



Examiner's Report Principal Examiner
Feedback
Summer 2019
Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Chinese (8CN0) Paper 1

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Paper overview

The GCE Chinese 8CN0 01 was set as per the GCE 2017 Specification, and is consistent with the format of the previous 8CN0 01 paper. As a Listening, Reading and Translation paper, this paper rewards students for their abilities to extract and communicate information from both recorded and written sources in Chinese.

All the passages are taken from the following two published themes:

Theme 1 Changes in contemporary Chinese society

- Family
- Education and the world of work

Theme 2 Chinese culture

- Traditions
- Cultural activities

This paper consists of three sections: Listening, Reading and Translation and there are a variety of task-types, some require non-verbal answers and others require written answers. It begins with three recordings, which are available in Cantonese and Mandarin, followed by four reading passages and an article for translation. All the passages and questions are printed twice in the Questions Booklet, once in traditional/full characters and once in simplified characters. Students may write in traditional or simplified characters in the Answer Booklet.

A total of one hour and forty-five minutes was available for the completion of the paper. Students must attempt all questions and a broad range of marks were awarded. The paper is worth 64 marks in total, of which 24 marks for Listening, 28 marks for Reading and 12 marks for Translation.

As this is the second year of the Specification, most of the teachers and students are, with the reference the Examiner's Report and examination paper, well attuned to the demands of the paper and there is little evidence that students did not have sufficient time to complete all the questions.

This paper is marked following principles consistent with the previous session and there is a decent number of very good and excellent performances. The following sections will discuss the students' performances in further details.

Students' Performances

In the 2019 exam cycle, the paper's structure remains the same as the previous exam series of the GCE 2017 Specification in that there are a total of eight questions which test listening, reading and translation skills.

This paper consists of three sections.

Section A Listening (24 marks)

Section A is a listening assessment with a maximum of 24 marks. It requires students to listen to a range of recorded Chinese-language materials and to retrieve and convey information given by responding to Chinese-language questions. Students will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses, short answers or summaries in Chinese.

In this section, students will have individual control of the recordings and they may listen to the recording of each passage, in Mandarin or in Cantonese, as many times as they like. Students are advised to listen, stop, revisit and replay sections of the recordings at will within the allotted time to complete the three relevant listening questions and to make more certain that the answers they have written down are correct.

There are three questions in this section made up of multiple-choice and open-response questions, including questions testing summary skills. All questions, with the exception of Q3(b), are set in Chinese and must be answered in Chinese. Q3(b) is set in English and must be answered in English. No credit could be given for answers written in the wrong language or pinyin.

In this paper, Passage 1 of Section A was a multiple choice question worth six marks, about the Children's Festival. In response to Passage 2, about Elderly Life, it required written answers in Chinese, worth 6 marks. Passage 3 was, about a Radio Interview, Question 3(a) required written answers in Chinese, worth 8 marks, and, Question 3(b), where four marks were on offer for two written summaries in English.

A vast majority of the students were able to understand the content of the passages and gave some quality performances. Students who scored high are likely to be those who responded after listening to the whole passages carefully.

Question 1

The majority of students responded very well in this question with only a very small number of candidates made mistakes in Q1(iv).

Question 2

Most students showed good understanding of this passage and they were able to write all six correct answers to this question. It is evident that the question is very accessible as the writing characters in this question are basic and daily. A vast majority of students showed good understanding of the extract. Those who did not listen to the recording carefully lost marks in (a) while those who struggled to write Chinese characters did not score in (c).

Question 3

This passage is the longest recording amongst the three passages and the question carries the largest number of marks out of the three questions as students are required to give a written response in Chinese based on the information provided in the passage for the questions in 3(a) and two short summaries in English for 3(b). Students who struggled to write Chinese characters lost marks in (a)(iv) and (a)(v).

As for Question 3(b), some students did not read the question carefully and translated the recording into English, included some irrelevant information. There were responses appeared to have details glossed over, e.g. responded with “cooking” and omitted “(cooking) something he likes” and “listen to music” and omitted “(listen) to different types of music”. Students are to be reminded that precise understanding and summaries with specific information are essential to score in this question.

Section B Reading (28 marks)

Section B is a reading assessment with a maximum of 28 marks. It requires students to comprehend Chinese-language printed materials and to retrieve and convey information given by responding to a multiple choice question and three short answer questions in Chinese. Students will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. All answers must be based exclusively on the information in the passages and no credit can be given for students’ own interpretation which has no basis in the original passages.

In this paper, the four reading comprehension passages relate to Reading online, Conference of Dictation on Chinese Characters, Generation Gap and Gap Year. The questions carry 4, 6, 8 and 10 marks respectively, giving a total of 28 marks.

While majority of students were able to understand the content of the passages, they were not always able to respond to the questions correctly. Misinterpretation of the questions, missing key information appeared to be the common mistakes.

Question 4

Four correct statements from eight possible statements had to be selected, each worth one mark. The performance in this question was good and most students scored 3 marks or more. A and F were the least successful items and E and G were sometimes chosen in error.

Question 5

A good number of students made good attempts at this question. They demonstrated good understanding of the passage and were able to produce accurate responses. For those who did not score well, the most common mistakes are that they did not read the question (b) carefully and responded with "who" instead of "where" and some failed to give full details for (d).

Question 6

This is another very well attempted question and most of the students showed good understanding of the passage and responded to all five sub-questions correctly. Those who did not score full marks failed to provide specific information in their responses, such as omitted "跟朋友……" in (d) and "……的心情" in (e).

Question 7

This question requires precise understanding of the passage to score. Although the students' performances on each sub-question were rather mixed, most of the students scored seven marks out of the ten available. Some students failed to read the word "who" in (a) and responded with "when". Other common mistakes were made in (c) and (f), which showed that the students did not read the questions in full or they did not understand the passage correctly.

Section C Translation (12 marks)

Section C requires students to translate a short Chinese passage into English. The Chinese text was divided into 12 discrete language elements each worth one mark to give an overall mark out of 12.

The lexis of this passage is relatively straightforward and the overall performance was good with a majority of students scored 8 marks out of the 12 marks. Although most candidates showed a good understanding of the article as a whole, there were students who struggled with some vocabulary or phrases, such as "筷子", "一部分", "亞洲/亚洲", "飲食文化/饮食文化", "比如" and "西方人". Students who

scored high are normally those included most, if not every, language element.

While students are reminded to produce a piece of translation which accurate transfer of meaning is vital, ensuring their work is free from grammatical mistakes is equally important, for, incorrect use of grammar, e.g. word order or sentence structure, can also hinder the meaning as well as wrong spellings or choice of words.

Paper Summary

Based on their performances in this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Read the rubrics and instructions carefully before answering the questions and adhere to the requirements, e.g. whether the answers should be in English or in Chinese.
- Check the corner marks of each question and search for the most appropriate/related answers for the questions.
- Answer all questions based exclusively on the information in the passages.
- Ensure the specific details required are provided.
- Pay attention when “lifting” text. Inference and manipulation are sometimes needed.
- Ensure the spellings are correct and syntax is accurate.
- Take care over precise English expression in questions 3(b) and 8.
- Question 8 comprises of twelve separate scoring units. Students should put down every element they can, even if they do not feel able to attempt a number of words or phrases.
- It is worth using some time to check and proofread answers.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

