

ARABIC

Paper 9680/04

Texts

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to ensure that they answer the specific question asked and that they understand the focus of the question before beginning to write their answers.

General comments

Overall, the performance of candidates on this paper was good. The majority of candidates focused on the demands of the question asked. There was also an improvement in candidates' approach to organising their answers.

Candidates are encouraged to manage their time effectively in answering questions. A number of candidates made good use of an essay plan before writing their essays, which helped them to identify the main points that they wanted to mention. Candidates should also ensure that their time is divided appropriately between the questions and sufficient time is allocated for checking at the end.

As last year, a number of candidates misread the question paper rubrics and answered only two questions. Candidates should answer **three** questions in total (choosing **either** (a) **or** (b) in each case), with one from Section 1, one from Section 2 and one other. **Each answer must be on a different set text.**

Candidates need to write within the word limit (500–600 words). Some candidates did not adhere to this and did not write enough to show adequate understanding, or wrote substantially more than the word limit. Candidates should be reminded that going beyond the word limit does not improve the quality of the work and may increase the likelihood of errors occurring.

Candidates should be encouraged to ensure that their handwriting is clear and legible. They should also state the specific question they are attempting (e.g. 2a and not just 2). It was noticeable this year that some candidates did not clearly indicate which question they were responding to. Candidates should be encouraged to write the question or part-question on **every** continuing page. It was noticeable this year that a few candidates skipped pages and continued their answer with a few blank pages in between. Candidates should be encouraged not leave blank pages in response to a single question.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1: *Dirāsāt fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabī al-Mu'āsir*, Dr. Shawqī Daif

- (a) Candidates who were awarded high marks on this question offered sufficient detail in their explanation. The verses of the poem were suited to a detailed explanation.
- (b) Many candidates attempted this question and wrote about the poet's political and social views and how these affected his poetry. Some candidates wrote a biography of the poet but did not attempt to quote any of his poems, or quoted very little. Candidates who quoted some of his poetry, as required in the question, were awarded higher marks.

Question 2: *Dīwān Zuhair bin Abī Sulmā*, Ali Faour

- (a) The question required candidates to read the given poetry and explain in detail the situation and events associated with them. Many candidates who attempted this question only included events from the poet's life or wrote in general terms. Candidates who address the specific question asked were awarded higher marks.

- (b) In general, candidates who answered this question did very well. Good candidates successfully used **Question 2a** as a platform to answer this question. Candidates who were awarded marks from the highest band addressed the specific question asked and demonstrated an ability to organise material and considerable sensitivity to language and the author's intentions.

Question 3: *Umarā' al-Shi'r al-'Abbāsī, Anīs Khuri al-Maqdisī*

- (a) Candidates who demonstrated a good understanding of the verses quoted and were able to address the specific question asked were awarded marks from the higher bands. Some candidates did not explain or relate the verses to the poet's life and philosophy as required by the question and were therefore awarded marks from a lower band.
- (b) Candidates who answered this question wrote about the poet in general terms without sufficiently quoting his poems. The question requires references to some verses of the poems in order to explain the poet's philosophy in life.

Section 2

Question 4: *Ahl al-Kahf, Tawfīq al-Hakīm*

- (a) Most candidates answered this question well as they were able to analyse the different events and principles reflected in the story.
- (b) Candidates were required to identify the role of Presca in the play and write about her role in shaping its incidents and events. Many candidates who answered this question wrote about the general events and characters without specific reference to Presca as required by the question. Candidates should be encouraged to address the specific question asked.

Question 5: *al-'Abarāt, Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūtī*

- (a) Many candidates answered this question well and wrote in detail about the different characters in the various stories they had studied in relation to misery and how it is influenced by social status and poverty.
- (b) Candidates who attempted this question were able to give their opinion on the social problems and moral dilemmas that the characters in the story had to face. Candidates who wrote in detail quoting from the author's stories were awarded higher marks.

Questions 6: *Al-Tarīq, Najīb Mahfūz*

- (a) Candidates who answered the question wrote in very general terms. Many candidates were able to explain the events of the story but did not address the specific question asked which was the search for the father.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question and responses, in general, were good. Candidates who were awarded marks from the higher bands demonstrated a good understanding of the events of the main character in the story and provided sufficient detail.

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Paper 9680/02
Reading and Writing

Key Messages

In order to do well in this paper candidates should

- expand their range of vocabulary by reading more widely
- practice use of all types of pronouns
- learn the use of the accusative case of the present tense
- practice the agreement of adjectives
- select relevant information to write a summary and respond to comprehension questions

General comments

Overall, the performance on this paper was good and it was clear that teachers had played an important role in preparing candidates for the examination. There was evidence of improvement in the standard of candidates' answers and there were some very interesting opinions expressed.

Candidates should be reminded not to copy out sections of the text and, as far as possible, they should use their own words and phrases, particularly in response to **Questions 3, 4 and 5**.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Some candidates answered this question successfully.

Appropriate answers included the following:

- أ- عصر: عهد أو زمن أو وقت أو حقبة
- ب- مذهلة: مذهشة أو كبيرة أو عظيمة أو فائقة أو رائعة أو خارقة
- ت- وسيلة: أداة أو واسطة أو طريقة
- ث- ننمي: نطور أو نحسن
- ج- المواثية: المناسبة أو الملائمة أو الصالحة

Question 2

Many candidates had difficulty with **Question 2(e)** as it appeared that they did not know the correct form of the verb after لم.

