IGCSE English Language

Question 3
**Summary question**

The question will be in response to a second passage within the exam paper.

You will have to write your content points in notes form and then construct a summary using continuous prose of approximately 100-150 words.

This question tests the following reading assessment objectives (10 marks)

R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings
R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes
R5 select for specific purposes

The question also tests the following writing assessment objectives

W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
W2 sequence facts, ideas and opinions
W3 use a range of appropriate vocabulary

There are a number of steps you should take in order to construct a successful response:

**Step 1: Read the question carefully.**

You will not be asked to summarise the entire passage so be clear on what it is you are being asked to summarise so you can focus in on the key parts of the text.

**Step 2: Read through the passage a number of times.**

On the first reading, simply get a feel for the text in its entirety. On the second reading, begin to highlight what you think will be the key information needed to respond to the question successfully. If you are being asked to summarise two points, use two distinct highlighters so you are clear which bits of information go into which section of your response. On the third reading, check that the pieces of information you have highlighted are key in helping you to answer the actual question.

**Step 3: Make notes in your own words.**

Make rough notes of the points you have identified – paraphrase parts of the text, use synonyms, begin to connect similar bits of information

**Step 4: Count the main points.**
How many points do you have? Therefore, how many words can you use for each point? (Too often, students use too many words for their first point, leaving too few words to be able to successfully make a range of points!)

**Step 5: Write the summary**

**Step 6: Proof-read.**

Make sure your summary makes sense. Check that you have covered a range of points and hit the word count.

Now let’s try this for ourselves

**Summary question 1 – taken from www.cie.org.uk**

Read carefully Passage B, Unicorns and Yetis, and then answer Question 3(a) and (b).

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**Passage B: Unicorns and Yetis**

*This passage from a website describes the history of two creatures generally believed to be mythical.*

The historical existence of the unicorn is an idea which is easy to accept. Its resemblance to actual animals, such as horses and antelopes, gives it an almost common-sense appeal, and the creature exerts a powerful attraction in numerous popular cultures. The first reports of the unicorn were found in works of ancient Greek history from 2,400 years ago, while eastern cultures recorded details of one-horned animals during the era of Genghis Khan.

Thorough research into contemporary wildlife has not supported the possibility of creatures with the characteristics of a unicorn, but to the present day, sightings of unicorns are reported from Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya. In 1987, Robert Vavra took an expedition there to find the mythical beast and became famous when he published his sensational diary, complete with photographs, claiming that with the help of Masai warriors he had tracked it down. Many people want to believe him.
The other well-known mythical creature is the yeti. For fifty years the snowy wastes of the Himalayas have beckoned intrepid explorers in search of the mysterious animal also known as the ‘abominable snowman.’ Occasional sightings of large hairy creatures walking on two legs across the snows or in the forested valleys of Nepal and Tibet have kept the legend alive. Conclusive evidence of the creatures’ existence has proven elusive, however. The picture of a large, wide footprint, taken by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1951 while climbing Mount Everest, proves nothing.

Since that time a number of yeti ‘relics’ have turned up. In 1960, western visitors to a Nepalese monastery were astonished to find monks using a ‘yeti scalp’ in some of their rituals. Analysis of the red hairs, however, showed that they had originated from a mountain goat. A different monastery presented a severed hand, obviously from a primate, as evidence that some kind of ape man was still wandering the mountain fortresses of the Himalayas. The hand could, of course, have come from anywhere – and it vanished in 1991. Finally, there have been rumours, started by travellers, of huge mummified bodies of yeti preserved in even more remote monasteries. These turned out to be fakes, or were no longer where they were supposed to be. However, belief in the existence of the ‘wild man of the snows’ is still real enough among the locals. What could account for this?

