FREE PAPER 1 · SEPARATE ANSWERS

Local G.C.E. O/L English

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EWS practice marking guide. Format review: original DoE papers 2020–2025; latest task sequence 2025. EWS rubrics below are teaching rubrics, not an official DoE marking scheme.

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Paper I · 40 marks

Test 1 (5 × 1): 1 D; 2 B; 3 E; 4 F; 5 C.
Test 2 (5 × 1): 1 fresh; 2 enough; 3 before; 4 clean; 5 regularly.
Test 3 (10 × ½): 1 gate; 2 boy; 3 watering; 4 flowers; 5 tree; 6 teacher; 7 bench; 8 basket; 9 birds; 10 path.
Test 4 (5 × 1): 1 on; 2 at; 3 with; 4 During/during; 5 for.
Test 5 (5 × 1): 1 about twenty thousand / 20,000; 2 English and Tamil (both needed); 3 cool and rainy (both); 4 rice with vegetables and beans; 5 woven/reed baskets. Accept accurate equivalents.

Test 6 · Notice model (5 marks)

NOTICE
School-Garden Clean-Up
Grade 11 pupils are invited to join our clean-up on 7 November at 8 a.m. Please meet beside the science room. Bring gardening gloves and a reusable water bottle. We will work in groups under teacher supervision. Help us keep our school green.
Secretary, Environment Club

Teaching allocation: content2 (relevant arrangements and notice purpose); language 3 (clear vocabulary and grammar). Accept other plausible dates/details and wording. About 40–50 words is a guide; assess communication, not a mechanical count.

Test 7 (5 × 1): 1 a; 2 b; 3 c; 4 a; 5 b.

Writing models and Paper II keys

Test 8 · Two alternative models (5 marks)

(a) I enjoy vegetable fried rice because it is colourful and easy to share. My father makes it with carrots, beans and a little egg. We usually eat it on Sunday evenings. I help wash the vegetables before he cooks. A bowl of fresh fruit afterwards makes the meal even better.

(b) Last month our class organised a book exchange at school. Each pupil brought a book in good condition. We displayed the books on tables and explained our favourites to younger children. Everyone could borrow something different. I enjoyed recommending a story to a shy pupil, who later returned to tell me she liked it.

Teaching allocation: content2; language 3. Accept either topic and original personal experiences.

Paper II · Closed answers

Test 9 (5 × 1): 1 information; 2 check; 3 received; 4 concern; 5 result.
Test 10 (5 × 1): 1 opens; 2 arrived; 3 was arranging; 4 had finished; 5 will hold / is going to hold (planned future).
Test 11 (14 × ½): 1 books; 2 had; 3 it; 4 because; 5 read; 6 old; 7 wooden; 8 began; 9 later; 10 could; 11 time; 12 they; 13 every; 14 library. Extra: more.
Test 12 (5 × 1): 1 c; 2 b; 3 c; 4 a; 5 c.
Test 13 (5 × 1): 1 D; 2 E; 3 B; 4 A; 5 C. Extra: F.

Test 15 · Reading key (8 marks)

1(a) True; (b) False; (c) False; (d) True (½ each =2).
2 a (1); 3 b (1); 4 c (1).
5 The volunteers (1).
6(a) iii, gave (1); 6(b) ii, helpful efforts or gifts (1).

For constructed answers, accept accurate meaning without unnecessary extra wording. Avoid deducting the same minor error twice.

Test 14 · Alternative models

(a) Formal enquiry/complaint letter

24 Lake Road
Battaramulla
20 October 2026
The Manager
Bright Books
Colombo
Dear Sir or Madam,
Wrong book received – order BB214
On 12 October I ordered your English Revision Guide for Grade 11 and paid Rs.900 by bank transfer. However, the parcel delivered yesterday contained a Grade 8 science book. I need the correct guide for my revision next month. Please arrange a replacement and explain how I should return the incorrect item without paying another delivery fee. I have kept the receipt and packaging. I would appreciate your reply within three working days.
Yours faithfully,
N. Perera

(b) Chart description

The bar chart shows how 100 Grade 11 pupils travel to school. The bus is the most common form of transport, used by 45 pupils. Walking comes next, with 30 pupils, whereas 15 travel by bicycle. Only 10 use a car, making it the least common choice. There are 15 more bus users than walkers. The number who walk is twice the number who cycle. Together, walking and cycling account for 45 pupils, which equals the number travelling by bus. Overall, the survey suggests that most pupils rely on buses or travel to school without using a private car.

Teaching allocation for either option (10): content 3; language 3; organisation 2; mechanics 2. For the letter, credit order details, error and suitable requested action. For chart, credit accurately selected figures and comparisons; do not reward invented causes as chart facts.

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Test 16 · Article and Essay

Illustrative original responses. Candidates write ONE option, not all four.

Article

A Better School Starts with Us

A better school is not simply a school with new buildings. It is a place where every pupil feels safe, respected and able to learn. Small changes can make that possible.

First, we should keep classrooms and shared spaces clean. Clearly labelled bins and a class duty rota would help, but pupils must also take responsibility for their own waste. A quiet reading corner could give children somewhere to study during break.

