

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

COMPONENT 2 ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT MATERIALS SET 3

SECTION A: 40 MARKS

The separate resource material for use with section A is a newspaper article, 'Au pairs on a pittance: the young women minding kids for £2 an hour', by Zoe Williams.

The extract is a letter published in a newspaper in 1893 from a reader, Mrs Venables.

Read the newspaper article 'Au pairs on a pittance' by Zoe Williams in the separate resource material.

- 1.1 (a) How much were au pairs paid in the 1980s? [1]
- (b) How many au pairs are there in Britain now? [1]
- (c) Which college conducted research into the pay of au pairs? [1]
- 1.2 How does Zoe Williams persuade us that au pairs are treated unfairly by their employers?
- You should comment on:
- what she says about how they are treated
 - Williams' use of language, tone and structure
 - any other methods she uses to show that au pairs are treated unfairly [10]

To answer the following questions you will need to read the extract by Mrs Venables.

- 1.3 (a) What hours do servants generally work? [1]
- (b) What often happens to servants who are too ill to work? [1]
- (c) How much do servants get paid? [1]

1.4 Mrs Venables has strong views about young female servants and their working lives. How far do you agree with this statement?

You should comment on:

- what is said
- how it is said [10]

To answer the following questions you will need to use both texts.

1.5 Using information from both texts, explain the arrangements for the young women to eat and sleep in their employer's house. [4]

1.6 Both of these texts are about women who are employed to work in family homes.

Compare the following:

- the writers' views of these women and the work they do
- how they get their views across to the reader [10]

You must use the text to support your comments and make it clear which text you are referring to.

In the late 1800s there was concern about the way some employers treated their servants, who worked for them and lived with them, although others felt these concerns were exaggerated. Here is one letter by a Mrs Venables, who had servants of her own, written in reply to a newspaper article.

Letters to the Editor

Sir – In the last edition of your newspaper there is an account, much exaggerated in my opinion, of the lives of domestic servants in certain homes in London that suggests these girls are not treated well by those they work for. “The hours these girls work,” we read, “are generally from 9 a.m. till 8 p.m., and very often till 10 or 10.30.” There is nothing wrong with working hard, I say. The article continues, “No allowance whatever is made for even an hour’s illness, and should a girl send a message in the morning saying she cannot lift her head with a headache, or any illness, the head of the house will instantly let her go, then advertise for another for the miserable pay of five shillings a week.” Quite right in my view: a good girl will have nothing to do with such petty complaints, and there is nothing worse than a servant who uses a list of trivial ailments to avoid her duties. According to the account, the rooms in which they have to live are “overcrowded”. Poor dears – do they not expect to have to share a room? We are told, if we are to believe it, that in one place the servants’ meals had to be taken “in a tiny, filthy, and draughty back kitchen, full of black beetles and bad smells.” Such exaggeration must not be allowed to go unchallenged; on special occasions I even allow my servants to eat in our dining room once we have finished with it for the evening and I am sure this must be the case elsewhere.

I cannot believe the life of a servant these days is as hard on these girls as this account makes out; else why do they choose this work, when so many other fields of industry are without workers? The cry for domestic servants is heard more loudly every day. I am unable to find servants to work in my house, even if I offer seven shillings a week – more than enough in these times, especially with one afternoon’s holiday every week. Surely domestic service is not quite such slavery as girls imagine it to be?

Starting work as a servant brings, perhaps, some hard work – like most other new jobs. But it is certainly in every young woman’s power, if she be steady and industrious, to rise to good jobs with generous wages. If servants would only be loyal and faithful workers, they would, I am sure, as in olden times, be valued friends. It is the restlessness of the present day that often ruins a young girl’s career. How can a mistress care for a servant who leaves her at the end of a year just because she wants a change?

February 20, 1893

MRS VENABLES THE VICARAGE, CARLTON, NR BARNESLEY, YORKS W.R.