A popular theory among zoologists is that the idea of the yeti is based upon handed-down memories of apes, possibly orang-utans, which may have lived in the mountain forests of this region in the distant past. Some argue that a few of these apes still survive in small numbers, just occasionally spotted crossing a snowfield from one valley to another. Reinhold Messner, one of the world’s foremost mountaineers, believes that the legend is based upon a real but little-known animal that inhabited the forests of eastern Tibet. This was the area the Sherpas once lived in before migrating to present-day Nepal, so they may have taken with them their traditional stories.

Messner decided to investigate the yeti for himself, so in 1986 he retraced the Sherpas’ migratory route in eastern Tibet. In his book he describes a terrifying night hiking through the forest, haunted by the strange whistling cries of a creature he was later to see. Several times a tall biped with long arms ran across his path. Eventually the creature stood in front of him, raising itself to full height before running off on all fours at incredible speed into the woods. When Messner reached a settlement, he was told by the villagers that he had seen a ‘chemo’, a Tibetan name for a yeti. This encounter took place in the heart of the area from which the Sherpas had brought their yeti stories, so the large, hairy, ape-like man may just be a Tibetan bear, transformed by Sherpa legend into something more.
Question 3
Answer the questions in the order set.

(a) Notes

What are the reasons for not believing in the existence of unicorns and yetis, according to Passage B?

Write your answer using short notes. Write one point per line.

You do not need to use your own words.

Up to 15 marks are available for the content of your answer.

The notes sheet is on the next page.
The reasons for not believing in the existence of unicorns and yetis:

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Now, compare your answers with the answers listed below

1. Appeal / acceptability of idea
2. Similarity to / confusion with real animals
3. Power of popular culture
4. Ancient traditional belief
5. Research not supportive of possibility
6. Authors seek fame / commercial success
7. People want to believe
8. Travellers keep legend alive
9. Lack of evidence
10. Photo of footprint inconclusive
11. Ritual hair belonged to a goat
12. Primate hand of unknown origin
13. Mummified bodies fake / not traceable
14. Apes formerly inhabited region
15. Little-known local animals
16. Sherpa stories
17. Resembles a bear
18. Legends exaggerate / distort facts

How many of the points above did you originally get in your notes? Give yourself a mark out of 12.

(b) Summary

Now use your notes to write a summary of what Passage B tells you about the reasons for not believing in the existence of unicorns and yetis.

You must use **continuous writing** (not note form) and use your own words as far as possible.

Your summary should include all 15 of your points in Question 3(a) and must be 200 to 250 words.

**Up to 5 marks are available for the quality of your writing.**
Now look at the mark-scheme for this part of the question below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 1</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Your response is well focused on the passage and the question. All points are expressed clearly, concisely and fluently, and in your own words (where appropriate) throughout.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Most points are made clearly and concisely. Your own words (where appropriate) have been used consistently. Your summary is mostly focused but may have a redundant introduction or conclusion.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Excessive lifting; no focus. The response cannot be understood or consists entirely of the words of the passage.</td>
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Use this mark-scheme to identify where you would place your response. What band would you place your response in and why?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Let's see how accurate you were. Read through the responses to the question below and then using the same mark-scheme, identify what band you would place these responses in and why.

**Response 1:**

After looking over Passage B, I have found several reasons for not believing in the existence of unicorns and yetis. There has been thorough research into unicorns, yet the research has not supported the possibility of unicorns. It appears the
unicorn and the yeti are just myths. There has been supposed evidence of the yeti but when looked into, the evidence is invalid, such as the mummified yeti bodies, which turned out to be fake. The ‘evidence’ also doesn’t really prove much, such as the huge footprint. Why should it automatically be a yeti footprint? Also, the severed hand found could have come from anything, it is wrong / invalid to be concluded as a doing of the yeti. Also, this hand then disappeared in 1991. For all we know, it could have been a hoax. Passage B tells us the yeti is based upon hand-down memories of apes and a real but little-known animal, therefore it is very easy to conclude the existence of the yeti a myth, and perhaps nothing more. Passage B proves that a the supposed ‘evidence’ doesn’t prove anything and there is actually no sufficient evidence for the existence of the unicorn and the yeti. It seems much of the belief in the yeti / unicorn is based upon conclusions, and rumours. One of my points that sightings of a ‘yeti’ could have been a Tibetan bear proves my point of people jumping to conclusions.

