

A 3D wireframe grid is overlaid on a dark brown background. A red line graph with a peak and a blue line graph with a valley are plotted on the grid. A stick figure is drawn on the right side of the grid, appearing to walk or run. The letters 'A' and 'B' are visible on the left side of the grid.

# SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS

**For  
Formative  
and  
Summative  
Assessment Purposes**

**Sample Compositions**  
**for**  
**Formative**  
**and**  
**Summative**  
**Assessment Purposes**

Selected from the ENGLISH  
Junior Lyceum Entrance  
Examination 2002

The Educational Assessment Unit

**2003**

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Education Division  
Malta  
2003

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## **Preface**

The National Curriculum speaks of ‘Linking Formative and Summative forms of Assessment’ and states its policy of “a mode of assessment that, between Year 4 and Year 6, will combine summative and formative assessments.”

This combination comes about as our schools adopt more widely and efficiently formative modes of assessment that feed back effectively into the every day teaching and learning experiences in our classrooms.

It also means the gradual building up of best practices in summative assessment, as our examinations become more ‘student friendly’, less memory based and more skills oriented.

Moreover, linking formative and summative assessment has also come to mean that we draw formative feedback from forms of summative assessment. Hence, the Educational Assessment Unit is carrying out useful item analysis of Junior Lyceum Entrance Examination candidates’ papers, and the Unit later reports back to teachers and parents. Teachers in schools are also using children’s examination scripts for formative feedback.

In this booklet the Educational Assessment Unit has carried out a similar exercise. It has taken ten children’s creative writings from the Junior Lyceum Entrance Examination scripts and it has analysed them. We hope that the feedback that we are sending to the schools will be a useful tool for teachers, pupils and parents who wish to support their children’s learning.

**Mary Vella**

**Director Curriculum Management**

## **Introduction**

The Educational Assessment Unit is presenting this publication which contains ten compositions selected from the 2002 English Junior Lyceum Entrance Examination. We have reproduced both scanned as well as typed copies of the original. When typing the compositions, an effort was made to present them as similar as possible to the original work. So we were careful not to correct any spelling mistakes or other inaccuracies that were made by the student. One should note that the pictures and the names of the students are fictitious and were included for the sole purpose of giving the compositions a more personal touch.

This publication is intended mainly for Primary School Teachers particularly those teaching Year 5 and Year 6. One notices that at the end of each composition we have included general comments so as to help the teacher understand what level is expected from a year 6 student. Moreover, these comments will surely help students improve on their work and hence serve for formative assessment purposes. It is of the utmost importance to emphasise the fact that it is the work of the students that is being evaluated and not the students themselves.

The reader realises that three titles, namely, (a) **The Thief** (which is the picture composition), (b) **Close To Nature** and (c) **The Amazing Thing That Came Out Of The Well** feature at three different levels of ability. This will make it easier for teachers to compare the work. This can be done by comparing works which share the same title as well as those which are of the same level. So these compositions are presented as exemplars to teachers who may need to continue to develop the ability of evaluating children's work.

The Educational Assessment Unit hopes that teachers, and perhaps parents as well as students themselves, will find this publication very useful. As an extra help, at the end of this publication, we have included the extract from the Chief Examiner's Report for English, which deals with the Composition. This was first published in the JL Report (2002) pages 57-58.

A word of thanks goes to Ms Antoinette Lucia, Education Officer Primary (with an emphasis on English) for the general comments on each composition, to Ms Patricia Sant for the drawings and to Mr Joe Camilleri who typed the scripts and designed the cover.

**Peter Vassallo ADE (Student Assessment)**

**Leonard Grech EO (Test Construction)**

**G. Composition**  
**In not less than 150 words, write a composition on ONE of the following.** (30 marks)

51. Write a story ending with the words *...I had been waiting for ten whole minutes.*

Say what happened during those ten minutes, where you were, what you saw and heard and how you felt.

52. **Picture Composition : The Thief**



Imagine the shopkeeper in the picture is your uncle. Write a story saying what happened one day in his shop when a man tried to steal a radio.

Some of the following words may help you: radio, tape-recorder, counter, customer, suitcase, switch, accidentally, policeman.

53. **The amazing thing that came out of the well.**

Describe the thing and what it did.

54. **Close to nature.**

Write about an event that brought you close to trees, flowers, birds or other living things. Describe what you saw, heard and felt.

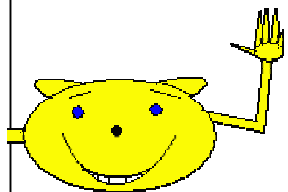
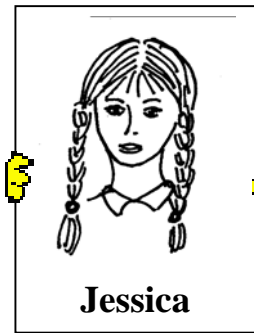
55. **Letter to a friend.**

Imagine you are Kim. Using the example below to begin your letter, write a letter to your friend Kelly who wishes to visit Malta to get to know about Maltese customs.

You may wish to write about a local festivity or event.

