



General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Subsidiary Examination

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (SPECIFICATION A)
Unit 1 Discovering Language

ENA1



Tuesday 22 May 2007 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is ENA1.
- There are **two** sections:
Section A: Language Analysis
Section B: Language Issues.
- Answer Question 1 from Section A and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 from Section B.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 70.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- It is recommended that you spend 10 minutes on the reading and preparation of the data to be analysed in answering Section A.

SECTION A – Language Analysis

Answer Question 1.

1 Read carefully **Text A**, which you will find below and on page 3. **Text A** is the beginning of the book *We Want Real Food* by Graham Harvey.

- Comment linguistically on the significant features of the text.
- Explain how these language features contribute to the text's meanings.

In your answer you should consider:

vocabulary and meanings
 grammatical features and their effects
 how the language represents the nature of food
 how the language shapes the reader's response.

(45 marks)

Text A

The Nature of Sweetness

It started with a bunch of organic bananas. I bought them in a wholefood shop. They hadn't looked particularly promising – a sort of washed-out grey in colour, but I felt sure they'd ripen once I got them home.

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A week later they were starting to go soft, though the skin had turned even greyer. I peeled one and took a bite. It wasn't that it tasted bad. Quite the opposite. There was no discernible taste of any kind. Not so much as the merest hint of sweetness. I might as well have been eating damp cardboard.

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This came as something of a shock. If it had been the usual chemically-grown stuff I'd have understood. No one expects the economy end of the fresh produce market to taste of anything much these days, but we're talking organic here. These bananas had been grown without any chemical sprays, and nourished with barrow-loads of good, old-fashioned compost – or so I imagined. They *ought* to have been full of flavour.

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Then again, maybe I shouldn't have been that surprised. To be honest, I'd experienced tasteless organic produce before – carrots that hardly registered on the taste buds; apples with all the sweetness and flavour of household soap.

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I used to believe it didn't matter much. Why worry about the taste, I thought, so long as they're doing you good. I know better these days.

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As a kid I remember being intrigued by the picture on the tin of Lyle's Golden Syrup. It shows a dead lion with a swarm of bees coming out. The proverb that goes with it is a bit of a mystery too: 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness.'

The picture's still there on the Golden Syrup tin – I checked in my local superstore. It's from the Bible story of Samson. While travelling to Timnah, Samson is attacked by a young lion. He kills it with his bare hands. On the return journey he notices that the carcass has been occupied by the bees. So he scoops out the honey to sustain him on his journey.

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Ironically, it was nineteenth-century sugar refiners like Abram Lyle, of Lyle's Golden Syrup, who made it possible to put a sweet taste in junk foods. Before they started turning out their deadly white crystals, sweetness had long been associated with strength and vitality.

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In nature, sweetness is often linked to rich sources of essential trace elements, such as zinc, magnesium, copper and boron. Sweet-tasting natural foods like ripe fruits, berries and honey contain minerals as well as sugars. For early man – the hunter-gatherer – there was an evolutionary advantage in developing a sweet tooth. It was a means of selecting the ripest fruits, which would be at their most nutritious.

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But fresh foods no longer taste sweet. Many are deliberately harvested whilst under-ripe, to lessen damage in transport and extend shelf life. Also, they've been robbed of many of the trace elements they once contained although this is disputed by some food scientists. A revolution in the way they're grown has taken away the very nutrients that once promoted good health. Our staple foods have been 'dumbed down'. As a result, Britain – like other industrial countries – is suffering a tidal wave of sickness.

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Degenerative conditions, such as heart disease, arthritis, diabetes and asthma, are reaching epidemic proportions. No fewer than one in three of us will be struck down with cancer at some stage in our lives. Mental illness, too, is rife – everything from depression to dementia.

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Could food really be responsible for the health catastrophe that has overtaken the western world? It seems scarcely credible. Yet the fact remains that our basic foods have been changed. They are now subtly different from those eaten by human beings through all of history.

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Britain – like other western countries – is fifty years into a mass experiment in human nutrition. We're all eating basic foods that have been stripped of the antioxidants, trace elements and essential fatty acids that once promoted good health. Is it any wonder that our body maintenance systems are breaking down in middle age or earlier?

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Source: GRAHAM HARVEY, *We Want Real Food*, Constable & Robinson, 2006

SECTION B – Language Issues

Answer **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

EITHER

- 2 Some people dismiss political correctness in language, claiming that it has ‘gone too far’ in rejecting some words and introducing alternative expressions.

Using your knowledge of language issues, explore the arguments that suggest the words used to label people are significant.

In your answer you should discuss words used to label people according to **one or more** of the following: gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality.

(25 marks)

OR

- 3 What do we learn about language acquisition by looking at children’s early use of words and the meanings these words convey?

In your answer you should discuss issues raised by the data below, which are the first words of a child called Rachel. You may also use examples of your own.

(25 marks)

Data Set: Rachel’s first words

Jasper	no	my	cuddle
socks	yes	toast	biscuits
Daddy	yeah	Marmite	cat
shoes	ta	jam	wassat?
juice	poo	ball	bubbles
bye-bye	book	hot	Laa-Laa
more	duck	cup	jump
hello	quack quack	spoon	nice
hiya	woof	bowl	two
Nana	please	Mummy	eyes
Grandad	bot-bot	bang	weeble

Source: Private data

END OF QUESTIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COPYRIGHT-HOLDERS AND PUBLISHERS

Question 1 Source: Extract from *We Want Real Food* by Graham Harvey by kind permission of Constable & Robinson Ltd.
 Question 3 Source: Private data

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M/Jun07/ENA1