Where would you place this response? Highlight on the grid below and then explain why you have awarded that band / mark underneath.

| Band 1 | 5 | The response is well focused on the passage and the question. All points are expressed clearly, concisely and fluently, and in their own words (where appropriate) throughout. |
| Band 2 | 4 | Most points are made clearly and concisely. Their own words (where appropriate) have been used consistently. Their summary is mostly focused but may have a redundant introduction or conclusion. |
| Band 3 | 3 | There are some areas of conciseness. There may be occasional loss of focus or clarity. Their own words (where appropriate) are used for most of the summary. Their response may be list-like or not well-sequenced. |
| Band 4 | 2 | Their summary is sometimes focused, but it may include comment, repetition, unnecessarily long explanation or lifted phrases. |
| Band 5 | 1 | Their summary is unfocused or wordy. It may be answered in the wrong form (e.g. narrative). There may be frequent lifting of phrases and sentences. |
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I have awarded this response a band _____ because ________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Response 2:

The existence of unicorns can’t exist because they are described as mythical beasts and are believed in due to common sense not evidence. They are part of Greek history not modern day science. Modern wildlife do not support these mythical creatures and Robert Vavras diary and photographs of unicorns in 1987 could just have been fake. The yeti is also described as a mythical creature, whose existence has been proven very difficult to find. Monks who claimed to have Yeti hair were mistaken because it had actually come from a goat. A yeti hand was off any primate and mummified. Yeti bodies weren’t genuine. In the area of the supposed yeti existence are a small amount of apes which were the culprit of most yeti sightings. Some apes cross the snowfields and were mistaken as yetis. There has been no recent sightings of yetis and many of the historical sightings of both yetis and unicorns could have just been a different species. When Messner decided to find a yeti he did so at night when he probably couldn’t see much anyway. Also the stories of yetis and the Sherpa legend meets the description of a Tibetan bear not a yeti. The apes are also very few so not many people see them so therefore when they do they assume it’s a yeti.

Where would you place this response? Highlight on the grid below and then explain why you have awarded that band / mark underneath.

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I have awarded this response a band _____ because ____________________________
Response 3:

There are many different reasons given in the passage for the non-existence of unicorns and yetis. There is no evidence or proof that either creature exists. Scientists say that there is little possibility for a creature with the characteristics of a unicorn. The yeti however has characteristics of real creatures such as apes and bears.

Where would you place this response? Highlight on the grid below and then explain why you have awarded that band / mark underneath.

| Band 1 | 5 | The response is well focused on the passage and the question. All points are expressed clearly, concisely and fluently, and in their own words (where appropriate) throughout. |
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I have awarded this response a band _____ because ________________________
Were you right?

Have a look at what each response was given by the examiner:

**Response 1:** The response included a redundant introduction but is mostly concise and clear. Own words are used and the candidate attempts variety in vocabulary, though choices are not always successful. Focus on the text is evident. *(Band 2)*

**Response 2:** There is occasional loss of clarity in expression, though the candidate mostly uses own words. *(Band 3)*

**Response 3:** There is limited focus on both the task and text in this answer. The response does not offer the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate the range of ideas or vocabulary required *(Band 5)*

Now, looking back at your own response, do you think you were right about the band and the mark you thought it deserved?

**Now having practised extracting details from the text and seen what makes a good response, here is your second practice question:**

**Summary question 2**
In this passage the writer explains why animal life in the rainforest is not what one might expect.

