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 12. 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 being in a town or city at night. What can you infer about the differences between the experiences of people outdoors at night in Source A and Source B?

Infer differences rather than simply listing facts: Source A emphasises necessary journeys shaped by shifts and transport, while Dickens chooses to walk because he cannot sleep and learns about those without a home.

Source A's people may find facilities unavailable despite commercial lighting; Dickens initially finds company in movement and late businesses, then longs for any sign of wakefulness. Support each inference with precise evidence from both sources.

Distinguish the modern writer's imagined examples and general argument from Dickens's first-person account. Neither text supports claiming that all people outdoors are homeless or that every traveller feels the same. Apply AO1 inference bands by best fit.

Question 03 [12 marks]

You now need to refer only to Source A, from lines 25 to 30. How does the writer use language to present the town as a living community?

The extended metaphor of the heart and other pulses gives the town a life beyond its shops. The counterclaim questions a commercial definition of community.

The three ordinary sounds make late workers and travellers perceptible; quieter rhythms value activity easily overlooked.

The contrast between a shop window and a shared room changes the town from something displayed or sold to a space inhabited together. The final homecoming image supports inclusion. Reward effects, not a count of metaphors; 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 town or city life at night.

Compare perspectives throughout rather than writing two disconnected summaries. The modern writer argues for practical provision and dignity; Dickens records fascination that develops into sympathetic awareness and a longing for company.

Source A uses hypothetical people, questions, concessions and an extended communal metaphor to make a public argument. Dickens uses first-person witness, a restless-city personification and the shifting experience of Houselessness to make the night feel social and then lonely.

The modern ending measures welcome by what remains available; Dickens's ending seeks any light or movement. Both value company or provision, but their purposes and narrative positions differ. Credit other supported comparisons; apply AO3 bands for 16 marks.

Question 05 [40 marks]

"Public spaces should serve people after the shops close, not just while they are spending money." Write a letter to your local council 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).

Charles Dickens, Night Walks (1860).