

# Cambridge International AS Level

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**CHINESE LANGUAGE****8238/32**

Paper 3 Writing

**May/June 2026****MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 40

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**Published**

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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This document consists of **13** printed pages.

**General marking principles**

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the specific <b>content</b> defined in the mark scheme</li> <li>the specific <b>skills</b> defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions</li> <li>the <b>standard of response</b> required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2 | Examiners must award <b>whole marks</b> (not half marks, or other fractions).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3 | Examiners must award marks <b>positively</b> . This means that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>marks are not deducted for errors or omissions</li> <li>marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for <b>other valid answers</b> which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate</li> <li>the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged <b>only</b> when the mark scheme indicates that these features are <b>specifically assessed</b> in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.</li> </ul> |
| 4 | Examiners must <b>consistently</b> apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 5 | Examiners must use the <b>full range of marks</b> defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 6 | Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and <b>must not</b> award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

**Annotations guidance for centres**

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

**Annotations**

| Annotation                                                                          | Meaning                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | Credit for good language or content point                                                                                         |
|    | Credit for content on functional task – bullet point one                                                                          |
|    | Credit for content on functional task – bullet point two                                                                          |
|    | Credit for content on functional task – bullet point three                                                                        |
|  | Credit for content on functional task – bullet point four                                                                         |
|  | If the examiner considers the answer to be more correct than incorrect, then 'benefit of the doubt' is given (Functional Writing) |
|  | Omission                                                                                                                          |
|  | Character error (Chinese)                                                                                                         |
|  | Grammatical, spelling or vocabulary error                                                                                         |
|  | Indicates a section of the text the annotation refers to                                                                          |

| Annotation          | Meaning                                                                                     |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>IR</b>           | Irrelevant                                                                                  |
| <b>REP</b>          | Repetition                                                                                  |
| <b>?</b>            | Meaning unclear or illegible                                                                |
| <b>SEEN</b>         | Used to show that blank pages have been seen and any creditworthy material has been awarded |
| Off page<br>Comment | Used to make a holistic comment about the script                                            |
| On page<br>Comment  | Wrong question number given by candidate                                                    |

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Candidates respond to two questions. All candidates answer **Question 1** and choose to answer either **Question 2** or **Question 3**.

Candidates will be awarded marks in three categories for each piece they respond to:

**Question 1**

- Task completion (maximum of 8 marks): see Table A
- Linguistic range and organisation (maximum of 4 marks): see Table B
- Language accuracy (maximum of 4 marks): see Table C.

**Question 2 and Question 3**

- Task completion (maximum of 10 marks): see Table D
- Linguistic range and organisation (maximum of 7 marks): see Table E
- Language accuracy (maximum of 7 marks): see Table F.

The Writing assessment objectives are:

- **W1:** Communicate information, ideas, opinions and arguments clearly and effectively, with support/justification.
- **W2:** Organise ideas by paragraphing and by using a range of appropriate linking devices.
- **W3:** Use text conventions and register appropriate to the given purpose and audience.
- **W4:** Use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar.
- **W5:** Use vocabulary and grammar accurately.

**Additional guidance on word count**

A word count range is provided for candidates in the rubric at the start of each section. This is not a rigid range but a recommendation i.e. candidates are not to be penalised for going over the upper limit or going below the lower limit. However, they may self-penalise after the mark scheme has been applied to the agreed standard because, for example, they may not have fully responded to the task or they may have been too repetitive. There is no need for examiners to count the number of words a candidate has written and they should not stop reading/marking after a certain number of words: they should include everything the candidate has produced in their overall judgement.

**Generic guidance on using levels-based mark schemes**

- (a) Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The examiner should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a 'best-fit' level statement has been identified, examiners should use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

- (b) Examiners are reminded that this is a language qualification aimed at assessing language proficiency at level B1 and B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The descriptions in this mark scheme should be understood and applied with reference to CEFR B1 and B2 level.

**TABLE A – Question 1 Task completion**

**W1:** Communicate information, ideas, opinions and arguments clearly and effectively, with support/justification.

**W3:** Use text conventions and register appropriate to the given purpose and audience.

| Level    | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Marks |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates detailed information that is always relevant with clear and supported opinions.</li> <li>Maintains a sense of purpose and audience throughout by using conventions and register appropriate to the task.</li> <li>Completes all parts of the task fully.</li> </ul>                                                     | 7–8   |
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates detailed information that is sometimes relevant, with opinions that are sometimes supported.</li> <li>Shows some sense of purpose and audience, although the conventions and register used may be inappropriate in places.</li> <li>Completes most parts of the task with some development.</li> </ul>                  | 5–6   |
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates limited information that can sometimes be irrelevant, and attempts to give opinions that are occasionally supported.</li> <li>Generally insufficient sense of purpose and audience, with generally inappropriate use of conventions and register.</li> <li>Attempts some parts of the task with some detail.</li> </ul> | 3–4   |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates very basic information that is frequently irrelevant. There is an attempt to give opinions.</li> <li>Lacks a sense of purpose and audience, with inappropriate use of conventions.</li> <li>Attempts task(s) with little or no detail.</li> </ul>                                                                       | 1–2   |
| <b>0</b> | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 0     |

**TABLES B and C – Question 1 Quality of Written Communication**

Responses that do not address the task and were awarded 0 marks for Task Completion (Table A) cannot be awarded a mark above **Level 2** for Linguistic range and organisation, i.e. a composition of pre-learnt material that does not follow the instructions.