*Dear Kelly,*

*20, St. Lucy Street,  
 Sliema,  
 Malta.  
 15<sup>th</sup> May 2002.*



## The Thief

### The Thief (Picture Composition)

My uncle Joe, is a jovial, kindly man who owns a shop in a Main Street. This shop is tiny and but very successful. It sells all sorts of electrical appliances, such as vacuum-cleaners, stereos, radios and many others. One day something ~~differe~~ different happened to Uncle Joe. Although it was a narrow escape, he still chortles at the memory of it, because, like I said, Uncle Joe is a very jovial, happy-go-lucky person.

~~On a bright morning in October, a man came into the shop to purchase a radio cassette recorder. ~~Now~~ It so happened that Uncle Joe had put a ~~very~~ small black radio on display. This radio was very valuable, because it had many gadgets which could do all sorts of things at once. Also, it was portable and battery-operated. Many people had gazed at it and in wishful thinking but no-one had offered to buy it. Suddenly, on one bright, sunny morning in October, a peculiar looking man came in to purchase a cassette recorder. The man had a long, jet-black coat and a dark hat and sunglasses. He also had a Cuban cigar, in his mouth and he twitched a lot, just like a furtive little animal. Uncle Joe seemed very nervous.~~

Joe went up the ladder to fetch the man's cassette recorder. Meanwhile, the sneaky, suspicious man was reaching out a ~~stee~~ hand to steal the valuable radio!

Uncle Joe recalls that the thief must have been an amateur because, just as he was sliding the radio into his bag, his finger hit a button on the radio and the voice of a soprano echoed through the shop. Uncle Joe spun around in surprise, just in time to see the ill-fated bumbler ~~try~~ try to make a desperate getaway. Uncle Joe ~~hollered~~ hollered "THIEF! THIEF!" at the top of his voice, and began chasing the man.

Luckily, a policeman was on patrol and he caught the thief, (who, by the way, had dropped his posh cigar!). The thief was frog-marched to the nearest police station and he got his well-deserved punishment. The crowning glory of Uncle Joe's ~~appliance~~ appliance shop was returned to him without further ado. When the ~~press~~ press came to question him about the case, he remarked that the man "was a ~~very~~ silly man, and a terrible thief!"

### The Thief (Picture Composition)

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*He also had a Cuban cigar in his mouth and he twitched a lot, just like a furtive little animal. He seemed very nervous. Uncle Joe went up the ladder to fetch the man's cassette recorder. Meanwhile, the sneaky, suspicious man was reaching out a ~~gloved~~ hand to steal the valuable radio!*

*Uncle Joe recalls that the thief must have been an amateur because, just as he was sliding the radio into his bag, his finger hit a button on the radio and the voice of a soprano echoed through the shop. Uncle Joe spun around in surprise, just in time to see the ill-fated bumbler ~~make~~ try to make a desperate gateway. ~~XXX~~ Uncle Joe ~~hollered~~ hollered "THIEF! THIEF!" at the top of his voice, and began chasing the man.*

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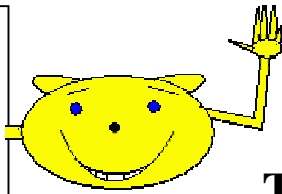
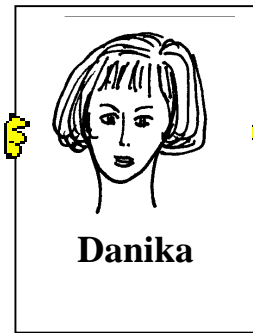
### **Examiner's Comments**

This work is definitely above what one would expect at this level. It reveals the candidate's ability to express herself with great fluency and confidence.

The story captures the reader's interest through the choice of words and phrases. These are varied and imaginative, for example, *a narrow escape, a furtive little animal, echoed, frog-marched*. Jessica makes effective use of complex, yet, grammatically correct sentences. She also uses connectives which are not limited to 'and' and typically uses more than one adjective to describe the same noun, as in *jovial, happy-go-lucky person; long, jet-black coat; sneaky, suspicious man; portable and battery-operated radio*.

Jessica's spelling is sound throughout, while her punctuation, evident also within sentences, is correct. Worthy of note is the effective way in which she presents the words "*THIEF! THIEF!*" which definitely shows that her presentational devices are in place and that she is an avid reader.

For all these reasons, the work was judged as being of excellent standard and well above the expected level.



## The Amazing Thing That Came Out Of The Well

At the bottom of the <sup>our</sup> garden there is a well. No one uses it now but one day my brother and I were playing with a ball when it went near the well.

We ran after it and soon found out that it was at the bottom of the well. Then very suddenly a light shone from the well and a lovely stone appeared. It fell to the ground.

My brother ran to get our parents while I stood guard. ~~When~~ When my parents came they were very puzzled. Finally I touched the stone and it shone. I backed away straight into a tree and the tree turned into gold.

My father said ~~that~~ that the blue stone ~~probably~~ <sup>probably</sup> was the philosopher's stone. It had the power to turn anything into gold and it gave its owner immortality.

