

**Certificate in
ESOL Skills for Life
Level 2 – Reading
Sample paper**



Time allowed: 60 minutes

Please answer **all** questions. Write your answers in pen, **not** pencil, **on the separate answer sheet.**

You may **not** use dictionaries. You may **not** use correction fluid.

There are blank pages for rough notes at the end of this exam paper.

Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life

Level 2 – Reading

Time allowed: 60 minutes

This exam paper has 30 questions. Answer all questions.

Task 1

Task 1 contains a **descriptive** text. There are eight questions (1-8). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Charlotte Brontë

Nineteenth-century England was not an easy place for women to live, but the author Charlotte Brontë demonstrated that it was possible to succeed if you were talented, hard-working and above all, determined.

Charlotte Brontë is now famous all around the world for her novel *Jane Eyre*, but when she first sent the book to publishers she had to use a male pseudonym because she knew she stood little chance of the book being published if people realised she was a woman.

1. The heroine is a poor orphan girl who responds to her terrible start in life by resolving to stand up against injustice and live independently. Many people were shocked by the book, which argued that everybody is equal before God and suggested that women should only marry men if they really loved them. At that time, British culture idealised women who stayed at home, living like a kind of 'angel in the house'.

Charlotte Brontë drew on many aspects of her own life when she wrote *Jane Eyre*. For example, Jane is sent to boarding school at a young age and is treated very badly there. Similarly, Charlotte spent a brief period at a boarding school in the north of England where discipline was harsh and the food inadequate. ...

2.

Frustrated with the work of a governess, Charlotte moved to Brussels in Belgium, where she was able to study French literature in return for teaching English. While there, Charlotte fell passionately in love with her teacher, Constantin Heger, but he was married and in any case he did not feel the same way about her.

3. She and her two sisters, Emily and Anne, were thrilled when they managed to publish a collection of their poems. They changed their names so that nobody would know they were women.

The sisters were no strangers to writing. All through their childhoods they had written furiously, creating imaginary kingdoms and populating them with a huge range of characters based on their brother Branwell's collection of toy soldiers. The manuscripts they produced were absolutely tiny, only a few centimetres square. The handwriting was minute and the pages sewn together to make little books that were just the right size for the toy soldiers.

After the poetry book, the three sisters each published a novel. Emily's was called *Wuthering Heights*, Anne's was *Agnes Grey*, and Charlotte's was the famous *Jane Eyre*. For a while, people speculated that the three authors were actually one single person who might be a woman. To stop these rumours, the sisters travelled to London to meet their publisher and reveal the fact that they had written under pseudonyms.

4. People of her day said her writing was 'unfeminine'. Charlotte was shocked by this. She had been brought up in a religious family and considered nothing more important than telling the truth. Nowadays scholars praise her books for the way they combine romantic storylines with a realistic portrayal of life in the nineteenth century.

Section A: Questions 1-4

Four sentences are missing from the text. Look at the following sentences and decide which one best fits each gap. Write the letter of your answer **on your answer sheet**. There is one sentence you do not need.

- A Furthermore, Charlotte, like Jane, worked as a private governess, a job she hated.
- B Charlotte would not find true love until she was in her late thirties.
- C *Jane Eyre* was published in 1847 and was instantly a hit.
- D During her lifetime, Charlotte was criticised for creating heroines who had strong characters and powerful emotions.
- E When Charlotte returned to England she poured her energy into writing poetry.

Section B: Questions 5-8

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

- 5. What is the main purpose of this text?
 - A to give readers a general introduction to the works of Charlotte Brontë
 - B to explain how 19th century attitudes to women affected Charlotte Brontë
 - C to persuade readers to change the way they think about women writers

- 6. People who read *Jane Eyre* were shocked because
 - A it was about an orphan girl who was badly treated
 - B the author had been passionately in love with a married man
 - C it stated that wives had a right to feel equal to their husbands

- 7. The text says the Brontë sisters were 'no strangers to writing'. This means that they
 - A were used to writing together as friends
 - B already had a lot of experience of writing
 - C only wrote for people they knew well

- 8. According to the text, which sentence is correct?
 - A Everyone thought the author of *Wuthering Heights* was a man.
 - B Some people thought *Agnes Grey* and *Jane Eyre* had one author.
 - C The Brontë sisters' publisher always knew they were women.

Task 2

Task 2 contains **explanatory** texts in a vocational context. There are eight questions (9-16). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

A Career in Film

Text one

FILM STUDIES (COURSE CODE FS1)

The world of film is the most exciting, vibrant area of artistic endeavour to have emerged in the last century. The course in Film Studies will develop your understanding of classical and contemporary cinema and its place in society. It will enable you to understand and analyse film and electronic media and its relationship with literature, art history, philosophy, architecture, music and politics in our **interdisciplinary community** of researchers, students and lecturers.