**W2:** Organise ideas by paragraphing and by using a range of appropriate linking devices.

**W4:** Use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar.

**W5:** Use vocabulary and grammar accurately.

| Level    | Table B Linguistic range and organisation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |          | Table C Language accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |          |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Marks    | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Marks    |
| <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are consistently well-organised and structured coherently in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of simple and complex structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of linking words and cohesive devices to create a well-linked connected sequence of points, relevant to the task.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s). Regular use of less common but appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul> | <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently accurate use of simple grammar.</li> <li>Shows a good degree of control of some complex grammar.</li> <li>Good use of characters and punctuation with some minor slips. (Note: 'use of characters' includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors do not impede communication.</li> </ul>         | <b>4</b> |
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text is generally well-organised in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses a range of structures, including some complex structures, to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses a range of linking words and some cohesive devices to create a mostly well-linked connected sequence of points, relevant to the task.</li> <li>Uses a range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s). Occasional use of less common but appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul>           | <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate use of simple grammar, with some minor slips.</li> <li>Uses some more complex grammar, with some slips.</li> <li>Good use of characters and punctuation with occasional slips. (Note: 'use of characters' includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors very rarely impede communication.</li> </ul> | <b>3</b> |

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| Level    | Table B Linguistic range and organisation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |          | Table C Language accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |          |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Marks    | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Marks    |
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text is generally organised in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses mostly simple structures and some complex structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses linking words and some cohesive devices to create a connected sequence of points sometimes relevant to the task, occasionally difficult to follow.</li> <li>Uses vocabulary appropriate to the task(s), frequently overusing some vocabulary.</li> </ul> | <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good use of simple grammar, with some errors.</li> <li>Uses some more complex grammar, with frequent errors.</li> <li>Some errors in use of characters and punctuation. (Note: 'use of characters' includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors sometimes impede communication.</li> </ul>         | <b>2</b> |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are some attempts at paragraphing.</li> <li>Uses simple structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses basic linking words to create a sequence of points, which is often irrelevant to the task and difficult to follow.</li> <li>Relies on repeated use of a small range of vocabulary, not always appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>                                                                 | <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses simple grammar, with frequent errors.</li> <li>Attempts to use more complex grammar, with limited success.</li> <li>Frequent errors in use of characters and punctuation. (Note: 'use of characters' includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors frequently impede communication.</li> </ul> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>0</b> | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>0</b> | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>0</b> |

**TABLE D – Questions 2 and 3 Task completion**

Responses that do not address all aspects of the question cannot be awarded a mark above Level 4 for Task completion, i.e. a response that only addresses part of the task in Question 2 or 3 and the content is still 'relevant' to the question but fails to address any additional aspect of the task e.g. a second aspect within the overall task.

**W1:** Communicate information, ideas, opinions and arguments clearly and effectively, with support/justification.

**W3:** Use text conventions and register appropriate to the given purpose and audience.

| Level    | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Marks |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>5</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates detailed information that is always relevant.</li> <li>The argument is logical, clear and fully supported, and justified with a variety of facts, ideas and opinions.</li> <li>Maintains a sense of purpose and audience throughout by using conventions and register appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>      | 9–10  |
| <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates information that is often detailed and relevant.</li> <li>The argument is clear and mostly supported, and justified with a variety of facts, ideas and opinions.</li> <li>Generally maintains a sense of purpose and audience throughout by using conventions and register appropriate to the task.</li> </ul> | 7–8   |
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates information that is sometimes detailed and relevant.</li> <li>The argument is somewhat weak and sometimes supported and justified with facts, ideas and opinions.</li> <li>Shows some sense of purpose and audience, although the used conventions and register may be inappropriate in places.</li> </ul>     | 5–6   |
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates limited information that can sometimes be irrelevant.</li> <li>The argument is weak and rarely supported with straightforward facts, ideas and opinions.</li> <li>Generally insufficient sense of purpose and audience, with generally inappropriate use of conventions and register.</li> </ul>               | 3–4   |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates very basic information that is frequently irrelevant.</li> <li>There is an attempt to give ideas and opinions – not organised into an argument.</li> <li>Lacks a sense of purpose and audience, with inappropriate use of conventions.</li> </ul>                                                              | 1–2   |
| <b>0</b> | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 0     |

**TABLES E and F – Questions 2 and 3 Quality of Written Communication**

Responses that do not address the task and were awarded 0 marks for Task Completion (Table D) cannot be awarded a mark above **Level 2** for Linguistic range and organisation, i.e. a composition of pre-learnt material that does not follow the instructions.