**Animals of the Amazon forest**
When I tried to think of all the animals I wanted to see, those old travellers’ tales kept flooding into my thoughts, the tales of weird and dangerous creatures everywhere in the forest. But reality is not like this. In the forests, most animals are small. The problem of moving through trees when danger threatens has prevented any really large animals surviving for long within the forest proper, particularly anywhere far from water. Most animals are highly camouflaged, which creates a problem of its own: how does each recognise its mate? Moving around in daytime would make the camouflage useless, so most animals stay motionless during the day and only move about at dusk. Then it is more difficult to be seen, but they can be heard. That is why the forest is hushed by day but noisy with recognition signals by night.
On my first afternoon I walked through the Amazon forest, along an overgrown trail which would eventually return to the river. I reached a fork in the path and, as the way to the right seemed to move towards higher forest, I followed it. It was not far from a stream, and knowing that there was more likelihood of seeing animals a bit larger than insects the closer to the water I got, I trod carefully and stared intently into the dark middle distance. My intentness was rewarded. Something about 50 centimetres long darted out from the right and raced ahead of me into the dark forest. It was a rodent, a paca, unmistakable with its brown flanks spotted with white. I must have walked close to its daytime hide-out and frightened the creature. Pacas are right to be fearful, for their meat is very tasty and they are hunted by Indians for food.

I looked around me and saw hundreds of trees, a few of the many millions in the forest. I had seen just one paca. That, I thought, would be that, for the rest of the walk. The chances of seeing anything larger were exceedingly slim. The reason for this lies in the extraordinary adaptations that all creatures have been forced to evolve to survive in this waterlogged forest.

What would be simple ground beetles in other parts of the world here have comb-toothed claws to cling to tree leaves, since heavy rain and flooding demand a means of escape upwards into the trees. In the Amazon, birds whose Old World relations spent a long time on the ground are adapted to perching and have long, curved claws to ensure a solid grip on the branches. Frogs, which in other lands hatch out as tadpoles in ponds, find no such still waters here and instead lay their eggs in the bromeliad flowers. Here there is the only fully aquatic marsupial in the world, the water opossum, with webbed feet for swimming (the female’s pouch somehow protects her young as she swims).

Then there are the monkeys, which seem more at home in the trees than monkeys anywhere else – indeed many never come down to the ground at all. They are different from Old World monkeys and some have developed an amazingly useful fifth limb, a prehensile tail. On the underside is a patch of sensitive skin, like the palm of the hand, which turns these animals into super-acrobats of the trees.
### Question 3

Answer the questions in the order set.

(a) Notes

What problems do the animals face living in the Amazon rainforest and how do they adapt to this, according to Passage B?

Write your answer using short **notes**
You do **not** need to use your own words

**Up to 12 marks are available for the content of your answer.** (Usually this will be 15!)

<table>
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<th>The problems the animals face living in the Amazon rainforest and how they adapt to this</th>
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Now, compare your answers with the answers listed below

(a) Problems that animals have in living in the Amazon rainforest

1. Big animals **cannot move easily**
2. Animals need to be **near water**.
3. The rainforest is often **waterlogged / flooded**
4. Camouflage **reduces recognition** by a mate
5. **Cannot move by day**
6. **Some get hunted**

(b) Ways in which these animals adapt themselves to life in the rainforest

7. Reliance on **communication** by sound
8. **Insects** have **claws to hang** on leaves
9. **Birds** are **adapted to perch high up / curved claws**
10. Frogs **lay eggs in plants**
11. Opussums have **web feet / pouches to swim with young**
12. Monkeys have **tails to hang on to trees**/ sensitive path/’prehensile’ tail

How many of the points above did you originally get in your notes? Give yourself a mark out of 12.

(b) Summary

Now use your notes to write a summary of what Passage B tells you about the problems the animals face living in the Amazon rainforest and the ways in which they adapt to this.

You must use **continuous writing** (not notes form) and use your own words as far as possible. Your summary should include all of the points from Question 3a and must be 200 to 250 words.

**Up to 5 marks are available for the quality of your writing.**
Finally, using the mark-scheme, where would you place your response?

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