GCSE

C700U20-1A

ENGLISH LANGUAGE – Component 2

**19th and 21st Century Non-Fiction Reading and
Transactional/Persuasive Writing**

RESOURCE MATERIAL FOR USE WITH SECTION A

Au pairs on a pittance: the young women minding kids for £2 an hour



An au pair is usually a young woman living in someone else's family home who works for some pay in exchange for helping around the house. There are tens of thousands of au pairs in Britain, many of them working long hours for low pay. **Zoe Williams** investigates.

In the 1950s an au pair was seen as a cross between a helpful teenage daughter and a foreign exchange student who stayed with the family. In those days the father worked and the mother stayed at home to run the house and look after the children. An au pair employed by the family would help out with a little light domestic work—some help with the ironing, a little cleaning and washing-up perhaps. She was never expected to be a nanny, looking after pre-school kids on her own and it was generally understood she wouldn't be expected to work more than four hours a day. She was given some pay, meals and a room in the house.

When I was a kid in the 1980s our au pairs were paid about £70 a week and I remembered thinking that even then it didn't sound like very much for someone who was living with us and working almost every day of the week. Since then the demand for au pairs has increased – there are an estimated 90,000 in Britain – but so have the expectations of the kinds of work they should do. These days it seems almost expected that the au pair will look after the parents' pre-school children through the day while the mother goes out to work. The demands and the hours of the au pair's work have grown enormously but many are earning little more, if anything, than au pairs were earning in the 1980s.

Research conducted by Birkbeck College in London has found women work 40 or 50 hours a week for less than £2 an hour, doing the job of a full-time nanny, or in an ideal world, two nannies (because looking after a baby with two other young children in the house is definitely not `light domestic work`). I have spoken to one au pair whose family, a wealthy couple who both work in banking and finance, leaves her with two under-five children all day, but then won't let her use the kitchen after 7pm. For £80 a week! Another au pair told me that she had lived with a family but wasn't allowed to eat meals with them. She said she felt she was being treated like a Victorian servant. When I spoke to Daniela, a 26-year-old from Romania, she told me she had worked for a family, getting up at 7.00am every morning to cook breakfast for two teenage kids, and then do eight to ten hours, looking after a four-year-old all day before cooking dinner for the family. She got £120 a week. For a 50-hour week that's less than £3 an hour, or much less than half the minimum wage, even if you included the room in the house she was given and her meals.

The Birkbeck research looked at what families expect from au pairs. One third of them were asking for childcare for children under three and 15% for babies under one year old. The average wage was £110 per week for an average of 40 hours. Some adverts asking for au pairs were only paying £85 a week. This begins to look like modern slavery and it's happening because women are coming from the poor parts of Europe to look for work. Young women from our own country simply wouldn't do this work for the pay they would receive. Lots of these au pairs are coming to Britain to make our working lives possible by looking after our children whilst we go to work. People talk about their children as the most precious thing to them. However, the care for them involves this absolutely hypocritical treatment of the au pairs themselves.

MARK SCHEME

Section A : 40 marks

Read the newspaper article 'Au pairs on a pittance ' by Zoe Williams in the separate resource material.

- 1.1 (a) How much were au pairs paid in the 1980s? [1]
(b) How many au pairs are there in Britain now? [1]
(c) Which college conducted research into the pay of au pairs? [1]

(AO1 1a)

This question tests the ability to identify explicit information.

Award **one mark** for each correct response in (a), (b) and (c).

- (a) About £70 a week (1)
(b) 90,000 (1)
(c) Birkbeck College

1.2. How does Zoe Williams persuade us that au pairs are treated unfairly by their employers?

You should comment on:

- what she says about how they are treated
- Williams' use of language, tone and structure
- any other methods she uses to show that au pairs are treated unfairly [10]

(AO2 1a, b, c and d)

This question tests the ability to explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effect and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

Give 0 marks for responses where there is nothing worthy of credit.

Give 1-2 marks to those who simply identify a few textual details that suggest au pairs are treated unfairly.

Give 3-4 marks to those who identify some of the textual details that show au pairs are treated unfairly.

Give 5-6 marks to those who identify and comment on the examples Williams uses in the text to show au pairs are treated unfairly and begin to show how language, tone and structure are used to achieve effects and influence the reader. These responses will begin to use relevant subject terminology accurately to support their comments.