**W2:** Organise ideas by paragraphing and by using a range of appropriate linking devices.

**W4:** Use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar.

**W5:** Use vocabulary and grammar accurately.

| Level    | Table E Linguistic range and organisation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |       | Table F Language accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |       |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Marks | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Marks |
| <b>4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are consistently well-organised and structured coherently in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of simple and complex structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of linking words and cohesive devices to create a well-linked connected sequence of points, relevant to the task.</li> <li>Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s). Regular use of less common but appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul> | 6–7   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently accurate use of simple grammar.</li> <li>Shows a good degree of control of some complex grammar.</li> <li>Good use of characters and punctuation with some minor slips. (Note: ‘use of characters’ includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors do not impede communication.</li> </ul>         | 6–7   |
| <b>3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text is generally well-organised in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses a range of structures, including some complex structures, to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses a range of linking words and some cohesive devices to create a mostly well-linked connected sequence of points, relevant to the task.</li> <li>Uses a range of vocabulary appropriate to the task(s). Occasional use of less common but appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul>           | 4–5   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate use of simple grammar, with some minor slips.</li> <li>Uses some more complex grammar, with some slips.</li> <li>Good use of characters and punctuation with occasional slips. (Note: ‘use of characters’ includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors very rarely impede communication.</li> </ul> | 4–5   |

| Level    | Table E Linguistic range and organisation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |       | Table F Language accuracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |       |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Marks | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Marks |
| <b>2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text is generally organised in paragraphs.</li> <li>Uses mostly simple structures and some complex structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses linking words and some cohesive devices to create a connected sequence of points sometimes relevant to the task, occasionally difficult to follow.</li> <li>Uses vocabulary appropriate to the task(s), frequently overusing some vocabulary.</li> </ul> | 2–3   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good use of simple grammar, with some errors.</li> <li>Uses some more complex grammar, with frequent errors.</li> <li>Some errors in use of characters and punctuation. (Note: ‘use of characters’ includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors sometimes impede communication.</li> </ul>         | 2–3   |
| <b>1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are some attempts at paragraphing.</li> <li>Uses simple structures to express their ideas.</li> <li>Uses basic linking words to create a sequence of points, which is often irrelevant to the task and difficult to follow.</li> <li>Relies on repeated use of a small range of vocabulary, not always appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>                                                                 | 1     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses simple grammar, with frequent errors.</li> <li>Attempts to use more complex grammar, with limited success.</li> <li>Frequent errors in use of characters and punctuation. (Note: ‘use of characters’ includes both accurate choice of characters in context and accurate character formation.)</li> <li>Errors frequently impede communication.</li> </ul> | 1     |
| <b>0</b> | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 0     | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 0     |

**Glossary of terms used in the Writing levels-based mark schemes****TABLES A and D – Task completion**

- **Relevant:** related or relatable to required content points and/or task requirements.
- **Conventions:** include such things as genre, format, register and function. For example, a personal letter should not be written as a formal report, should be laid out accordingly and should use the right tone for the communicative purpose.

**TABLES B and E – Linguistic range and organization**

- **Range:** the variety of words and grammatical forms a candidate uses. At higher levels, candidates will make increasing use of a greater variety of words, fixed phrases, collocations and grammatical forms.
- **Linking words:** these are cohesive devices, but are separated here to refer to higher-frequency vocabulary which provides explicit linkage. They can range from basic high frequency items (such as 'and', 'but') to basic and phrasal items (such as 'because', 'first of all').
- **Cohesive devices:** refers to more sophisticated linking words and phrases (e.g. 'moreover', 'as a result'), as well as grammatical devices such as the use of reference pronouns, ellipsis.
- **Simple structures:** a simple structure is, for example, a sentence that has just one independent clause (i.e. it stands alone and expresses one complete thought) and uses a basic time frame.
- **Complex structures:** a complex structure is, for example, a sentence that has an independent clause (i.e. it stands alone and expresses one complete thought) and a dependent clause (i.e. one that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence because it does not express a complete thought).
- **Less common vocabulary:** appears less often or may be used to express ideas more succinctly and precisely.

**TABLES C and F – Language accuracy**

- **Errors and slips:** **Errors** are systematic mistakes. **Slips** are mistakes that are non-systematic, i.e. the candidate has learned the vocabulary item or grammatical structure, but just happened to make a mistake in this instance. In a candidate's response, where most other examples of a lexical/ grammatical point are accurate, a mistake on that point would most likely be a slip.
- **Impede communication:** gets in the way of meaning.
- **Simple grammar:** words, phrases, basic time frames and simple clauses.
- **Complex grammar:** longer and more complex items, e.g. noun clauses, relative and adverb clauses, subordination, passive forms, modal forms.
- **Choice of characters:** the character selected to form a word or phrase.
- **Character formation:** radicals and/or strokes used to form the written character.