

# 2011 England Riots

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Functional Skills English  
Level 2 practice questions

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Name

Date

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## Background

Between 6 and 10 August 2011, several London boroughs and districts of cities and towns across England suffered widespread rioting, looting and arson.

Following a peaceful march on 6 August 2011 in relation to the police response to the fatal shooting of Mark Duggan by Metropolitan Police Service firearms officers on 4 August 2011, a riot began in Tottenham, North London. In the following days, rioting spread to several London boroughs and districts and eventually to some other areas of England, with the most severe disturbances outside London occurring in Bristol and cities in the Midlands and North West of England. Related localised outbreaks also occurred in many smaller towns and cities in England.

The riots were characterised by rampant looting and arson attacks of unprecedented levels. As a result, British Prime Minister David Cameron returned early from his holiday in Italy and other government and opposition leaders also ended their holidays to attend to the matter. All police leave was cancelled and Parliament was recalled on 11 August to debate the situation.

As of 15 August, about 3,100 people had been arrested, of whom more than 1,000 had been charged. Arrests, charges and court proceedings continue. Initially, courts sat for extended hours. There were a total of 3,443 crimes across London linked to the disorder.

Five people died and at least 16 others were injured as a direct result of related violent acts. An estimated £200 million worth of property damage was incurred, and local economic activity was significantly compromised.

Police action was blamed for the initial riot, and the subsequent police reaction was criticised as being neither appropriate nor sufficiently effective. The riots have generated significant ongoing debate among political, social and academic figures about the causes and context in which they happened.

The two documents in this pack are responses to the riots and attempt to make sense of the seemingly senseless violence. They were written in the aftermath, shortly after.

First read **Document 1**, taken from the BBC News website, and answer the questions that follow:

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## Document 1

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### England rioters 'poorer, younger, less educated'

*The most comprehensive statistics published so far on people charged over the August riots in England reveal that they were poorer, younger and of lower educational achievement than average.*

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BBC News website  
24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15426720>

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The government figures show 13% of those arrested were gang members. In terms of ethnicity, 42% of those charged were white, 46% black, 7% Asian and 5% were classified as "other". The Met Police admitted in a separate report it did not have enough officers available on the first night of riots.



Breakdown of the Home Office and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) figures, in brief:

#### Demographics:

- Some 90% of those brought before the courts were male and about half were aged under 21
- Only 5% were over the age of 40
- Of those defendants whose ethnicity is known: 46% were black, 42% were white, 7% were Asian and 5% were classified as "other". In some areas - such as Salford - this partially matched the ethnicity of the general population, in others - such as Nottingham - it was not representative of the general population
- Some 35% of adults were claiming out-of-work benefits, which compares to a national average of 12%
- Of the young people involved, 42% were in receipt of free school meals compared to an average of 16%

#### Criminal backgrounds:

- 13% of those arrested overall were gang members but in London the figure was 19%
- Three-quarters of all those who appeared in court had a previous conviction or caution. For adults the figure was 80% and for juveniles it was 62%
- One in eight of all the crimes committed in the riots were muggings, claiming 664 victims
- More than 2,500 shops and businesses were victims of looters and vandals, and more than 230 homes were hit by burglars or vandals

