machines allow Johnny to do? [1 mark]

- A. Count the coins automatically.
- B. Find out who is using his machines.
- C. Offer discounts to his customers.
- D. Reach a wider customer base.

[Braille page 15] ow 12. What does the writer reveal about site owners? [1 mark]

- A. They don't always make money from the vending machines.
- B. They are responsible for the maintenance of the machines.
- C. They get a smaller percentage of the profits than the operators.
- D. They pay a service charge to have the machine on their property.

Questions 13 to 16: Give short answers to the following questions.

ow 13. What phrase in paragraph 2 means 'to be disposed of'? (1 print line) [1 mark]

ow 14. What word in paragraph 6 means 'tricks intended to attract attention'? (1 print line) [1 mark]

ow 15. What problem did Johnny discover in the second-hand machine? (1 print line) [1 mark]

ow 16. What do some people use to try to cheat the vending machine? (1 print line) [1 mark]

Questions 17 to 21: Complete each gap with NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the text.

ow 17. In order to collect the ring, the police require __. [1 mark]

[Braille page 16] ow 18. Keeping the machine in the waiting room topped up is a/an _____. [1 mark]

ow 19. The machine in the Manchester shopping centre consistently _____ the highest profits. [1 mark]

ow 20. The Broderick empire's next _____ is going to be at Heathrow. [1 mark]

ow 21. According to Johnny, the current machines at Heathrow are a/an _____. [1 mark]

[Braille page 17] Text 3 Read the article below and attempt the questions that follow.

1. From dance qualifications at school via healthy living campaigns, to the battle against childhood obesity and even community cohesion, there has never been more encouragement for young people to get up and dance. London's Royal Opera House (ROH) has been involved with schools in three London boroughs for almost 20 years under its Chance to Dance programme. From age seven, children can see ballet demonstrations by ROH's professionals and are introduced to basic dance techniques, such as marching and skipping. Those who show particular talent progress to advanced workshops and, potentially, an opportunity to join weekly classes at ROH and perform on its stage.

2. The talent-spotting element is important, says Paul Reeve, its director of education, but the main objective is for all the children involved to have a fulfilling experience, and to develop life skills, such as 'discipline, teamwork, collaboration, self-esteem and confidence.' 'The rod that runs through the scheme is that we are asking them to stick at something for a sustained period, something that they initially find very difficult,' he says. 'And we **[Braille page 18]** never stop challenging them, so the better they get, the more we try to bring out of them. But I think the children and their families really see the continuous improvement that is achieved and what that does for their confidence. To know that they can succeed at something if they put the work and commitment in, is very important.'

3. Certain popular dance-related films like Billy Elliot notwithstanding, the idea of ballet as a hobby is not instantly appealing to some children and their parents, he concedes. 'We work with the children to break down any preconceptions they may have about ballet and dance. We have to work equally hard with parents and families whose prejudices are, if anything, going to be stronger than children's. We need to advocate that ballet isn't what they think it is. It's not just a career for elite young females. And that it requires huge athleticism, strength, co-ordination and self-discipline to succeed.'

4. Akademi, a London-based organisation specialising in south Asian dance, links much of its work with schools to the curriculum. For primary children, for example, a project might be focused on literacy, with children learning how classic Asian texts are interpreted through dance and **[Braille page 19]** then creating their own tales. For older children, projects linked to drama or health topics have incorporated elements of Bollywood performance and kathak, the classical dance of northern

India, but also street dance, rap and hip-hop. 'For some, it will be the first time they have heard about the traditions, though we are looking at south Asian dance in a British context, so it's not about preserving the culture as such,' says Christina Christou, Akademi's education director. 'It's about relating the dances and stories to young people living in Britain today.'

