

ARABIC AND ARABIC LANGUAGE

Paper 9680/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

Overall the standard of answers this session was good and there is clear evidence of an improvement in the standard since last session in the quality of language and accuracy of answers. The questions which candidates found most challenging were **Questions 1 and 2**.

Candidates need to practise grammatical structures such as *kaana* and its sisters, the dual case, sound feminine plurals and demonstrative pronouns. Candidates should also read widely and practise summarising. They should pay attention to correct spelling. Candidates should avoid copying the author's phraseology when answering **Questions 3, 4 and 5**.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates who attempted this question did not manage to produce satisfactory answers. Examiners were looking for synonyms of the stated vocabulary.

Acceptable answers included the following:

- أ- أصولها ، أو أسسها
- ب- العادات، أو الموروثات
- ث- شجع، أو حضّ
- ج- مليئة، أو غنية، أو مفعمة، أو غاصة، أو مزدحمة

Question 2

The standard of answers to this question was better than for **Question 1**, but candidates still found difficulty in handling the relevant grammatical structures. The most common errors were as follows:

- أ- رصد المتغير السريعة التي واكبت التقدم العلمي.
- ب- توفر أسلوبين مميزاً.
- ث- أنشأت الجهات الحكومية جناح لها روعي في تصميمها التراث والمعاصرة.
- ث- ومن أهداف هذا المهرجانات العمل على التعريف بالموروث الشعبي.

Question 3

Examiners were looking for answers which demonstrated candidates' comprehension of Text One, expressed in the candidates' own words and style of writing. The majority of candidates copied phrases from the author's text.

The following is part of an answer which scored good marks:

- ث- يشجع المهرجان على دراسة التراث للتعلم من الثروات المعنوية الرائعة والأخلاق الحميدة كالصبر والجلد وتحمل المسؤولية والانتقال على الذات والنفس الخاصة.
- ث- أما السبب الأول فهو لكي تكون الصورة أفضل وأوضح وأغور وأعمق. وأما السبب الثاني فهو لتوفير صورة حية عن التاريخ القديم بكل جوانبه ودلالاته الثقافية والفنية.

Question 4

Examiners were looking for answers which demonstrated candidates' comprehension of Text Two, with good use of language and expressed in the candidates' own words. The following is part of an answer which was written in the candidate's own words, but was not up to the expected level of language use:

ت- الدليل على نجاح المهرجان أن النظير منقطع التي تمثل في الحضور الجماهيري المكسف كل لايلة. وكان البدو العرب يشهدون هذا المهرجان وعددهم كبير وهم الأجنبي.
ج- اهتمامات دائرة السياحة والتسويق التجاري هي النشاط الذي فقدت وعدت أن تتقدم شيئاً إبداعياً جديداً ومختلفاً في مهرجان وحفظ استمرار الجماهيري المقبول لأن الإبداع والتراث متساويان بدليل الشعبية الجارحة بين المواطنين والمعنيين في الدولة.

Question 5

Candidates were required to write a summary on the importance of creativity and its relationship to cultural and artistic life, and on how creativity can play a role in protecting the environment in large cities.

Many candidates did not score good marks for the following reasons:

- (a) They copied out portions of text from one or both texts.
- (b) They used irrelevant sections of the text.
- (c) They wrote using poor quality of language.

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Paper 9680/03

Essay

General comments

The question paper gave a choice of six titles, with the overall mark being out of 40: 24 marks for language and 16 for content. The standards attained by the candidates varied considerably. Overall, the level achieved by the candidates was satisfactory, though there appeared to be fewer outstanding essays than in previous years. The best essays were grammatically sound and well-structured, with coherent lines of argument, but a number of essays were deficient in some or all of these respects. On the plus side, there was less reliance on memorised formulae than in scripts from the previous year, and there were no discernible instances of 'pre-learned' essays being submitted as scripts.

As in previous examinations, there were frequent grammatical errors, for example in the use of the *idaafa* construction, and in case endings, and some candidates continued to demonstrate an inadequate grasp of the principles of Arabic word order. Some candidates tried to include proverbs or other short maxims in their answers to illustrate their points, but these were not always effectively related to the main thrust of their answers.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This proved a popular topic. Many essays were well written, although not all answers were well structured: many candidates devoted too much space to the structure of the family, leaving little room to discuss its place in society.

Question 2

This also proved a popular topic. Again, many essays were well written, though some essays showed a tendency towards 'padding', through the incorporation of strings of vocabulary items.

Question 3

Only a very few candidates chose this topic. The few essays produced were, however, generally of high quality.

Question 4

This question produced some interesting answers, including some that drew on the candidates' own personal experience.

Question 5

This question, on the environment, proved very popular, and elicited a number of excellent answers, though overall the quality was rather variable. The most interesting answers were often related at least partly to local circumstances in the candidates' own countries.

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Paper 9680/04

Texts

General comments

The paper was comparable in standard and in length with those of recent years. Candidates had a range of questions from which to choose. They were required to answer three Questions out of twelve and each question on a different book. The questions chosen varied from one Centre to another; they were mostly related to the books concentrated upon by the different teachers.

To determine the level of each answer, Examiners looked for the candidate's ability to organise their response in an effective way without copying large extracts from the relevant book or from prepared notes and quotations.