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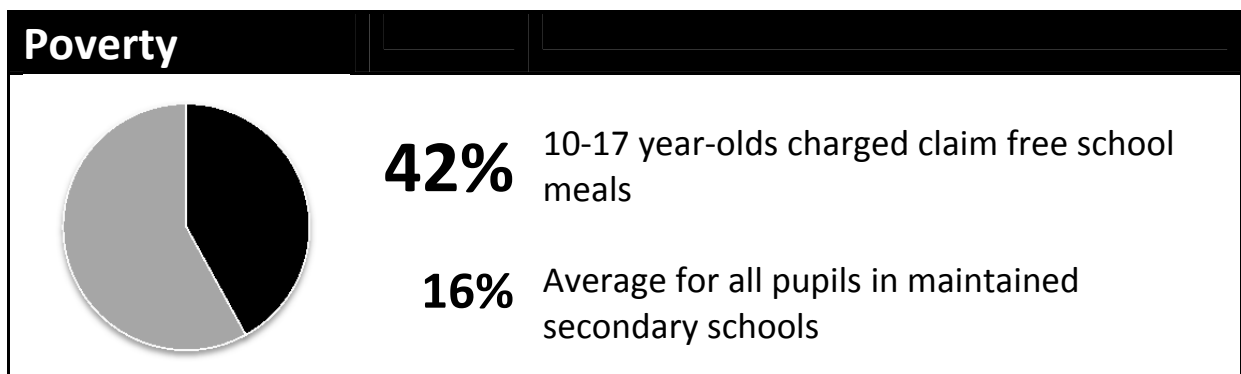
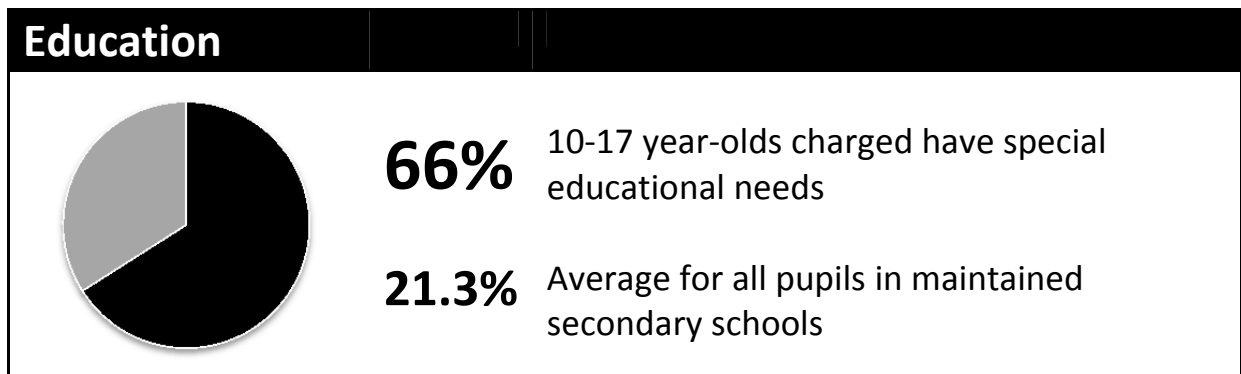
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## Educational backgrounds:

- Two-thirds of the young people in court were classed as having some form of special educational need, compared to 21% for the national average
- More than a third of young people who were involved in the riots had been excluded from school during 2009-10 - this compares with Department for Education records showing 6% exclusions for all Year 11 pupils
- More than one in 10 of the young people appearing before courts had been permanently excluded - the figure drops to 0.1% among all those aged 15

## August riots in numbers:

Key statistics	
<b>1,984</b> Before courts	<b>2,584</b> Businesses attacked
<b>13%</b> Involved in gangs	<b>664</b> People robbed/injured
<b>26%</b> Juveniles (age 10-17)	<b>231</b> Homes targeted



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<b>Ethnicity</b>			
	<b>White</b>	<b>Black/Mixed Black</b>	<b>Asian</b>
<b>SALFORD</b>			
<b>In court</b>	94%	6%	NA
<b>Local population (under 40)</b>	88%	2%	NA
<b>HARINGEY</b>			
<b>In court</b>	34%	55%	NA
<b>Local population (under 40)</b>	62%	17%	NA
<b>NOTTINGHAM</b>			
<b>In court</b>	32%	62%	NA
<b>Local population (under 40)</b>	71%	9%	NA
<b>BIRMINGHAM</b>			
<b>In court</b>	33%	46%	15%
<b>Local population (under 40)</b>	58%	9%	30%

Source: School Census, Ministry of Justice

The MoJ said: "It is clear that compared to population averages, those brought before the courts were more likely to be in receipt of free school meals or benefits, were more likely to have had special educational needs and be absent from school, and are more likely to have some form of criminal history.

"This pattern held across all areas looked at."



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Questions 1-4 relate to **Document 1**, *England rioters 'poorer, younger, less educated'*. Using this text, please answer the following questions:

1. What is the **main** purpose of this article?

- To share opinion about the London riots
- To provide information about those involved in rioting
- To persuade readers that young people are violent
- To describe the damage attributed to the riots

2. Was the percentage of gang members arrested in London higher or lower than the national average of 13%?

- Higher
- Lower

What was the percentage for London? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read the following statements attributed to the information given in the article and decide whether they are true or false, according to the text:

	True	False
Less than a quarter of those involved in the riots were aged below seventeen		
Of 10-17 year olds charged in the riots, the percentage of those with special educational needs was greater than the proportion of those who claimed free school meals		
Appearing in court in Birmingham were fewer rioters from the Black/Mixed Black community than there were from the Asian community		
Almost all of those appearing in court in Salford were from a White background		
Rioters were less likely to attack homes than places of business		
Most of the young people involved in the riots had been excluded from school during the 2009/10 academic year		
The under 40s Asian population in Birmingham represents roughly half that of the White population		

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4. Please provide three techniques or features that the writer of **Document 1** has employed in order to more clearly convey the information given.