My mum suggested leaving it while my ~~brother~~ brother wanted to break it into pieces. My father wanted to keep it, so we kept it.

We locked it in a box and kept it in the attic for a month. Then my father wanted to experiment with it. He brought a few stones from the

garden and after holding the ~~stone~~ <sup>stones</sup> powerful stone ~~to~~ touched the stones. At once they turned into gold. Even he ~~thought~~ <sup>thought</sup> a plant and the same thing happened.

My father realized how dangerous ~~the stone~~ <sup>the stone</sup> was ~~so~~ after a few more things into gold he broke it into pieces.

There were seven pieces. My father caught seven strong metal boxes and locked each piece in a box. Then he destroyed the keys and buried the boxes. No one will ever use the philosopher's stone again.

*At the bottom of the our garden there is a well. No one uses it now but one day my brother and I were playing with a ball when it went near the well.*

*We ran after it and soon found out that it was at the bottom of the well. Then very suddenly a light shone from the well and a lovely stone appeared. It fell to the ground.*

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My father realized how dangerous the ~~the~~ stone was so after turning a few more things into gold he broke it into pieces.

There were seven pieces. My father bought seven strong metal boxes and locked each piece in a box. Then he destroyed the keys and buried the boxes. No one will ever use the philosopher's stone again.

### **Examiner's Comments**

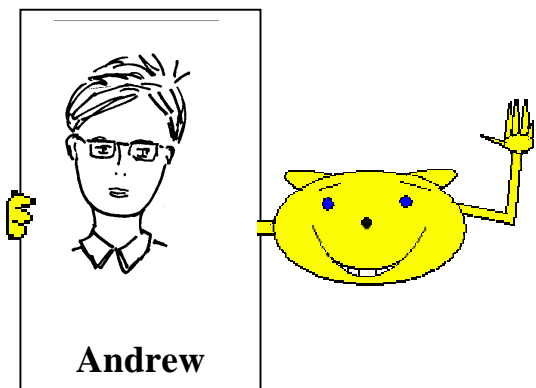
Danika's work clearly shows her imagination and ability to create a story that unfolds through a clear sequence. This is evident in the first three paragraphs, which help to set the scene. One event follows exactly after another. She paces the story through the use of the transitional words such as *soon, then, suddenly, while, finally*. Each paragraph focuses on one main idea.

Danika makes effective use of appropriate vocabulary, which is also varied.

There are some spelling mistakes but the work presented is grammatically correct. Her sentences are generally long but structured in a way to interest the reader.

This candidate's achievement is, therefore, commendable. The work presented not only fulfils requirements for writing levels, but exceeds expectations for a girl her age.

# Close To Nature



Close to Nature

Saturday morning dawned bright and sunny and the sun smiled upon the houses in the village. The village was a small one that didn't have any nature round it except for the few trees left, but one day something strange happened that brought me close to nature.

It all began like this, ~~on~~ once I went jogging round the village, when I saw a wishing well in ~~the courtyard of an~~ old ruined cottage I went into the cottage and walked towards the well. After a few minutes staring at the well I threw five cents in it and made a wish. My wish was to be close to nature. My wish came true!

All of sudden I was on a hill looking down at fields carpeted with multi-coloured flowers and a small forest of trees. I felt a sudden ~~think~~ and I saw a spring I went to it the water in it was freezing but very good. After I drank I lay on the ~~thick~~ grass looking at the sky I felt peaceful, as now I wasn't surrounded by buildings and industrial areas.

I was enjoying listening to chirping of the birds. It was a rather new sensation. All of a sudden I saw hills and fields vanishing one by one in the distance was horrified when it got so close and after a few split seconds I vanished too! When I opened my eyes I found myself back into the courtyard of old cottage.

While I walked home I felt puzzled but happy for being so close to nature.

## Close to Nature

Saturday morning dawned bright and sunny and the sun smiled upon the houses in the village. The village was a small one that didn't have any nature round it except for the few trees left, but one day something strange happened ~~at~~ that brought me close to nature.

It all began like this, ~~on~~ once I went jogging round the village, when I saw a wishing well in ~~the~~ the courtyard of an old ruined cottage. I went into the cottage and walked towards the well. After a few minutes staring at the well I threw five cents in it and made a wish. My wish was to be close to nature. My wish came true!

*All of sudden I was on a hill looking dow at fields carpeted with multi-coloured flowers and a small forest of trees. I felt a sudden thirst, and I saw a spring I went to it the water in it was freezing but very good. After I drank I lay on the thick grass looking at the sky I felt peaceful, as now I wasn't sorrouded by buildings and industrial areas.*

*I was enjoying listening to chirping of the birds. It was a rather new sensation. All of a sudden I saw hills and fields vanishing one by one in the distance was horrified when it got so close and after a few split seconds I vanished too!! When I opened my eyes I found myself back in the courtyard of old cottage.*

*While I walked home I felt puzzled but happy for being so close to nature.*

### **Examiner's Comments**

Andrew presented the examiners with a composition which is a pleasure to read. The imagery used, the technical accuracy and adequate language structure were evident throughout.