With this qualification, you will be able to work in all aspects of film-making and acting, as well as a range of other fields.

To be eligible for a Film Studies course, you will ideally need 3 'A' levels or equivalent. Your application will be stronger if you have gained some practical experience and are able to show a portfolio of your work.

The Film Studies course from our institution will enable you to:

- develop advanced communication skills: you will be taught how to put forward convincing and intricate written and verbal arguments coherently
- collect and process substantial amounts of information and prioritise it: you will be trained in information gathering and **sifting** skills
- critically analyse various forms of the media
- carry out independent research with full access to our rich bank of archive materials.

Our aim is to provide you with a range of skills that will stand you in good stead in whatever career you choose.

Text two

My job in film

A – The Actor

Acting is like walking a tight-rope: you have to perform in front of the camera, no matter how fragile you are feeling. You are not taught this at uni. I might appear perfectly natural in a film, but this is the result of painstaking work beforehand. It's tough! The thing I hate the most, though, is the sycophantic behaviour of some of the 'lurvies' of the screen world. I can't stand being told how wonderful I am, when I know they are not really interested in me.

B – The Director of Photography

When I started out, it was all on-the-job training and you just worked your way up. I've reached my current position through sheer **graft**. My role is to collaborate with the director and help make the screenplay come to life. I need about a month prior to shooting begins to set everything up – I check out the locations, choose the equipment and study the screenplay. When the filming kicks off, there's not much time to think!

C – The Editor

My role is absolutely crucial, although ironically, not many film-goers are aware that editors exist! I find that quite frustrating, as without good editing, a film is unlikely to succeed, whether it's a biopic, rom com or the latest in arthouse. I do feel undervalued at times, particularly since I am so highly qualified. My job is to combine footage so that it flows, ensuring that no content is lost. Depending on the director I'm working with, I make a greater or lesser creative contribution. The best is when I'm just left to get on with it.

Section A: Questions 9-12

Choose the best person from text two to answer each of the following questions. Write **A** for 'The Actor', **B** for 'The Director of Photography' or **C** for 'The Editor' **on your answer sheet.**

9. Who did not study to do their job?
10. Which person finds other people hypocritical?
11. Who has to work closely with another person?
12. Which person feels unappreciated?

Section B: Questions 13-16

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet.**

13. What is the main purpose of text one?
 - A to give readers information about how to get a job in film
 - B to criticise the difficulty of getting work in the film industry
 - C to encourage readers to consider a course in film studies
14. In text one, what does '**interdisciplinary community**' mean?
 - A people from different academic fields
 - B people who correct mistakes
 - C people who only study one subject
15. In text one, what does '**sifting**' mean?
 - A sorting according to importance
 - B searching for information
 - C analysing information in detail
16. In text two, passage B, what does '**graft**' mean?
 - A good luck
 - B promotion
 - C hard work

Task 3

Task 3 contains **persuasive** texts. There are eight questions (17-24). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Text one**Paying for Your Plastic**

We all know plastic carrier bags are bad for the environment but it seems we struggle to stop using them. Like many people, I own plenty of reusable bags but I frequently leave them at home. What's worse, figures in England show that only 60% of shoppers ever take reusable bags out with them, while just 40% rely exclusively on free plastic bags.

But would paying for plastic bags make any difference? The statistics seem to support it. In Wales there is a minimum 5p levy on plastic carrier bags. It's not a lot but it would help me, for one, remember my reusable ones, and it certainly seems to help the Welsh! Only a fifth of them use single use carrier bags compared with around 70% of us Scottish shoppers.

One major UK-wide chain reports that since it started charging for plastic bags, demand has dropped by 80%, which is amazing. I'd like to see all retailers get on board with this as I think that would bring about a real shift in people's attitudes.

Text two

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your article 'Paying for Your Plastic' advocates levying charges for plastic bags. However, it can be argued that this will have no effect on the number of bags used. Most bags are reused by households at least once for such purposes as food waste, nappies and lining bins. Only 6% are thrown away immediately. So instead of using plastic bags from supermarkets, people will buy tailor-made bags for these purposes.

Plastic bags occupy less than 0.03% of landfill space and have a tiny environmental impact. They do not usually biodegrade and so do not emit greenhouse gases or release chemicals into groundwater.

It is frequently cited that marine wildlife has been affected by plastic. However, research shows that the overwhelming majority of plastic found on beaches and in whales' stomachs has been used in the agricultural and construction industries.

There is the argument that if people reuse plastic bags, it will encourage them to do other environmentally friendly things. My view is that people will feel absolved from doing anything else.