Give 7-8 marks to those who make accurate comments about how a range of different examples from the text show that au pairs are treated unfairly and show how language, tone and structure are used to achieve effects and influence the reader. Relevant subject terminology is used to support comments effectively.

Give 9-10 marks to those who make accurate and perceptive comments about a wide range of different examples from Williams' text to influence readers' views, and provide detailed analysis of how language and structure are used to achieve effects and influence readers. Accurate use of relevant subject terminology supports comments effectively.

In addition to the points given above, other details candidates may explore or comment on:

- she uses the word 'pittance' to suggest the pay is very poor
- she begins by giving some historical context – suggesting the role of au pairs was merely supportive – and emphasising the limitations on the type of work expected (note the use of adjectives ['a little light domestic work' / 'some help' / 'a little cleaning'])
- she relates her own perceptions of the pay of au pairs in the 1980s - 'it didn't sound like very much' even back then
- and then explains the increased expectations made of au pairs today
- but concludes the second paragraph by saying that in spite of the increased expectations, 'many are earning little more' than in the 1980s
- to support her view she gives research evidence and examples that are intended to shock the reader
- her tone in paragraph 3 is one of outrage (note the simple, emphatic sentence 'For £80 a week!')
- she concludes the paragraph showing the pay is well below the minimum wage – the link with minimum wage is important, as this point is developed in the final paragraph

- the article moves into what is now expected from au pairs and the link to their pay – using facts about payment to emphasise her point about their poor pay
- she uses the expression `modern slavery` to emphasise his view that young women from poor parts of Europe are being exploited
- she says the pay is so poor that women from our own country `simply wouldn't do this work for the pay` - her tone is condemnatory
- she concludes by saying our treatment of au pairs is appalling – using the contrast of our feelings that children are `the most precious thing` with the `hypocritical treatment` of those who now get paid to care for them

This is not a checklist and the question must be marked in levels of response. Look for and reward valid alternatives.

To answer the following questions you will need to read the extract by Mrs Venables.

- 1.3** (a) What hours do servants generally work? [1]
(b) What often happens to servants who are too ill to work? [1]
(c) How much do servants get paid? [1]

(AO1 1a, b, c, d)

This question tests the ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.

Award **one mark** for a correct response:

- (a) from 9 a.m till 8 p.m
(b) The head of the house will instantly let her go / she will be dismissed/sacked (1)
(c) Five shillings a week (1) **or** seven shillings a week (1)

- 1.4 Mrs Venables has strong views about young female servants and their working lives. How far do you agree with this statement?

You should comment on:

- what is said
- how it is said

[10]

(AO4)

This question tests the ability to evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Give 0 marks for responses where there is nothing worthy of credit.

Give 1-2 marks to those who express a simple personal opinion with linked basic textual reference but struggle to engage with the text and/or the question.

Give 3-4 marks to those who give a personal opinion supported by straightforward textual references. These responses will show some interaction with Mrs Venables' views.

Give 5-6 marks to those who give an evaluation of the text supported by appropriate textual references. These responses will show some critical awareness of Mrs Venables' views.

Give 7-8 marks to those who give a critical evaluation of the text and its effects, supported by well-selected textual references. They will show critical awareness and clear understanding of Mrs Venables' views.

Give 9-10 marks to those who give a persuasive evaluation of the text and its effects, supported by convincing, well-selected examples and purposeful textual references. These responses will show engagement and involvement, where candidates take an overview to make perceptive comments about Mrs Venables' views.

Details that candidates may evaluate or respond to:

- her view (in the first sentence) that the account in the newspaper is `much exaggerated` - in particular, candidates may evaluate or comment on:
 - her comment that implies servants' hours are not excessive
 - her view that servants who are ill should be dismissed (`good girls` don't get ill)
 - her view that servants should expect to share a room
- her tone - in the first paragraph it is dismissive
- her dismissal, in the second paragraph, that being a servant is not as hard work as the article implies
- her lament that it is hard to find servants – even at seven shillings a week
- the implication that one afternoon off a week as a holiday represents good working conditions
- her tone – that implies servants have expectations `above their station`
- her suggestion that servants would `rise to good jobs` if they didn't want to look for `change`

This is not a checklist and the question must be marked in levels of response. Look for and reward valid alternatives.