Many candidates did not achieve as they should have done because they answered ONLY two questions. Candidates should be reminded at the beginning of the session that they have to answer one from **all** three questions. Some candidates, unnecessarily, answered four questions of which the Examiners selected the three questions with the highest scores for the overall mark.

Candidates should always be encouraged to stick to the word limit. Although excessive length is not penalised, writing beyond the word limit can often lead to deterioration in the quality of work; on the other hand, neither can a response which is too short achieve at the top level. Candidates are reminded to try to keep within the word limit as any surplus time can be spent more on the main points of each question or on reading through the answers at the end of the session.

The performance of the candidates this session reflects the improving standard in the different Centres. The candidates seemed more focused in their answers and in their approach to dealing with the different aspects of the questions. Learners' handwriting and organisation has improved, although more attention could be paid to sentence structure and language in general. It seems to be the case that some Centres encourage their candidates to analyse, relate and read beyond the events of the story in order to convey the correct answer. This in turn gives the candidates a higher chance of achieving at the top level.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1a

This question was answered by most candidates. Candidates who answered this question showed full knowledge of the different characters and their role in creating the events of the story.

Some candidates were unable to achieve the correct level because they answered the questions very briefly, i.e. they failed to write between 500 – 600 words. Candidates should be reminded that the questions are there only as prompts to guide them in writing their essays.

Question 1b

Strong candidates tried to analyse the events of the story and write about the effect of the different circumstances that changed the life of the main character 'Zahra'. The weaker candidates copied a few extracts from the book without relating the different events or even explaining what affect they had on the main character. Candidates should be encouraged to use their own words in analysing the events.

Question 2a

Many candidates answered this question. Although they were able to write about the Poet's life, they failed to quote some of his poems and explain them. Some candidates were successful in writing about the poet's life but were not able to explain the quoted verses. This, of course, affected the mark awarded.

Question 2b

In general, candidates successfully used this question as a springboard to their response. Candidates wrote freely about the poet's life but some failed to quote any other poems which had been written and which reflect his irresponsible and reckless life.

Question 3a

Few candidates answered this question; those who did were able to explain the poem with all the images and metaphors involved. They were also able to analyse the poem and relate it to the poet's personality and life.

Question 3b

The candidates wrote freely about the life of the poet and about his philosophy in life. Candidates who answered this question showed some understanding of the political and cultural issues of the era which had affected the poet's life and poems. Most candidates had trouble with quoting poems and referring to specific situations in the poet's life and dealings with other people. This, in turn, put them at the lower level of the scale. In questions relating to poems, candidates are advised to learn as many verses as they can so they are able to support their answers.

Section 2

Question 4a

Candidates seemed to find 'Dami, Dumu'l Wa-btisamati' very interesting. Strong candidates were able to write and analyse the events of the story in their own words, which meant they achieved highly. Other, weaker candidates copied parts of the story without explaining why or what relation it had to the question.

Question 4b

This question was the most popular question among the candidates. They were able to write about the different social issues that prevailed over the Egyptian Society at the time. The strong candidates were able to relate the different issues in the stories to the different characters portrayed in each story. Other candidates showed good knowledge of the stories but their weak language impeded their efforts to relate the events and make themselves clear.

Question 5a and 5b

Very few candidates chose this question. Candidates who did choose this answered it well and were able to relate the main character to the political issues discussed and raised in the book.

Question 6a

This question was the most popular and candidates seemed to find it accessible. Candidates were able to write freely about the effect of the queen, Shahrazad on the king, Shahrayar. Many candidates summarized the events without taking any notice of the requirements of the question. Candidates concentrated on the King's life more than on how the Queen was able to transform him and free him from his psychological problem. Of course, this put these candidates in a lower achieving group because they failed to answer the question properly.

Question 6b

Candidates who answered this question showed a good knowledge of the book. Candidates who achieved highly were able to write about the King's changing character by analysing the events of the play. Weaker candidates were able to copy down parts of the play without any attempt to explain and analyse. On the whole, however, candidates who answered this question did well.

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Paper 9680/05

Prose

General comments

Candidates were required to supply an Arabic translation of the English text. The standard of answers this session showed an improvement from the previous session. However, candidates should be given more practice in the diptote cases, masculine and feminine, and adjectives.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Common mistakes in translation were as follows:

- (a) Candidates seemed unsure how to translate the term 'middle-aged'. Some wrote wrote واسطة العمر. Others wrote رجل غير عجوز
The correct Arabic translation would have been متوسط العمر
- (b) Many candidates translated 'black trousers' as البنطلون الأسود. Some wrote بنطلوناً أسوداً. The correct translation would have been سروالاً أسود، بنطلوناً أسود
- (c) The words 'white shirt' were translated by many candidates as قميص الأبيض. The correct translation would have been قميصاً أبيض
- (d) The phrase 'after a late-night party' was translated by many candidates as بعد مجلس في. Some wrote بعد طعاماً ليلتاً متأخراً. The correct translation would have been بعد حفلة ليلة متأخرة
- (e) Some candidates translated 'The young man nodded' as كان الفتى يديق رأس. The correct translation would have been أومأ الشاب برأسه، أشار الشاب برأسه
- (f) The phrase 'He seemed to have no idea' was translated by some candidates as ليس لديه. The correct translation would have been بدا أنه ليس لديه فكرة
- (g) Some candidates wrote شاهد المشي. The correct spelling is شاهد الماشي
- (h) Many candidates translated 'driver' as الصائق. The correct spelling is السائق