GCSE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Marking guidance

Maximum mark: 80

Use best fit to select the band and the mark. Credit valid alternative readings supported by the text.

Question 01 [4 marks]

Read again the first part of Source A, from lines 1 to 13. Choose four statements below which are true.

Correct statements: A, C, E, G. Award one mark for each correct selection.

For this practice paper, if more than four boxes remain selected, subtract one mark for each selection beyond four from the number of correct selections, with a minimum of zero. For example, four correct selections among five selected boxes earns 3 marks.

Question 02 [8 marks]

You need to refer to Source A and Source B for this question. Both sources describe travelling by railway. What can you infer about the differences between the travellers' experiences of the railway in Source A and Source B?

Source A presents a familiar system on which people rely for daily commitments, so failure creates uncertainty and cost. Kemble encounters a new technology on a guided excursion and responds with excited curiosity.

The modern passenger may be physically still but mentally occupied with disrupted arrangements; Kemble's movement becomes magical and her attention expands to engineering and landscape. Support inferences with details from both sources.

Do not reduce Source A to wholly negative or Kemble to wholly uncritical: the modern writer recognises wonder, while Kemble offers practical explanations of operation and construction. The question still asks for differences, supported by both texts. Apply AO1 bands for 8 marks.

Question 03 [12 marks]

You now need to refer only to Source A, from lines 26 to 32. How does the writer use language to convey the frustration caused by unclear information?

The paradox that silence makes a platform longer conveys a psychological stretching of waiting rather than a literal change.

The image of towers of guesswork suggests a fragile accumulation of assumptions. The repeated perhaps clauses enact repeated uncertainty and shifting plans.

The maze metaphor presents confusing information as an additional obstacle. The final opposition between participants and objects stored by a track criticises dehumanising treatment and appeals to dignity. Reward precise analysis within the range; apply AO2 bands for 12 marks.

Question 04 [16 marks]

For this question, you need to refer to the whole of Source A together with the whole of Source B. Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives about railway travel.

Compare the mixed modern perspective with Kemble's delight rather than claiming a simple negative/positive opposition. Source A sets admiration beside a demand for reliable, inclusive service; Kemble expresses wonder at a developing invention and admiration for its engineering.

Source A moves between everyday examples, concession, imagery and direct questions to persuade. Kemble's intimate address to a friend, explanatory detail, sustained animal metaphor and fairy-tale comparison convey excitement while making unfamiliar machinery understandable.

Both make the abstract achievement human: modern passengers' obligations matter, while Kemble gives the engine bodily qualities and highlights Stephenson's problem solving. Their endings value different measures of success: dependable arrival and the overcoming of physical obstacles. Credit alternative supported comparisons; apply AO3 bands for 16 marks.

Question 05 [40 marks]

"Reliable public transport would improve everyday life more than almost any other change to our local area." Write an article for a local news website in which you argue your point of view on this statement.

Mark the response as an independent piece of transactional writing addressed to the audience and purpose in the task. There is no required viewpoint and no need to repeat either source.

AO5, 24 marks: assess communication, audience, purpose, register, development and organisation. Indicative bands: 1-6, a simple or fragmentary position with limited development; 7-12, some shaped argument and audience awareness but uneven control; 13-18, clear, developed and persuasive writing with purposeful organisation; 19-24, an assured, engaging argument whose ideas and effects are controlled throughout.

AO6, 16 marks: assess sentences, grammar, punctuation and spelling independently. Indicative bands: 1-4, frequent errors and limited control; 5-8, some accurate patterns with variable security; 9-12, generally secure accuracy and a purposeful range of structures; 13-16, sustained technical control, flexible sentence choices and highly secure accuracy. Occasional slips do not automatically exclude the top band.

Award 0 in either assessment objective if there is no relevant evidence for it. Select a best-fit band and place the response within it. Do not allocate marks by counting techniques, paragraphs or impressive words. These original notes support classroom moderation; they are not an official standardised mark scheme.

Exam Stash, Original contemporary opinion article (2026).

Fanny Kemble, Records of a Girlhood (letter of 1830) (1879).