

INTERNATIONAL GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Optional endorsement
Speaking and listening

Commentary on DVD performances

1. John

John gives a presentation on social media.

He organizes and structures a sophisticated range of ideas, with some very sophisticated rhetorical strategies, such as the haircut sign and the use of stories that he has researched. He also includes the audience in his rhetorical approach, and they are fully engaged in his talk.

He has an assured and flexible use of spoken English, suitable to the topic and suitable for the audience. He is relaxed, with a calm authority. He makes use of some sophisticated patterning of grammatical structures, and varies his vocal emphasis.

The questions, coming as they do from the fellow students, are not especially challenging, but he elaborates on them with further ideas and input.

He hits all the descriptors for **Distinction**.

2. Laura

Laura gives a formal presentation to her class on the dangers to horses of steeplechasing.

Laura has a very clear grasp of her topic and puts forward some sophisticated ideas and solutions. She highlights central concepts through reference to detailed interpretation of data. She has a sophisticated repertoire of vocabulary and creates a very tightly structured and cohesive argument and analysis. She uses a range of rhetorical strategies to engage with her audience.

She has an effective range of interactive strategies and listens closely to audience questions, before interrogating perceptively the implications of what she is being asked. Her responses to the challenging questions asked by the teacher are especially impressive, with some appropriate elaboration of her ideas.

She follows an argument with some sophistication and closely argues throughout. She has a very assured and flexible use of spoken English.

She hits all the descriptors for **Distinction**.

3. Jack

Jack gives a presentation on his role in a national youth parliament (NYP).

Jack maintains excellent cogency and gives explicit depth of detail when appropriate. He has some sophisticated ideas which he addresses through sophisticated rhetorical methods. He weaves a clear narrative through such devices as rhetorical questions, the raising and resolving of issues and making comparisons. He uses spoken cohesion devices to very good effect – such as ‘now’, ‘so’. There is a natural ease to his delivery, including some use of colloquial language, which helps him to achieve the purpose of his talk to this audience. He really does explain, and he does so with assurance and flexibility. His use of brief written prompts is effective and unobtrusive. The rather abrupt ending is a result of editing, although if assessed ‘as seen’ it would need to be taken into account.

He answers questions perceptively in a way matched to the context of the presentation. He gives a thoughtful response to Greg’s question, and expands upon Livia’s straightforward question to give a more detailed explanation of adult roles in the parliament.

There is some hesitation in delivery, but taking into account the whole performance and applying the criteria, he can be awarded **Distinction**.

4. Beth

Beth gives a presentation on the topic of female representation in books and films. She speaks at some length on this challenging topic, before answering questions for her audience. The audience of peers had themselves just been taught questioning techniques, so they offer, unusually perhaps, sufficiently challenging questions.

Beth takes on a challenging topic, and presents a strong sense of her own personal feelings about the issues she addresses. Her talk is clearly organised, and indeed she marks steps in her evolving argument, but the organisation at a micro level is slightly less effective because of the long speech sentences she uses, often linked by 'and then'. Although she has a notebook, she is actually speaking without the support of an outline structure; it might have helped her if she had had one.

She has a range of vocabulary ('aspiring to marry') but is not always sophisticated in her expression ('other sorts of romance books like that'). She listens to questions and responds formally with some elaboration of further ideas. She demonstrates confident use of spoken English.

There are times when Beth hits the descriptors for Distinction, especially in her engagement with the audience, but she does not do so in all areas, especially the strands which refer to vocabulary and structure. For that reason she is awarded a **Merit**.

5. Phoebe

This scenario has been designed to show that there can be an element of role-playing in the establishment of the presentation, and that use of other material from the English syllabus – in this case literary reading – can be also be used. Here Phoebe is taking part in a radio chat show called 'Book of the Week' and is discussing 'Mr Pip' by Lloyd Jones.

Inevitably with this format, Phoebe mainly responds to questions, but she does begin by giving an overview of the novel. She confidently conveys information and emphasises challenging points and issues.

She is enthusiastic and detailed in her responses, working well within the fictional format of the radio programme. The presentation is shaped by some searching questions and her ability, on the whole, to make suitably challenging and detailed responses which meet the needs of the radio audience. She certainly achieves the purpose of the presentation.

Her vocabulary is appropriate, controlled and effective, but not sophisticated enough for a Distinction. She confidently uses spoken English throughout.

She is awarded **Merit**.

6. Rory

Rory give a presentation on medical ethics, especially focusing on the issue of stem cell research.

Rory starts by structuring a challenging topic which is well organised in terms of its ideas, but there is a sense that his final personal view comes rather late and as something of a surprise. He is in command of his material and he uses language and vocabulary confidently. He also uses some rhetorical techniques.

He should not here be seen as reading a script, as clearly he says far more than could be contained on a cue card, but he does as part of his overall performance tend to look down quite frequently. As a result his engagement with the audience might be seen as rather detached, although his very serious demeanor is suited to the topic.

When questioned, he listens and responds thoughtfully but there is a sense that perhaps he could extend his answers a bit further.

Although he has many strengths, he is better described as ‘engaging with the audience’ rather than ‘using an effective range of strategies’. For this reason he is awarded **Merit**.

7. Zain

Zain presents to a group of his classmates on the topic of racism.

Zain launches directly into the topic, expressing straightforward ideas and gives some opinions. He links ideas in a simple way, and so clearly makes an attempt to organise and structure his talk. He has done some research into the background of his topic. His reference to himself and his own experience shows an attempt to meet the needs of his audience.

He uses appropriate spoken English and there are times when his vocabulary -‘fascist ideology’- goes beyond being straightforward. He also uses some rhetorical methods, such as use of questions. He closes his presentation rather abruptly, but then listens to questions/comments and provides an appropriate response when questioned directly. His final plosive shows how hard he has tried.

He hits all the criteria for pass and is beginning to move in to merit. For this performance he is awarded **Pass**.

8. Mofaiza

Mofaiza makes a presentation to college staff and students on the challenges she has faced since moving to the UK from Pakistan 18 months ago.

Mofaiza presents us with some issues around how we fairly assess students for whom English is not their first language. She has lived in East London for 18 months and we are seeing progress here in her English, but not completion. At this stage there are some particular issues with spoken English grammar, most noticeably around the more complex grammatical functions delivered by prepositions and adverbs.

She has planned the structure of her talk but unsurprisingly it comes across as slightly stilted as she is not yet fully used to speaking English. There are, though, some examples of a competent range of vocabulary. She makes relevant and extended contributions usually being able to voice her ideas cogently. She clearly has presence, and so meets audience needs, but at times loses some coherence at sentence level.

She listens carefully to questions and provides appropriate responses.

It is clear that Mofaiza is making progress with her English, and the content of her talk shows that she has ambitions to succeed. As things stand here, though, we can say that she generally uses appropriate spoken English and that in an overall sense she is heard and understood. For these reasons she can be seen to fulfill the **Pass** criteria.

9. Jamie

Jamie, accompanied by his teacher, presents to the class on the problem of overseas players in English football.

His opening comments show an attempt to organise and structure his short talk. His ideas are straightforward and supported by some research on informational data. It is legitimate that he reads this data.

Although he does not as such use rhetorical methods, his speech is very clear, and to this extent he makes an attempt to meet the needs of his audience.

He is best when responding to questions, developing his answers with some detail. The teacher's question pushes him and he responds well to it. He generally uses appropriate spoken English.

He hits all the criteria for **Pass**.

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LINACRE HOUSE, JORDAN HILL, OXFORD, OX2 8TA
UNITED KINGDOM
enquiries@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk
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