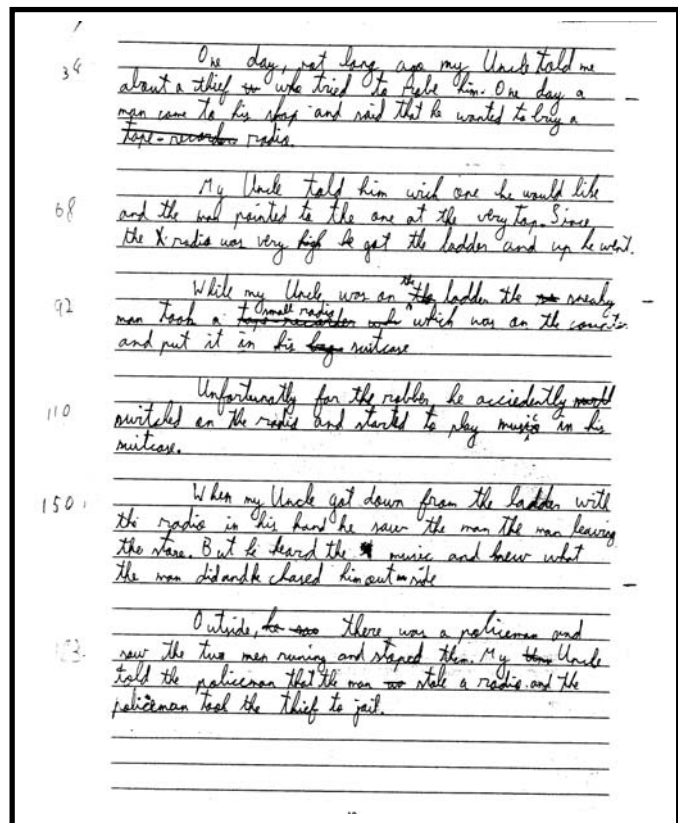
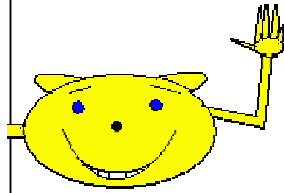
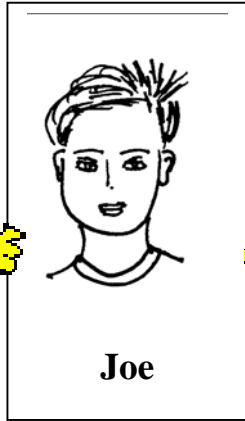
The candidate uses his writing skills effectively. He writes a beginning, a middle (incorporating a main event), and an end which develops into a surprising climax.

Sentences are joined to one another with appropriate connectives. Although some errors in punctuation are evident, Andrew does experiment with the different forms of punctuation such as exclamation, double exclamation, and commas within the sentence.

Throughout the story there is vivid, and rich vocabulary, creating a powerful image of a small village void of trees but *with the sun smiling upon the houses*, of fields *carpeted with multi-coloured flowers*, of *thick grass*. He appeals to all the senses with the sound of the *chirping of birds* and the *water* that is *freezing*.

This is work of high quality and demonstrates very good writing skills. This is what earned Andrew his mark.

# The Thief



One day, not long ago my Uncle told me about a thief ~~wh~~ who tried to rob him. One day a man came to his shop and said that he wanted to buy a ~~tape-recorder~~ radio.

My uncle told him which one he would like and the man pointed to the one at the very top. Since the X radio was very high he got the ladder and up he went.

While my Uncle was on the ~~the~~ ladder the ~~sn~~ sneaky man took a ~~tape recorder~~ ~~wh~~ small radio which was on the counter and put it in his ~~bag~~ suitcase.

Unfortunately for the robber he accidentally ~~switch~~ switched on the radio and started to play music in his suitcase.

When my uncle got down from the ladder with the radio in his hand he

saw the man the man leaving the store. But he heard the ~~the~~ music and knew what the man did and he chased him out ~~to~~ side

Outside, ~~he~~ saw there was a policeman and saw the two men running and stoped them. My ~~the~~ Uncle told the policeman that the man ~~was~~ stole a radio and the policeman took the thief to jail.

### Examiner's Comments

Joe's story is well structured and organised into paragraphs.

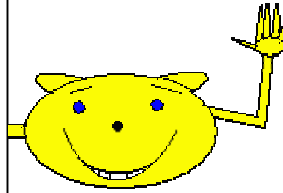
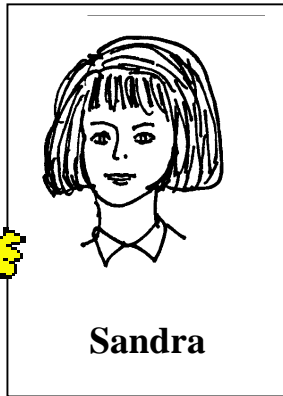
He is clear in his ideas and manages to convey meaning. He makes effective use of complex sentences to improve the quality of his writing. Although he uses 'and' frequently to combine two sentences, yet he does make several attempts at using connectives such as *since*, *while*, and *when*.

