



2012 English

Intermediate 2 – Close Reading

Finalised Marking Instructions

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English – Intermediate 2
Close Reading
Marking Key

1. Look at lines 1 – 3, and then explain **in your own words** what is meant by tennis players being “a funny bunch”. **1 U**
- odd/strange/curious/eccentric – ie not comical/amusing*
2. Consider the first two sentences of the second paragraph (lines 4 – 6), and then show how any example of the writer’s **word choice** here reveals what his attitude to “top players” is. **2 U**
- Any one of “beloved”, “bizarre”, “twists” or “(poor) dears” (1)
suggests (eg) amusement/condescension/wonderment/lack of sympathy /
mockery OR any other acceptable comment **on the chosen example** (1)*
3. Explain why the paragraph in lines 11 and 12 works well at this point as a link of the ideas in the passage. **2 A**
- “(these multifarious) superstitions” or “(not only about) humanity”
looks back to the ideas of the first two paragraphs (1);
“of deeper importance” anticipates more serious ideas which follow
or
“other species” anticipates following ideas (about pigeons) (1)
OR
“not only (about humanity)” (1)
signals a diversion (1)
OR
the question the sentence asks (1)
is then answered (1)*
4. Explain **in your own words** why the writer can feel confident about using B. F. Skinner (see line 15) to support his claims about pigeons. **1 U**
- Glosses of “widely regarded” (eg seen by many people/well-known/respected)
or “father (of modern psychology)” (eg an innovative/authoritative figure)
OR
Skinner used pigeons in his experiments*
5. Explain how effective you find the writer’s use of the **image** or **metaphor** “groundbreaking” (line 17) to refer to Skinner’s experiment. **1 E**
- It (clearly) conveys the innovative nature of the experiment/he was doing
something new;
accept adverse comment that the expression may be perceived as a cliché*
6. Look at lines 24 – 30, and then explain fully and **in your own words** what “the connection” was. **3 U**
- Both the pigeons and the tennis player (1)
(wrongly) thought their actions (1)
were linked to the consequences (1)*

7. What is the effect of the inclusion of the sentence “They were, unfortunately, unavailable for interview” (lines 34 – 35)? 1 A
- It adds /contributes to the humour/sceptical tone of the passage*
8. Why does the writer include the reference to Harvard University (line 39)? 1 A
- (To show that)
intelligent people can be superstitious too/superstition is not just the preserve of “the silly and gullible”*
9. Explain the humour of “something that really got up the noses of his team-mates” (line 45). 2 A
- There is the (literal) sense of being malodorous (1)
and the (figurative) sense of being annoying (1)
OR
The pun/double meaning/play on words (1) of (literal and figurative)
senses of being malodorous and being annoying (1)*
10. Look again at lines 52 – 56.
- (a) How do these lines relate to the ideas the writer presents in the previous paragraph? 2 A
- They give an example/provide an illustration (1)
which addresses the reason(s) for superstition/
continues the idea of “deep evolutionary history” (1)*
- (b) What is surprising about the expression “to get his five-a-day” (line 56)? 2 A
- This is a modern/idealistic notion (1)
In a very old/more brutal context (1)
Condensed answer explaining incongruity/anachronism
(eg “cavemen wouldn’t know about five-a-day”) = 2*
11. Explain **in your own words** what the “huge evolutionary benefits” (line 59) of superstitions are. 2 U
- Gloss of “providing a cocoon of safety in a turbulent and dangerous world”:
eg they insulate/shield/shelter/protect (1)
in unstable/risky/perilous/unsettled circumstances (1)
OR
gloss of “The caveman’s behaviour now looks not only sensible but life-saving”
eg being superstitious can make you cautious (1) and (therefore) more likely to survive (1)*
12. Explain the writer’s use of a colon in line 61. 1 A
- It introduces an expansion or explanation (of what the “proviso” is).*

13. Look again at lines 63 – 69, in which the writer examines the nature of superstition nowadays.
- (a) Explain **in your own words** the points the writer makes. **2 U**
- People (still) indulge in superstition (in various situations) (1)*
But it has little influence/(beneficial) effect/is harmless (1)
- (b) How does the **sentence structure** reinforce the ideas the writer is putting forward? **1 A**
- Idea of similarity of construction/repetition/triplet of “some... but”*
 OR
comparability of relationship indicated/implied by use of semi-colons
(N.B. not identification of semi-colon alone)
14. Explain how effective you find the word “spectrum” (line 71) as an **image** or **metaphor** to illustrate people’s “irrationality”. **2 E**
- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>It is appropriate because</i> | <i>Just as a spectrum contains a whole range/variety/scale (of colours) (1)</i> | <i>so there is a (wide) range of superstitions/(illogical) behaviours/perceptions/beliefs (1)</i> |
| <i>It is inappropriate because</i> | <i>the (bright) colour imagery implied (1)</i> | <i>is not apt or fitting or helpful to describe/illustrate the (melancholy) subject (1)</i> |
- Award one mark for a claim that the expression is a cliché*
15. Why does the writer include the anecdote about the footballer Kolo Touré (lines 72 – 77)? **2 A**
- It illustrates his point about the range of “irrationality” (1)*
by providing an extreme example of superstition (1)
 OR
It illustrates his point that superstition taken to excess/dogmatically insisted upon (1)
has an unhelpful/deleterious effect/outcome (1)
 OR
He is using reference to a team game (1)
to show the influence of superstition on others (1)
- He is using someone famous to help the reader connect = 1*

16. How effective do you find any aspect of the final paragraph (lines 78 – 79) as a conclusion to the passage?

Your answer might deal with such features as **word choice** or **tone**.

2 E

*The reference to the elements of help and hindrance (1)
(neatly) recaps the idea of ambivalence explored elsewhere
in the passage (1)*

OR

“ritual” (1)

*(tellingly) repeats a (significant) word used earlier/repeated (three times)
earlier in the passage (1)*

OR

(metaphor) “kick (the ritual into touch)” (1)

(neatly) reprises references to football/sport used earlier (1)

OR

*“a rabbit’s foot” is (clearly) associated with superstition (1)
which is the article’s topic (1)*

OR

“With a rabbit’s foot, obviously” (1)

*(adroitly) reprises the cynical/sceptical/humorous tone seen
elsewhere (1)*

U = 11; A = 14; E = 5

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]