

Smart Exam Resources

0500-IGCSE-English-Paper-2

PAPER 2 COMPOSITION / PAPER-2-DESCRIPTIVE COMPOSITION

Descriptive-task-01-qp-Expert Solution

QUESTION:

You have to get to an important event or meeting, but the vehicle you are in is held up in a traffic jam. Describe what is going on around you and your feelings during the delay. [25]

ANSWER:

The car was an island of frustration amidst a sea of stalled vehicles. Ahead, a solid wall of blinking red taillights stretched into the distance, disappearing into the shimmering haze of heat rising from the asphalt. The air felt heavy, stifling, and thick with exhaust fumes that mingled with the faint aroma of fried food from a roadside stall somewhere out of sight. My watch mocked me with every ticking second, the hands moving with a deliberate slowness that mirrored the knots tightening in my stomach. The more I stared at it, the more I felt time slipping through my fingers, dragging my hopes of arriving on time along with it.

Around me, the chaos of the traffic jam unfolded. A cacophony of blaring horns created a symphony of impatience, each note more desperate than the last. Motorbikes wove precariously between cars, their riders shouting instructions or hurling complaints as they navigated the narrow gaps. A bus nearby rumbled loudly, its engine groaning in protest as it idled, releasing clouds of smoke that hung in the humid air like a stubborn reminder of our collective inertia. The sheer noise and motion around me only added to the gnawing sense of helplessness that churned in my chest.

Inside the car, the atmosphere was no less stifling. The air conditioning, despite its valiant efforts, struggled against the sun's relentless glare streaming through the windshield. Sweat trickled down my temple, my shirt sticking uncomfortably to my back. My fingers drummed an impatient rhythm on the armrest, the dull thud barely audible over the grating chatter of a radio host debating a topic I couldn't focus on. Every movement I made felt futile—a shallow attempt to dissipate the restless energy bubbling inside me.

My emotions oscillated wildly. Anxiety twisted in my chest, imagining the event beginning without me, my absence noted and judged. I felt an irrational anger flare, not at anyone in particular but at the entire situation—the unmoving cars, the noise,

even the innocent vendors weaving through traffic with trays of bottled water and snacks. A pang of envy hit me as I watched the street vendor's calm demeanor. How could he find serenity in this chaos when I was unraveling at every passing moment?

As the minutes dragged on, frustration gave way to resignation. I craned my neck to spot any sign of movement, but the traffic remained stubbornly frozen, as though mocking my impatience. My breathing slowed as I realized the futility of my fidgeting and worrying. What could I do but wait? The initial storm of emotions softened into an uneasy acceptance, tinged with the faintest glimmer of hope that the line might inch forward soon.

The world outside remained a mess—a symphony of stalled engines, raised voices, and weary vendors—but inside, I found a fragile sense of calm. The delay still stung, my heart still raced at the thought of being late, but for now, I held onto the smallest shred of control: the ability to endure, even in the face of powerlessness.

ANALYSIS:

Analysis of the Writing Based on the Mark Scheme Guidelines:

1. Many Well-Defined, Well-Developed Ideas and Images:

- Detailed Atmosphere:
 - The scene is brought to life with rich sensory details:
 - Visuals: *"A solid wall of blinking red taillights stretched into the distance, disappearing into the shimmering haze of heat."*
 - Sounds: *"A cacophony of blaring horns created a symphony of impatience."*
 - Textures and Smells: *"Sweat trickled down my temple, my shirt sticking uncomfortably to my back," and "thick with exhaust fumes that mingled with the faint aroma of fried food."*
 - These descriptions create a vivid and immersive setting that captures the chaos and discomfort of being stuck in traffic.
- Emotional Depth:
 - The protagonist's feelings are explored with nuance:
 - Initial frustration: *"My watch mocked me with every ticking second."*
 - Rising anxiety: *"Imagining the event beginning without me, my absence noted and judged."*
 - Anger and envy: *"An irrational anger flared...a pang of envy hit me as I watched the street vendor's calm demeanor."*
 - Resignation and acceptance: *"The initial storm of emotions softened into an uneasy acceptance."*

2. Overall Structure Through Devices:

- **Movements of the Writer:**
 - The protagonist's physical actions—craning their neck, fidgeting, and drumming fingers—mirror their emotional state, creating a dynamic flow.
- **Short Time Span Creation:**
 - The piece focuses on a brief but significant moment in the traffic jam, capturing the protagonist's evolving emotions during the delay.
- **Atmosphere and Tension:**
 - Tension is created through the protagonist's growing impatience and anxiety, heightened by external stimuli (e.g., noise, heat, and ticking time).
 - The eventual resolution—resignation and calm—provides a satisfying emotional arc.
- **No Confusion with a Story:**
 - The writing avoids narrative elements, instead focusing on descriptive imagery and the protagonist's internal experience.

3. Clarity and Sequence:

- **Repetition Avoided:**
 - Each sentence introduces new sensory details or emotional layers, ensuring variety and engagement.
- **Clear Sequence:**
 - The progression from external observations → rising frustration → emotional acceptance is logical and easy to follow.
- **Clarity of Description:**
 - The vivid language and precise details make the scene easy to visualize and emotionally resonant.

4. Stylistic and Linguistic Strength:

- Consistency:
 - The tone remains reflective and descriptive, capturing the intensity of the situation while maintaining relatability.
- Stylistic Fluency:
 - The writing employs varied sentence structures and evocative imagery:
 - *"The air conditioning, despite its valiant efforts, struggled against the sun's relentless glare."*
 - *"The world outside remained a mess—a symphony of stalled engines, raised voices, and weary vendors."*
- Linguistic Accuracy:
 - Grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary are precise, enhancing the overall quality of the piece.
- Sense of Audience:
 - The piece resonates with readers by portraying universally relatable emotions (impatience, anxiety, and eventual acceptance) in a vividly described setting.

Overall Assessment:

The writing effectively meets the guidelines:

- It uses rich, detailed descriptions to create an immersive atmosphere and convey a spectrum of emotions.
- The structure is clear and logical, guiding the reader through a short, focused time span with natural transitions.
- The style is fluent, linguistically strong, and tailored to engage the audience.