

NEW Cambridge IGCSE® (9–1) First Language English 0627 For examination from 2017

Cambridge IGCSE® (9–1) First Language English, syllabus 0627, will be graded from 9 to 1 and has built on the unique strengths and traditions of the current Cambridge IGCSE First Language English (syllabus 0522), while complying with all the requirements outlined in the Department for Education (DfE) subject content requirements for the new GCSE English Language (9–1) qualifications for use in UK schools from 2017.

For schools who offer the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English (0522) qualification, many aspects of the new Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) will be familiar, and the assessment methods consistent. For new Centres, the 0627 syllabus offers a refreshingly different model in terms of the assessment of Reading and Writing skills. Interestingly, of all the reformed qualifications, Cambridge IGCSE has required fewer changes to the assessment model than any of the existing GCSEs offered by other awarding bodies.

For any schools who offer the current Cambridge IGCSE First Language English (0500) qualification, which is not regulated by Ofqual, this syllabus will continue to be available as before.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening remain clear and concise. An additional Reading assessment objective has been added to incorporate the DfE's requirement that learners compare unseen passages, but otherwise they have had only slight modifications.

Paper 1 and Paper 2

The two question papers for the new 0627 Cambridge IGCSE syllabus are firmly modelled on the current 0522 Cambridge IGCSE question papers, although the 0627 Paper 1 (Reading Passages) has combined the Core and Extended papers in terms of question types. The 0627 Paper 2 (Directed Writing and Composition) has had very little modification. Teachers should therefore find that much of the assessment model remains the same, and that the question types are familiar.

More detailed information about how this new syllabus compares to syllabuses 0500 and 0522 can be found in the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English Mapping document available on the 0627 webpage of Teacher Support at <http://teachers.cie.org.uk>

Marks

Paper 1 and Paper 2 are both marked out of a total of 80:

- Paper 1 carries 65 marks for Reading and 15 marks for Writing
- Paper 2 carries 65 marks for Writing and 15 for Reading

Both papers have one task that includes marks awarded for both Reading and Writing.

Reading and Writing skills

The new Cambridge IGCSE adopts a holistic approach to developing and teaching writing skills – both Paper 1 and Paper 2 include directed writing tasks and learners will be taught to write in six specified text types, two of which will be tested in the examination. In both Paper 1 and Paper 2, reading passages are used to inform the learners' own writing.

Cambridge has retained the same balance of Reading and Writing so that the 0627 Cambridge IGCSE has separate question papers to test Reading and Writing skills. The reformed GCSEs offer question papers that test Reading skills in Section A and Writing skills in Section B.

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Paper 1 (Reading Passages)

Learners are required to respond to three reading passages, one from a 19th century text (Passage A) and two from 20th and 21st century texts (Passages B and C). Passages B and C are thematically linked and used for the comparative question.

- **Question 1** is based on Passage A and addresses the challenge of responding to an unseen 19th century text. This is styled on the current Core paper. This will ensure appropriate differentiation at all levels. A number of sub-questions test comprehension and these are followed by a more extended response on the writer's effects in a given paragraph of the passage.
- **Question 2** is based on Passage B and is a directed summary. Candidates will be asked to focus on a specific aspect of the passage and complete a piece of directed writing picking out only the relevant information. This writing will have a clear text type, voice and audience, giving the task a 'real-life' context. Giving a summary a purpose makes the task much more accessible to learners.
- **Question 3** requires learners to compare how the writers' ideas, views and perspectives are presented in Passages B and C. The comparison of unseen texts may present challenges, so to address these challenges the question offers three bullet points to give the learners a scaffold for their response. Both Question 2 and Question 3 offer some low tariff sub-questions on the passages as a lead-in to the more extended responses.

Paper 2 (Directed Writing and Composition)

Learners are required to read two short passages. These passages will contain information on a common theme.

- **Question 1** (Directed Writing) requires learners to use the information given in the passages to do a piece of Directed Writing, written in a discursive style. The writing style will either be a letter or an article. Again, a clear voice, purpose and audience will be required, and learners will be assessed on both their Reading and Writing skills in this task. This syllabus is the only reformed qualification which enables learners to use reading passages to directly inform their own writing.
- **Question 2, 3, 4 or 5** (Composition) offers learners a choice of four tasks – two descriptive and two narrative titles. This enables teachers to prepare learners for different styles of imaginative writing, developing clear strategies and techniques to suit the style. It allows learners a generous choice of tasks and ensures that they can select the one that is most suited to their interests and skills.

Component 3 (Speaking and Listening Test)

The Speaking and Listening Test retains its title in the Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English syllabus, putting equal emphasis on both skills. Learners prepare a presentation and respond to questions. The presentation can be performed in a classroom setting, or as an individual presenting to the teacher. All presentations will be audio recorded for moderation. Cambridge International Examinations is the only Awarding Body that already runs this style of Speaking and Listening assessment in the current First Language English syllabus. Experienced teams of moderators moderate this type of assessment using audio recordings provided by Centres. The moderation process is tried and tested, and Centres' receive appropriate support in terms of moderation samples and standardisation processes.

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