Grammar is generally accurate, especially in the use of prepositions (e.g. He pointed **to** the one **at** the top) verb agreement and tense. Spelling, though not fully correct, is satisfactory. Capital letters and full stops demarcate sentences but no examples of commas within sentences, or of any other form of punctuation, are evident in his work.

Joe's composition could have been further enhanced by the use of more imaginative phrases and descriptive words. In his work, these are limited to only a few such as *at the very top* and *sneaky*.

All in all, Joe's work can be considered to have just reached the expected level.

# The Amazing Thing That Came Out of The Well



The amazing thing that came <sup>out</sup> of the well  
I was in my grandma's garden watering  
the plants. I heard a ~~noisy~~ <sup>noisy</sup> ~~noise~~ coming  
from the well.

I went to tell my grandma  
but she told me that I was only imagining  
incredible things. At first I thought that it  
will be good for all of us if we could phone  
the police. Then I told my grandma to  
come along and see. By grandma brought  
her camera. As she saw the man sitting  
on the well, she began to scream. He was  
wearing a pointed shoes, his shirt was all ~~with~~  
blood and his hat was like that of a stupid  
clown. Our neighbors came to aid but the Turkish  
man told us ~~not~~ <sup>in</sup> language not to be afraid.  
He told us that he was the Turkish  
man "Dragut". We all were amazed and  
we told him how he was in our garden.  
He told us that under our well their ~~well~~  
were died persons. We all were frightened  
and I ran as my feet could ~~run~~ carry me  
to my ~~mother's~~ <sup>house</sup> that was a little ~~distance~~  
away. ~~She came.~~ My mother came too but  
she didn't see the man because he had  
disappeared when he saw that all people.  
Everyone who saw the "Dragut" kept it as  
a secret.

I never went in my grandma's garden  
again. I wrote a book with the title <sup>4089</sup>  
"The adventures of Dragut in Malta" (65)  
This story is a little bit ~~far~~ <sup>far</sup> fetched but its  
true!

## The amazing thing that came out of the well.

I was in my grandma's garden watering the plants when I heard a  
~~noisy~~ ~~noise~~ noise coming from the well.

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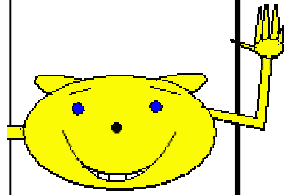
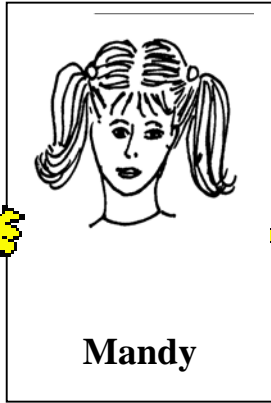
Sandra's work can be described as logically sequenced. It contains an introduction, development of ideas and a conclusion.

A range of punctuation marks is generally accurately employed.

However, there is a clear problem of incorrect grammar (e.g. ***a pointed shoes, we told him how he was in our garden***) spelling and other elements of language structure. While these errors do not affect meaning, they render the sentences awkward. For instance, ***all***, is always placed incorrectly: ***we all were amazed, we all were frightened, he saw that all people***. Idioms are also used incorrectly: ***I ran as my feet could carry me; the house was a stone's throw***.

Sandra's work lost marks for these reasons and was considered to be slightly below the required level.

# The Thief



The Thief

This is a story that happened ~~to~~ to my uncle George. My uncle George is a shopkeeper. This is the story...

It dawned bright and sunny with a sky that was a deep blue flecked with tiny white clouds. My uncle was in his shop as usual. All of ~~a~~ a sudden a man called Tom reached my uncle's shop. He told my uncle that he wanted a tape-recorder, and ~~from~~ ~~then~~ my uncle brought his ladder. ~~As~~ As he was climbing to bring the tape-recorder, ~~the~~ Tom stole a radio that was near the counter. When my uncle came down he told Tom if the tape-recorder was good. Tom told my uncle that it was good then he told him how much does that tape-recorder cost. My uncle told him that it cost £10.00 he paid my uncle and ~~the~~ he went out of the shop.

When he went out he switched on the radio he had stole. My uncle thought that the radio was like he had in his shop. So he left his shop and went after the thief. At that moment there was a policeman ~~was~~ passing by. The policeman caught the thief and my uncle had the radio ~~again~~ back. The policeman went with the thief to the police station.

It was a very bad day for my uncle but he learned a lesson not being anymore careless and to be more care for his shop.

## The Thief

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This is the story...

It dawned bright and sunny with a sky that was a deep blue flecked with tiny white clouds. My uncle was in this shop as usual. All of ~~a~~ a sudden a man called Tom reached my uncle's shop. He told my uncle that he wanted a tape-recorder and ~~when~~ than my uncle brought ~~a~~ his ladder. ~~As~~ As he was climbing to bring the tape-recorder, ~~the~~ Tom stole a radio that was near the counter. When my uncle came down he told Tom if the tape-recorder was good. Tom told my uncle that it was good then he told him how much does that tape-recorder

costs. My uncle told his that it cost £30.00 he paid my uncle and ~~that~~ he went out of the shop!