To answer the following questions you will need to use both texts.

1.5 Using information from both texts, explain the arrangements for the young women to eat and sleep in their employer's house. [4]

(AO1 2a and b)

This question tests the ability to select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

Give 0 marks for responses where there is nothing worthy of credit.

Give 1 mark to those who make a limited selection of relevant detail from both texts.

Give 2 marks to those who select a range of relevant material from both texts.

Give 3 marks to those who synthesise with some understanding a range of relevant detail from both texts.

Give 4 marks to those who synthesise with clear understanding and provide an overview drawn from a range of relevant detail from both texts.

Details that candidates may select, explore or respond to:

Williams

- they would be given a room in the house (as part of the way they are paid)
- some au pairs are not allowed to use the kitchen after 7 pm
- some au pairs are not allowed to eat meals with the family

Venables

- they would be expected to share a room in the house / may be overcrowded
- some are expected to take their meals in the kitchen / the kitchen may not be very pleasant
- some are allowed to eat in the dining room on special occasions after the family has finished

This is not a checklist and the question must be marked in levels of response. Look for and reward valid alternatives.

1.6 Both of these texts are about women who are employed to work in family homes.

Compare the following:

- the writers' views of these women and the work they do
- how they get their views across to the reader

[10]

You must use the text to support your comments and make it clear which text you are referring to.

(A03)

This question tests the ability to compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across the two texts.

Give 0 marks for responses where there is nothing worthy of credit.

Give 1-2 marks to those who identify a basic similarity and/or difference in the writers' views about the women and the work they do.

Give 3-4 marks to those who identify some basic similarities and/or differences in the writers' views about the women and the work they do.

Give 5-6 marks to those who identify similarities and differences in the writers' views about the women and the work they do and make some attempt to comment on how the writers make their views clear to their readers.

Give 7-8 marks to those who make detailed comparisons of the writers' views about the women and the work they do and offer some valid comments on how the writers make their views clear to their readers.

Give 9-10 marks to those who make comparisons that are sustained and detailed, showing clear understanding of the writers' views about the women and the work they do and go on to show a clear understanding of the different ways in which the writers make their views clear to their readers.

Details that candidates may explore or respond to:

-the writers' views of these women and the work they do

Williams

- au pairs work very hard for little pay
- there are much-increased expectations of the job of an au pair
- their role is almost always now looking after children / childcare
- they are often treated badly (examples in paragraph 3)
- they are exploited

- Venables
- expects servants to work hard
- good servants are never ill / never have `trivial ailments`

- would be expected to share a room with others
- expects to employ hard-working girls for seven shillings a week
- servants complain too much
- if they are loyal they will become `valued friends`
- too many servants look to change their jobs too often

-how they get their views across to readers

Williams

- she gives a historical context, suggesting their pay has changed little
- she uses facts and figures and research evidence to support her viewpoint
- she comments on some of the facts (`looking after a baby... is definitely not `light work`) – note the use of `definitely` and the inverted commas around `light work`
- she uses short, simple sentence [and an exclamation mark] to emphasise her disgust at the conditions and pay earned by one au pair (`For £80 a week!)
- she uses first-hand examples of au pairs she has met with – and comments on the details, showing her views
- she describes the work as `modern slavery` and calls the treatment of au pairs hypocritical` (she gives her views using strong, condemnatory language)

Venables

- she immediately makes it clear that the article is exaggerating the concerns about domestic servants
- she gives strong, forthright comments (`There is nothing wrong with working hard, I say` ; `Quite right in my view`)
- she is sarcastic about the concerns of servants living in overcrowded conditions (`Poor dears...`)
- she uses the word `slavery` sarcastically/contemptuously
- she tries to sound measured/reasonable at the start of para 4
- she tries to suggest she writes more in sorrow than in anger (`If only servants would be loyal...)

This is not a checklist and the question must be marked in levels of response. Look for and reward valid alternatives.