Question 3

Many candidates answered this question well, using their own words and expressing their understanding of the text provided. **Questions 3(c)** and **3(d)** proved difficult for some candidates, who did not manage to extract the correct information from the text. The following examples demonstrate good responses to these two questions in particular:

ث- إن مجتمعاتنا اليوم في أمس الحاجة إلى الإنسان المفكر المبتكر الذي يتمتع بالقدرة على جلب حلول مبتكرة لمواجهة المشاكل اليومية، والمهارة في الحفاظ على الموارد الطبيعية غير المتجددة وسلوك طريق غير اعتيادية في مواجهة التحديات المختلفة.

ج- أشارت الكاتبة بقلق إلى تخوفها من المبالغة في المسارعة لإنضاج الطفل تحسباً من حدوث اضطرابات نفسية يمكن تفاديها لذلك يجب الحفاظ على التوازن في تحفيزه ومنحه الحرية الفكرية بالشكل الملائم المدروس.

Question 4

There were some very good responses to this question. Many candidates managed to select the right ideas and utilised them in their answers. Part (a) was the least well answered.

Appropriate responses included the following:

أ- بات التردد على الشبكة العنكبوتية نوعاً من الترفيه الذي شابه التردد على دور السينما أو القراءة في مكتبة عامة، ومشاهدة التلفاز.

ب- يعد الإدمان على الأنترنت حالة من الحالات المنتشرة والمعروفة في مراكز العلاج النفسي ويتم التعامل معه على أنه إدمان حقيقي، وذلك لأن الشخص الذي يعاني من إدمان الأنترنت تظهر عليه عادات سلبية كإهمال الواجبات والمسؤوليات المرتبطة بالعمل، وإهمال الأمور الاجتماعية المتعلقة بعائلته وعلاقاته الاجتماعية الأخرى خاصة مع الأصدقاء.

ت- ظهرت عليها بعض علامات وأعراض الإدمان على الحاسوب فقد كانت تمضي ما يزيد عن اثنتي عشرة ساعة يومياً أمام شاشته وذلك على حساب ذهابها إلى العمل.

Question 5

There were many good responses to this question by candidates who managed to select the relevant ideas from both texts concerning the positive and negative effects of the use of computers and the internet and summarised these ideas in a well-structured manner.

Part (a): Candidates who scored highly successfully selected relevant ideas from both reading passages and presented them in a well-structured summary in their own words. Candidates should be encouraged to read the question carefully and address all the aspects asked in their summary. They should also be encouraged to use their own words as far as possible and not copy out large sections of the texts.

Part (b): Candidates who scored highly put forward relevant comments about how they benefit from the computer and the internet. Candidates who wrote solely about the necessity of using computers were not awarded marks as this was not asked in the question.

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Paper 9680/03
Essay

Key Messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to ensure that they answer the specific question asked and that they understand the focus of the question before beginning to write their answers.

General comments

This is an essay paper in which candidates are required to compose one essay from a choice of five topics. The essay is marked out of 40, with 16 marks for Content and 24 marks for Quality of Language.

Overall, the performance of candidates was satisfactory. Some candidates produced very good responses.

The best responses comprised fluent and coherent essays, focusing on the precise requirement of the question. Some other responses lacked originality and depth in their essays, going away from the focus of the question.

As advised in last year's PERT, some candidates seemed to be reliant on previously prepared or memorised essays and therefore were unable to address the specific question. Candidates who scored highly on this paper wrote original essays focusing on the requirements of the question.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This topic was answered by many candidates. The best essays were very well written, explaining with examples how a happy life can be characterised by a balance between work and free time.

Question 2

This topic in general, produced very well written essays. Most candidates understood the question and focused on the influence of mass media in society, citing very good examples to support their argument. Some responses focused solely on one aspect of the media such as TV or radio and therefore did not address the specific question asked and did not gain as many marks.

Question 3

Candidates who scored highly on this question address the specific question asked and discussed eloquently the link between the past and present in maintaining the environment. Candidates who focussed on the sources of pollution or the present only, for example, did not address the specific question asked and were not awarded as many marks.

Question 4

Candidates who scored highly on this question made an effective comparison between the roles of the family and schools in educating children. Candidates who focussed on the importance of schools or the family only, did not score as well as they did not address the specific question.

Question 5

Candidates discussed to what extent we should respect our cultural heritage. Those candidates who produced relevant examples to support their argument were awarded higher marks.

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Paper 9680/05

Prose

Key Messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should ensure that they read through the prose passage carefully before beginning to translate.

Candidates should try to allow themselves a little time at the end to read over what they have written to ensure that it makes sense and to check their spelling and grammar.

General comments

Candidates were required to translate an English text into Arabic. Translations that conveyed the correct meaning, used appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures were awarded higher marks.

There were some excellent answers showing accurate translations in good Arabic. Candidates should be encouraged to conjugate verbs in the present tense and focus on nominal sentences, relative pronouns and noun-adjectives agreement in particular. Stronger candidates generally used appropriate vocabulary, correct and accurate grammatical structures and conveyed the correct meaning of the passage.

The following is a list of common errors noted in candidates' answers, and are areas in which candidates would benefit from further practice.

- Some candidates struggled to translate 'one woman invites us'. A correct translation would have been تدعونا امرأة / سيدة.
- A number of candidates translated 'the sun goes down' as تشرق الشمس. A correct translation would have been تغرب الشمس.
- A few candidates translated 'the village will soon be dark' as تصبح القرية مظلمة. A correct translation would have been تصبح القرية مظلمة.