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Next, please read **Document 2** and answer the questions that follow:

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## Document 2

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### How to prevent more riots

*As well as addressing the gulf between the haves and have-nots I'd look at TV shows that confuse achievement with the acquisition of bling.*

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By Charlie Brooker

Adapted from The Guardian, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2011

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/14/charlie-brooker-prevent-more-riots>

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Like almost anyone who wasn't outside running around with a scarf over their face, I sat at home last week gawping at my TV screen in horror as English cities, including the one I live in, came under attack from their own citizens. It was a self-inflicted horror show, like a man repeatedly smacking himself in the teeth with a breezeblock. But nowhere near as funny.

Since I write for a newspaper, I am now legally required to write an agonised hand-wringing article in which I attempt to explain why the riots happened. Which is tricky because I don't have a clue. Some blame the parents. Or the education system. Or the economy. Or our unequal society. Or just the rioters themselves. I'd guess at some soupy combination of all the above.

Aside from the sheer mindless ferocity and violence, one of the most depressing aspects of the protracted smashup was the nature of the looting: time and again, shops selling trainers or gadgets were targeted first. Fancy shoes and electric widgets mark the peak of ambition. Every looter was effectively a child chanting: "Give me my toys, I want more toys". Look at the man captured on video mugging the injured Malaysian student. Watch his unearned swagger as he walks away; the size of a man, yet he overdoes that swagger like a performing toddler. That's an idiot who never grew up.

Why the obsession with trainers? Trainers are rubbish. You stick them on your feet and walk around for a while 'til they go out of fashion. Whoopie doo. Yes, I know they're also status symbols, but anyone who tries to impress others with their shoe choice is a dismally pathetic character indeed – and anyone genuinely impressed by said footwear has all the soaring spirit of a punnet of moss. There's no life to be found in "look at my shoes". There just isn't.

In the smouldering aftermath, some politicians, keen to shift the focus from social inequality, have muttered darkly about the role of BlackBerry Messenger, Twitter and Facebook – frightening new technologies that, like the pen and the human mouth, allow citizens to swap messages with one another. Some have even called for the likes of Twitter to be temporarily



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suspended in times of great national crisis. That'd be reassuring – like the scene at the start of a zombie movie where the news bulletin is suddenly replaced by a whistling tone and a stark caption reading PLEASE STAND BY. The last thing we need in an emergency is the ability to share information. Perhaps the government could also issue us with gags we could slip over our mouths the moment the sirens start wailing? Hey, we could still communicate if we really had to. Provided we have learned semaphore.

If preventing further looting is our aim, then as well as addressing the gulf between the haves and the have-nots, I'd take a long hard look at MTV Cribs and similar TV shows that routinely confuse human achievement with the mindless acquisition of gaudy bling. The media heaves with propaganda promoting sensation and consumption above all else.

Back in the 80s the pioneering aspirational soap opera Dallas dangled an unattainable billionaire lifestyle in front of millions, but at least had the nous to make the Ewing family miserable and consumed with self-loathing. At the same time, shows aimed at kids were full of presenters cheerfully making puppets out of old yoghurt pots, while shows aimed at teens largely depicted cheeky urchins copping off with each other in the dole queue. Today, whenever my world-weary eyes alight on a "youth show" it merely resembles a glossily edited advert for celebrity lifestyles, co-starring a jet-ski and a tower of gold. And regardless of the time slot, every other commercial shrieks that I deserve the best of everything. I and I alone. I'd gladly introduce a law requiring broadcasters to show five minutes of footage of a rich man dying alone for every 10 minutes of fevered avarice. It'd be worth it just to see them introduce it on T4.

If we were to delete all aspirational programming altogether, the schedules might feel a bit empty, so I'd fill the void with footage of a well-stocked Foot Locker window, thereby tricking any idiots tuning in on a recently looted television into smashing the screen in an attempt to grab the coveted trainers within.

Speaking of Foot Locker, if I were the CEO of Nike (which at the time of writing I'm not), I'd encourage Foot Locker to open special "decoy" branches near looting hotspots – unattended stores stocked full of trainers with soft sponge heels. Anyone pinching a pair of these would find it almost impossible to hoof in a window ever again. You'd be kicking fruitlessly at the glass for 15 years, making it less an act of spontaneous violence and more a powerful visual metaphor for your misguided existence.