When he went out he switched on the radio he had stole. My uncle taught that the radio was like he had in his shop. So he left his shop and went after the thief. At that moment there was a policeman ~~is~~ passing by.. The policeman caught the thief and my uncle had the radio again back. The policeman went with the thief to the police station.

It was a very bad day For my uncle but he leared a lesson not being anymore careless and to be more care For his shop.

### Examiner's Comments

Mandy shows good structure and organisation in her work.

Her sentences follow in sequence with a beginning that introduces the audience to the topic, a middle relating the main events and a conclusion. She uses phrases such as, *All of a sudden...*, *As he was climbing...*, *When my uncle came down*, to provide links in her writing and to help sustain the reader's interest. She is also adventurous using (...) in the first paragraph to indicate a slightly longer pause or suspense.

On the other hand, the word *told* is used repeatedly and could easily have been changed to *asked* or *answered*. There are few spelling mistakes. In fact, the two main mistakes observed relate to homophones, for example, *than/then*, *taught/thought*. Mandy's use of punctuation is not always accurate, especially within sentences. Moreover, there is evidence of carelessness in the use of lower-case and upper-case letters.

The moral, which Mandy inserts at the end of the story, although not expressed in perfect English, is plausible and original. This places Mandy firmly in the average band.



*The journey was three days long and to kill time I spent my time during daylight counting the fields we passed and at night trying to count the stars or to make funny ~~pictures~~ pictures with story (imagining).*

*At last we arrived. Before going looking for the antelopes I visited a type of car-boot-sale where there were only being sold types of ~~anni~~ animals. Afterwards we went into the forest being guarded by ten men who were armed to the teeth to defend us from ~~ann~~ dangerous animals.*

*On~~a~~ the way I saw snakes, lizards and many other things which made me feel very close to nature. At last we saw one and captured it. My father examined its genes when we came back to Malta (in his ~~laborati~~ ~~laboraty~~ lab). He made a wondrous discovery which was how to cure any type of disease by eating part of this animal's leg. Now we became rich and father is always blowing his trumpet about what he found. But the only thing which really interested me was nature in Africa, and this adventure brought me very close to nature.*

### **Examiner's Comments**

The most striking aspect in Darren's work is his extremely original ideas, drawing on what appears to be a very vivid imagination or experiences.

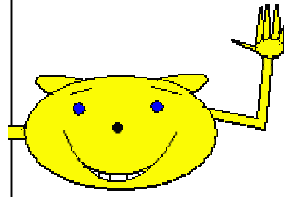
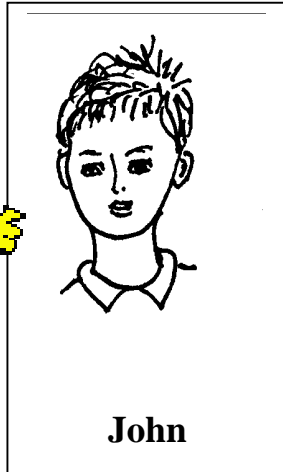
Sentences vary in length, his choice of vocabulary is appropriate, and he frequently uses idioms and expressions to convey meaning such as *to kill time; armed to the teeth; blowing his trumpet*.

Unfortunately, Darren often misspells words and occasionally uses prepositions incorrectly.

His writing is coherent, taking the reader sequentially through the story.

Although difficult to judge, Darren's work can best be classified as work that is in line with national standards.

# The Thief



The thief  
~~Over the~~ Many people ~~robbed~~ many things but at last policeman chased them. When policeman chased them they got into prison.

One day a strange tall man came at my uncle's shop. He want to buy a thing but his thought was different. He wanted to steal a radio.

The shopkeeper told him what he wanted. The strange man told him that he wanted a silver frame. When the counter turn to look the frame the strange man opened his suitcase and put the radio into it.

When ~~he~~ he put the radio properly he got out running. The counter hear something and when he turned he saw the man running out of the shop. The counter went out running after him. The counter knew that the man stolen some goods and the strange man switch the radio.

Accidentally a police man was walking at that place. When he saw the police man the man fall out and had a big shock.

The policeman when in every place an when there was a robbed they go as fast as they could there.

## *The thief*

~~Over the~~ Many people ~~robbed~~ many things but at last policeman chased them. When policeman chased them they got into prison.

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~~The~~

When ~~to when~~ he put the radio properly he got out running. The counter hear something and when he turned he saw the man running out of the shop. The counter went out running after him. ~~The counter knew that the man stolen some goods as the strange man switch the radio.~~

Accidentally a police man was walking at that place. When he saw the policeman the man fall out and had a big shock.

The policemen where in every place as when there was a robbed they go as fast as they could there.

### Examiner's Comments

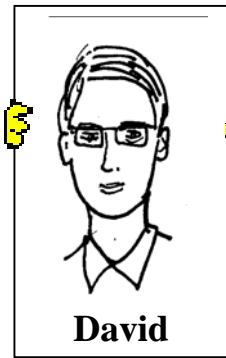
The candidate has definitely grasped the main points of the story as depicted in the pictures. He uses paragraphing and the story flows with a clear beginning, middle and an end.