Plastic bags should not be singled out for special attention: it gives the message that they are a big environmental issue. We should be looking at the real problems of energy, food and water shortages. Let's leave the trivia alone.

Yours faithfully,

Adam Wright

Questions 17-24

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

- 17.** Where does the author of text one live?
A England
B Wales
C Scotland
- 18.** In text one, the writer would be more likely to remember to take reusable bags to the supermarket if
A retailers caused attitudes to change
B there was a financial incentive involved
C statistics proved that it was beneficial
- 19.** What is the main purpose of text two?
A to argue that charging for plastic bags will not help the environment
B to attack the writer of text one for arguing in favour of a levy
C to explain why people need free plastic bags from supermarkets
- 20.** According to text two, sea animals are more affected by
A households throwing away their plastic bags
B businesses disposing of their plastic waste
C bag chemicals leaking into groundwater
- 21.** What is a big environmental issue for the writer of text two?
A energy shortages
B free plastic bags
C public ignorance
- 22.** Text one uses the 80% drop in demand for paid plastic bags as an argument in favour of a levy. Text two responds by arguing that
A if they can't get free bags for their rubbish, people will buy tailor-made ones elsewhere
B if they have to pay for supermarket bags, people will buy biodegradable ones instead
C if supermarkets don't give out free bags, marine wildlife will be negatively affected
- 23.** Which sentence is correct?
A Both texts are written from an unbiased point of view.
B Text two has a more personal perspective than text one.
C Text one takes a more subjective approach than text two.
- 24.** Both texts
A use formal language to make their arguments convincing
B use some facts and figures to support their different points
C tell us exactly how many people reuse bags for shopping

Task 4

Task 4 contains a **persuasive** text. There are six questions (25-30). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Questions 25-30 test your ability to read a text quickly for the general idea, and to scan it for key words and phrases. You are advised to read the questions **before** you read the text.

Section A: Questions 25-28

This text has seven paragraphs. Each paragraph has a purpose. Choose the letter of the paragraph which best matches the purposes below. Write the letter **on your answer sheet**.

There is an example. You do not need to use all of the paragraphs.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <i>Example</i> to introduce the book | A |
| | |
| 25. to describe the less positive aspects of the book | _____ |
| 26. to describe an incident from Goode's personal life | _____ |
| 27. to give some information about the author's career | _____ |
| 28. to describe a chapter about Goode's criminal activities | _____ |

Section B: Questions 29-30

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

- 29.** What is the main purpose of this review?
- A to summarise the content of *The Fall of Goode*
 - B to give the writer's opinion about a biography
 - C to say what the writer thinks about James Goode
- 30.** This review is mainly
- A positive
 - B neutral
 - C negative

***The Fall of Goode* by Daryl Turner**

Reviewed by James Martins

Paragraph A

The *Fall of Goode* is a remarkable read. James Goode might not be known outside the world of business but this doesn't matter – it's a book that has everything.

Paragraph B

I must admit when I was asked to review this book I was expecting a long, dreary story of how someone becomes successful and then is ruined. However, I was pleasantly surprised to find the book is a collection of stories written from the perspectives of those who knew Goode.

Paragraph C

In one chapter Goode's wife, Helen, discloses how she was aware that her husband was being cheated by his business partner but couldn't say anything because she was being blackmailed. When her husband eventually finds out that she had known about his partner and had not said anything, Helen believes it will end their marriage. It doesn't, and Turner does an outstanding job of taking us through the roller-coaster ride Helen went through.

Paragraph D

In another chapter there are details about how Goode bribed several CEOs to obtain inside information. This chapter is a real page-turner and only at the end do we discover how important this information is to the success of Goode's empire. Unfortunately, for legal reasons, some key names have been changed or omitted but – trust me – this chapter will surprise, shock and fascinate you.

Paragraph E

There are the occasional lapses in other chapters when Turner goes into too much unnecessary detail. Chapters 6, 8 and 9 are examples of this. In chapter 6 too much time is spent describing travel details and in chapters 8 and 9 descriptions of the people in the companies do not add anything to the book.

Paragraph F

Daryl Turner has written a number of biographies but they have mainly been about celebrities: pop stars, sports players, actors and actresses. His decision to write about a businessman surprised many as they believed his unconventional style would not suit a biography of this type. However, like his previous books, this is very well researched and his interviews with the people who know his subject provide him with some interesting insights, no matter who he is writing about.

Paragraph G

The Fall of Goode is available in hardback at all good bookshops and comes out in paperback next month. We give *The Fall of Goode* a star rating just a tad below our maximum.

*You can use these pages for rough notes. This booklet will **not** be marked.*