But perhaps it's better to nip future trouble in the bud with the use of deterrents. Obviously a small percentage of the rioters are sociopaths, and you'll never make any kind of impression on their psyche without a cranial drill. But the majority should be susceptible to threats. Not violent ones – we're not animals – but creatively unpleasant ones. Forget the water cannon. Unleash the slurry cannon. That kind of thing.

Greater Manchester police has attracted attention by using Twitter as a substitute for the "perp walk": naming-and-shaming rioters by tweeting their personal details as they leave court. Not bad, but maybe not humiliating enough. Personally, I'd seal them inside a Perspex box glued to a billboard overlooking a main plaza for a week, where people can turn up and jeer at them. It's not totally inhumane: they would be fed through a tube in the top – but crucially, they would be fed nothing but cabbage, asparagus and figs, and since they wouldn't be allowed out for toilet breaks, it would be getting pretty unpleasant in there after 48 hours. And it would be a cheery pick-me-up for passersby.

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Questions 5-8 relate to **Document 2**, *How to prevent more riots*. Using this text, please answer the following questions:

5. With which items in particular does the writer feel the looting rioters were all-consumed?

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6. In the sixth paragraph, which word could be replaced with the word ‘**vulgar**’ without the meaning of the sentence changing?

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7. What do you think is meant by ‘aspirational programming’? Can you think of any examples?

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8. *“Today, whenever my world-weary eyes alight on a “youth show” it merely resembles a glossily edited advert for celebrity lifestyles, co-starring a jet-ski and a tower of gold. And regardless of the time slot, every other commercial shrieks that I deserve the best of everything.” (Paragraph 6)*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the writer’s position that television promotes lifestyles out of the reach of most average people?

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## ANSWERS

### Document 1

1. To provide information about those involved in rioting
2. Higher, 19%
- 3.

	True	False
Less than a quarter of those involved in the riots were aged below seventeen		X
Of 10-17 year olds charged in the riots, the percentage of those with special educational needs was greater than the proportion of those who claimed free school meals	X	
Appearing in court in Birmingham were fewer rioters from the Black/Mixed Black community than there were from the Asian community		X
Almost all of those appearing in court in Salford were from a White background	X	
Rioters were less likely to attack homes than places of business	X	
Most of the young people involved in the riots had been excluded from school during the 2009/10 academic year		X
The under 40s Asian population in Birmingham represents roughly half that of the White population	X	

4. Use of subheadings, bulleted lists, bold typeface, pie charts, tables, or any other relevant features.

### Document 2

5. Trainers
6. gaudy
7. Any suitable answer with relevant examples. Check for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Check for well formed argument using Point, Evidence, Analysis (PEA) structure or similar.
8. Any suitable answer. Check for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Check for well formed argument using Point, Evidence, Analysis (PEA) structure or similar.

# 2011 England Riots – curriculum mapping

## Level 2 Functional Skills English mapping

Coverage and range statements provide an indication of the type of content candidates are expected to apply in functional contexts. Relevant content can also be drawn from equivalent (school) National Curriculum levels and the Adult Literacy standards. ✓ indicates the main coverage and range skills that are (or can be) covered in this resource. However, these will vary with the student group and how the resource is used by the teacher.

**Reference:** Ofqual (2009), *Functional Skills criteria for English: Entry 1, Entry 2, Entry 3, level 1 and level 2*. <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

**Speaking, Listening and Communication skill standard:** Make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar, and make effective presentations

- a) Consider complex information and give a relevant, cogent response in appropriate language
- b) Present information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others
- c) Adapt contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation
- d) Make significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward

**Writing skill standard:** Write a range of texts, including extended written documents, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively:  
Note: weighting in formal assessment: a-d 55-60%, e-f 40-45%.

- a) Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely ✓Q8
- b) Present information/ideas concisely, logically, and persuasively ✓Q8
- c) Use a range of writing styles for different purposes ✓Q8
- d) Use a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively ✓Q8
- e) Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately ✓Q8
- f) Ensure written work is fit for purpose and audience, with accurate spelling and grammar that supports clear meaning ✓Q8

**Reading skill standard:** Select, read, understand and compare texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions

- a) Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information ✓Q6
- b) Read and summarise, succinctly, information/ideas from different sources ✓Q2, Q3, Q5
- c) Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed ✓Q1
- d) Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias ✓Q7
- e) Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses ✓Q4

\*\* This resource also covers many adult literacy curriculum <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/sflcurriculum> elements.