Punctuation is also quite accurate, and on the whole there are only a few spelling mistakes. John won marks on these merits.

However his work was penalised as it was inadequately clear. This is evident through his incorrect use of prepositions (e.g. The man came **at** my uncle's shop; he was walking **at** that place) and inconsistency in the use of the Past Tense such as **he turn to took the frame; he want to buy a thing.**

The vocabulary he uses is commonplace and there is obvious misuse of words such as **counter** (which he mistakes for the shopkeeper), **told**, **accidentally** and **chased**.

His work is best described as being below the expected level.



David

## The Amazing Thing That Came Out of The Well

The amazing thing that came out of the well was a small little magical rabbit.

This tiny fellow can do tricks example turn the dead flowers into beautiful ones, make ~~see~~ all the broken toys that I had into new and when I ~~had~~ have a difficulty on my homework, he makes it to me.

We all family love this new magical pet ~~that~~ that we decided to call him professor Quirrel.

One day as I was walking to the bakery shop with my pet rabbit ~~prof~~ profs. Quirrel, someone was trying to steal him so I was running faster and faster, fast as I could that I was near the zebra crossing, I did not know that there was a car that hit ~~my~~ me and ~~prof~~ Quirrel my pet fell out of my hands. The car's driver was not very well good and some people that were nearby went to tell my mother.

Time passed and I was in hospital and ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> painful with pain. All of a sudden, I saw ~~some~~ <sup>someone</sup> passing ~~thru~~ through the door. It was ~~prof~~ Quirrel. He had something on his hand. It was ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> gold sand. He put it on my ~~broken~~ leg and on my painful hand.

He put some water on them and a stick. Time passed and with signals profs. Quirrel told me that I can take the stick off. It was really a magic. I told him were he had ~~that~~ <sup>in</sup> sand. He told me again with signals that he took some ~~of~~ it from ~~by~~ the ~~sea~~ <sup>well</sup> <sup>side</sup>. I was so proud of my ~~pet~~ pet rabbit that I wanted to keep him for my whole life.

But not for my whole life. He stayed for 4 four years and then he died. I was so sorry about him because he was my best friend even and he was even my brother too.

I loved him very ~~so~~ much and I told my m um and dad not to change their mind to not take off that magic well off.

The amazing thing that came out of the well was a small little magical rabbit.

This tiny fellow can do tricks example turn the dead flowers into beautiful ones, make ~~see~~ all the broken toys that I had into new and when I ~~had~~ have a difficulty on my homework, he makes it to me.

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I loved him very ~~th~~ much and I told my mum and dad not to change there mind to not take off that magic well off.

### Examiner's Comments

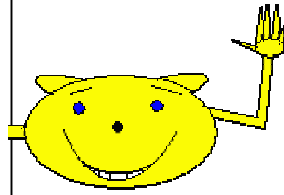
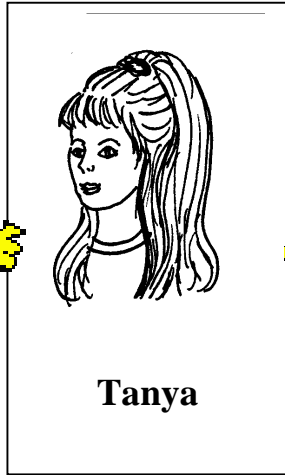
While David did score marks for his original ideas, these did not compensate for the innumerable errors encountered throughout. Moreover, his work lacks fluency and good style.

The candidate attempts to use complex sentences, yet he fails to demarcate them with punctuation. The writing is therefore not well organised and ideas are not joined together smoothly. In many instances there is evidence of poor sentence structure (e.g. *we all family love this pet, I told him where he had take that sand from*). Evidence of incoherent sentences such as *I did not know that there was a car that hit me; he was even my brother too* are also present.

There are gross grammatical errors (e.g. *the pet that we decided to call him Professor Quirrel; he was not very well good*). Incorrect expressions such as *fast as I could; painful with pain; to not take off that magic well off* are also evident.

For all these reasons the work has been rated below national expectations.

## Close to Nature



One day I was going to shopping and a ~~godly~~ <sup>godly</sup> came with his car. He told me to go with him. I went. He took me close to the nature. Then he told me to stay there until he came. So I had to stay.

There were many flowers of different colours. There were many trees of apples, oranges and lemons. The sound of the birds makes me happy. Then that ~~man~~ <sup>lady</sup> came with some bread and something to drink. I told her who she was and she told me that she was the lady that I helped when she was at that accident. I remembered. We cut some apples and oranges. We drank and played together. We talked about school, and about what we are going to do on Summer holidays.

Then a puppy came near us. It was lost. We gave him some meat that we have to eat. We played with him. The puppy was so disappointed. Then a man came and when he saw the puppy he came running. The puppy began to jump because it was in his father's arms.