Next, we need to listen to one another. A suggestion box and regular class discussions would allow pupils to raise problems politely. Older pupils could help new students find their classrooms and understand school routines.

Inclusion must be part of every plan. Paths should be easy to use, notices should be clear, and activities should offer different ways to take part. We should ask pupils who need support what would help them, rather than making decisions for them.

These improvements need cooperation among pupils, teachers and families. We could begin with one achievable project, review it after a month and improve it together. A welcoming school grows through everyday actions, not only through expensive plans.

Essay

Learning with Others

Although working alone can be peaceful, I prefer learning a new skill with other people. A well-organised group offers encouragement, useful feedback and different ways of solving a problem.

When I began learning to speak English, I could read exercises by myself, but I needed a partner to practise real conversations. My friend noticed words I pronounced unclearly, while I helped him form questions. Neither of us had to feel embarrassed because we were both learning.

Group learning also helps when motivation is low. An agreed practice time makes it harder to postpone work. Watching someone overcome a difficulty can show us that progress is possible. Moreover, explaining an idea to another learner often reveals gaps in our own understanding.

There are disadvantages. A noisy group may waste time, and a confident member may speak for everyone. Clear roles, short tasks and respectful turn-taking can reduce these problems. Learners still need some individual practice to reflect and remember.

For these reasons, I would choose a small, supportive group for learning a new skill. Working with others does not remove personal effort; it gives that effort direction and helps turn mistakes into shared opportunities.

Test 16 · Speech and Story

Illustrative original responses. Candidates write ONE option, not all four.

Speech

Good afternoon, teacher and friends.
When we hear the word environment, we often imagine a distant forest or a wide ocean. Yet our environment also includes the drain outside our gate, the trees beside our school and the stream through our neighbourhood. Protecting these places is something we can begin today.
Small daily choices matter. Carrying a reusable bottle reduces waste. Sorting rubbish properly helps keep drains clear. Saving water and switching off unnecessary lights avoid waste without requiring expensive equipment.
However, action must be safe and informed. We should never enter polluted water or collect dangerous objects alone. Instead, we can report problems to a responsible adult and join supervised activities. Planting a suitable local tree is useful only if someone also cares for it afterwards.
Young people can encourage change by asking questions and setting an example. Our school could record how much waste it produces, try one improvement and compare the results a month later. That would show whether our effort is working.
Friends, we do not have to solve every environmental problem at once. Let us choose one realistic action, do it consistently and invite others to join us. The place we protect today will support the people who live here tomorrow. Thank you.

Story

The Bag Beside the Bus Stop
On Tuesday afternoon, Amaya noticed a blue bag beside the bus stop. Her friends had already walked ahead, but she called them back. The bag was heavy and its owner was nowhere in sight.
“Someone has forgotten it,” said Kavindu. “Let us open it and find a phone number.”
Amaya hesitated. They did not know what was inside, and the road was busy. Another friend suggested leaving it where it was. Amaya thought of her own mother worrying over a lost bag. She wanted to help without taking a risk.
A teacher was still standing near the school gate. Amaya asked her for help, and the teacher contacted the nearby police post. The children waited at a safe distance while an officer dealt with the bag.
Before long, a woman hurried back along the pavement. She described the bag and explained that it held documents for her new job. The officer checked her details before returning it.
The woman thanked the children, but Amaya looked at her friends. “We did not need to solve it alone,” she said. Kavindu nodded. The next day, their class discussed what to do when finding lost property. A small decision had become a lesson everyone could use.

Marking and format record

Test 16 · EWS teaching rubric (15 marks)

Content 5; language 5; organisation 2; mechanics 3. Assess the whole response. Reward relevant development, clear paragraphs and an appropriate article/essay/speech/story voice. The models illustrate possibilities, not memorised answers or an official mark allocation.

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Structure used

Paper I · 1 hour	Paper II · 2 hours
Tests1–8: 5 marks each =40	Tests9–16: 5+5+7+5+5+10+8+15 =60
Notice40–50; paragraph50–60 words	Test 14 about 100; Test 16 about 200 words

Sources: Original Sri Lankan DoE English Language papers for exam years 2020,2021,2022,2023,2024,2025 were consulted for structure. Some are scans from public mirrors; exact source URLs and hashes are held in the EWS maintenance record. No past-paper passage has been reproduced as an original EWS task.

The 2021 paper offered a dialogue as one Test 16 option; the latest 2025 paper offered article, essay, speech and story. This model follows the latest four types. Dialogue practice remains useful supplementary learning; it is not a prediction of the next examination.

Both papers together total 100 marks. This model samples the examination skills; no single model can certify complete syllabus mastery. Confirm official examination dates through the Department of Examinations and your school.

Feedback after marking

Record strengths and two specific next steps. Re-read any passage answer using evidence from the text. Correct grammar in context, then write a new example. Rewrite one weak writing paragraph after feedback. Use a fresh paper for the next timed attempt.

Paper 1 and this answer guide are always free. Later paid local O/L FINAL examination packs: five Rs.1,000; ten Rs.1,500, only when complete and released.