5. One recent project brought together year 10 and 11 students with artists and DJs to devise a piece exploring the contrasting art forms of rap and kathak. It was performed to an audience at London's Southbank Centre. The young people involved all subsequently either stayed on to do their exams or went on to college, says Christou. 'We are trying to re-engage young people in danger of dropping out but also to bring them into contact with professionals close to their age who are successful in a creative industry and show that creativity could be a potential way forward for them, too.'

6. Thanks to TV's Strictly Come Dancing, a new generation has **[Braille page 20]** tuned into the joys of dancing with a partner. Essentially Dance, a Sheffield-based company, works with more than 1,000 primary and secondary schools in England to train staff in how to teach Hispanic and ballroom dance to children of all ages, either for dance and PE qualifications or as extended school activities. Over three day-long workshops — one per term — teachers and support staff get to grips with waltz, jive, quickstep and cha-cha, then cascade their new-found knowledge back to the children and other staff in their school. The scheme is paid for by local authorities, schools themselves or sometimes primary healthcare trusts under a healthy living programme.

7. 'We do a lot of work around evaluating and improving techniques where children learn to coach each other,' says Shelley Hartley, Essentially Dance's business manager. 'So there are opportunities for kids who are not good dancers but might be great teachers.' The use of school staff to tutor children is also key, says Hartley. 'You don't want to create a situation where all the kids feel they have to become experts, and they will engage better if they see that their teacher is learning too.' The ballroom boom is **[Braille page 21]** clearly linked to the wildly successful BBC show, though there is another factor which has piqued the interest of teenage boys in wanting to look good on the dance floor, Hartley believes. 'Now schools have American-style proms, a boy doesn't want to be the only one on the night who looks a fool because he can't dance.'

Questions 22 to 24: Complete each gap with NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the text.

ow 22. Dance can be used for social purposes such as _ as well as educational, cultural, and health-related projects. [1 mark]

ow 23. _ are key exercises for dance beginners. [1 mark]

ow 24. Paul Reeve believes in pushing young people to ensure that they make _ . [1 mark]

Questions 25 to 28: Choose the correct answer for each question and select one letter.

[Braille page 22] ow 25. Reeve wants families of potential dancers: [1 mark]

- A. to be inspired by dance-related films like Billy Elliot.
- B. to think of ballet as a career rather than a hobby.
- C. to be confident that their ideas about dance are correct.
- D. to fundamentally change their ideas of ballet.

ow 26. The Akademi organisation wants to: [1 mark]

- A. use dance as a gateway to a large variety of subjects.
- B. encourage teachers to make their own dance stories.
- C. concentrate its work on street dance, rap and hip-hop.
- D. keep the focus on South Asian dance culture.

ow 27. What did year 10 and 11 students do? [1 mark]

- A. They showed off the features that rap and kathak had in common.
- B. They completed a mixed-genre performance of dance.
- C. They all finished their school exams before going to college.
- D. They contacted dance professionals on their own initiative.

[Braille page 23] ow 28. The organisation called Essentially Dance: [1 mark]

A. prioritises primary schools over secondary schools.

B. teaches dance directly to children of all ages.

C. trains people in three-day blocks.

D. trains adults to teach others different dances.

ow Question 29: Match each person (i to iii) to an opinion (A to E). There are TWO opinions that you do NOT need.

(i) Paul Reeve [1 mark]

(ii) Christina Christou [1 mark]

(iii) Shelley Hartley [1 mark]

A. Some forms of dance are more challenging than others.

B. Performing to a live audience is vital to a dance project.

C. Pupil satisfaction is more important than finding great dancers.

D. Children can be trained to help their fellow-pupils learn.

E. Our project will help pupils stay in some form of education.

Question 30: Choose the correct answer and select one letter.

[Braille page 24] ow 30. What is the best summary of this text? [1 mark]

- A. How South Asian forms of dance influence Western ones.
- B. Pupils inspired by dance films on the big and small screen.
- C. Dance can boost the education of school pupils.
- D. Why we need to overturn negative stereotypes of dance.

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]