There ~~was~~ <sup>the arms</sup> was cut and it looked like ~~flor~~ <sup>flor</sup>. But I had to go because ~~my~~ <sup>my</sup> mum is thinking of me. So I told her goodbye and gave her my telephone number and ~~her~~ <sup>her</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> to phone me and go for a day ~~near~~ <sup>close to</sup> the nature.

12

One day I was going to shopping and a ~~man~~ lady came with his car. He told me to go with him. I went. He took me close to the nature. Then he told me to stay there until he came. So I had to stay.

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*Then a puppy came near us. It was lost. We gave him some meat that we have to eat. We played with him. The puppy was so disappointed. Then a man came and when he saw the puppy he came running. The puppy began to ~~fit~~ jump because it was ~~his~~ his father.*

*There ~~was~~ the grass was cut and it looked like a floor. But I had to go because mum is thinking of me. So I told her goodbye and gave her my telephone number and told her to phone me and go for a day ~~near~~ close to the nature.*

### **Examiner's Comments**

In her work, Tanya allows herself to drift in her imagination. Her composition is therefore rich in images and situations.

Regretfully, however, the scenes she creates are not well linked or structured. The composition starts with some confusion as to whether the protagonist is a man or a woman. Characters and situations – although various - are created within the story with little context or continuity. One could also argue that the composition drifts out of point at times.

There is also rather poor grammar and sentence structure in Tanya's work such as: *there were trees of apples, oranges and lemons; we gave him meat that we have to eat; I had to go because mum is thinking of me.*

Not lacking in imagination, it is mostly carelessness which pulls down Tanya's work to below average standard.

**Extract from the Report by the Chief Examiner for English published in the Junior Lyceum Entrance Examination Report (2002) pages 57-58.**

**Section III Composition**

In general, children fared worst in this section of the paper. Because this section carried a high portion of the marks, those children who did well here passed the exam, while those who failed in this section, tended to fail the paper. The examining board believes that this is correct given the importance of free writing.

The titles set had the potential to appeal to a variety of children. Although children were free to express themselves creatively, there were also sentences prompting the children to react and think about their choice.

There were plenty of ideas in the children’s writings, with some markers stating that some compositions were a pleasure to read. This was especially so in the case of the composition entitled ‘*The Amazing Thing that came out of the Well*’. However there was also evidence of poor levels in the basic use of language in its written form.

Loss of marks was brought about by:

- Spelling errors
- Limited vocabulary
- Inaccurate sentence structures
- Sentences which were too short and needed to be combined
- Incorrect and inconsistent tense usage
- Inappropriate use of memorised idioms
- Similes which may be considered as clichés
- Indecipherable handwriting.

Increasing errors and irrelevance were also brought about when children wrote beyond the stipulated number of words.

The table below gives an overall view of this section of the paper.

Questions	Examiners’ Comments
Number 51 <i>Write a story ending with the words... I had been waiting for ten whole minutes.</i>	This title was the least popular and those who opted for it clearly showed their inability to conceive timespans.
Number 52 <i>Picture Composition: The Thief</i>	As usual, this was the most popular title though some ignored the pictures or the sequence and wrote about a shop being robbed. Some of the given words were used incorrectly. <b>Counter</b> , for instance, was taken to mean the shopkeeper.
Number 53 <i>The Amazing Thing that came out of the Well.</i>	It is worth noting that students who chose this question tended to have a high level of English and produced some excellent compositions.

<p>Number 54 <i>Close to Nature</i></p>	<p>This was the second least popular of the five titles set. It was quite surprising because candidates could have written about a variety of experiences, given the openness of the title. The majority of those who did choose this title wrote irrelevant sentences that were hardly connected to the title.</p>
<p>Number 55 <i>Letter to a Friend who wishes to visit Malta to get to know about Maltese Customs.</i></p>	<p>Candidates who chose this composition tended to go out of point. They either ignored the word <i>customs</i> or confused it with <i>costumes</i> and wrote about everything but festivities or events! A few managed to get marks because of their good level of English.</p>

**Suggested Action:**

**One of the observations that emerges from this section is the fact that the Picture Composition is invariably the most popular option. It is almost as though children avoid other types of composition where there is more room for communicating their own ideas.**

**Perhaps there is a need for students to understand that writing is a communicative process. In this regard, they should be given regular opportunities to explore the use of writing for different audiences and purposes – not just the weekly composition. Moreover, students should be equipped with the skills of writing including prewriting, drafting, editing and revising. If these steps are ignored, the task of creating a composition can appear daunting. Possibilities for pupils to work in pairs and in groups should also be considered for the generation of ideas and for developing communication skills. Particularly, initially working in pairs or in groups can nurture confidence in the children and break their frequent diffidence when faced with free writing. Children can gradually be expected to work more and more on their own.**

**One final point worthy of note, is the fact that by the time the student is in Year 6, it is often harder to remedy the shortcomings which could have been put right in previous years. In this regard, Level Descriptors for English Language are being formulated and should serve as guidelines for teachers. In the meantime however, it is imperative for teachers to attend writing workshops and to keep abreast of modern trends in this sphere. The Internet can also be regarded as a learning environment that could help teachers update their knowledge with regards to the teaching of writing.**

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