

Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE In Chinese (9CN0)

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation

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Introduction

This was a special and additional assessment of this paper unit in autumn 2021. This paper includes a translation exercise and two written responses to works. The total mark for this paper is 120.

Candidates must answer Question 1 in Section A by translating a short piece of text from English into Chinese. In addition, they must answer two questions from Sections B and C – this means either two literary works from Section B or one literary work from Section B and one film from Section C. The duration of the examination is 2 hours 40 minutes.

In Section A Question 1 (20 marks), candidates are required to translate a short piece of text from English into Chinese. The content of the translation is a passage based on one of the four themes as indicated in the Specification. Candidates are assessed with reference to their ability to produce an accurate and appropriate translation.

Section B consists of three questions (Question 2, Question 3 and Question 4) on different literary works, whereas Section C consists of three questions (Question 5, Question 6 and Question 7) on different films. Prescribed literary works and films can be found in Appendix 2 of the Specification. Candidates are expected to write between 250 and 350 Chinese characters for each question. The whole essay is marked regardless of length.

For Question 2 to Question 7, each essay is assessed based on the following three categories: critical and analytical response (20 marks); range of grammatical structures and vocabulary (20 marks); and accuracy of language (10 marks).

Section A (Question 1)

This question consisted of a short English passage on "School Life and Student Issues". It was divided into 20 discrete language sections. Each correctly-translated section was given one mark.

While the majority of the candidates were able to convey the overall meaning of the passage, only a few were able to achieve full marks.

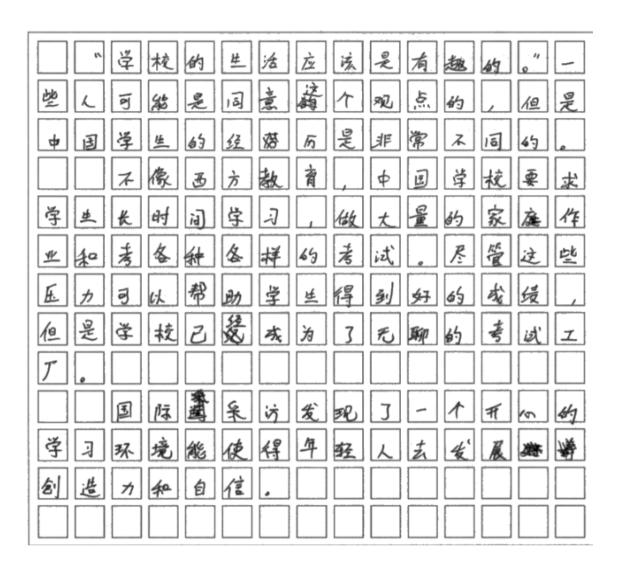
The vocabulary items were closely relevant to the sub-theme. Examples were "school
life", "education", "homework", and "learning environment". Most candidates were able
to give a close transfer of the meaning in Chinese. However, some lost marks owing to
their inability to write the Chinese characters correctly, such as □ "□ "/ □ "□ "; "□ "□
/"□"□.

While most of the candidates were aware of the nuance between English and Chinese, careless mistakes were found in some commonly-used English words, as shown in the following table.

English words/phrases	Common mistakes made by candidates
may	
experience	
many	
different	
education	
Chinese schools	
huge amounts of	
all kinds of	
these	
results	
factories	
develop	
creativity	
self-confidence	

In terms of sentence/word order, the majority of the candidates paid great attention to the differences between English and Chinese. However, some candidates made unnecessary changes in the first paragraph by reversing the order of the first two sentences, "'School life should be fun' Some people may agree with this view". As a result, there was a great loss of meaning.

The following competent piece of translation was awarded 18 out of 20 available marks.



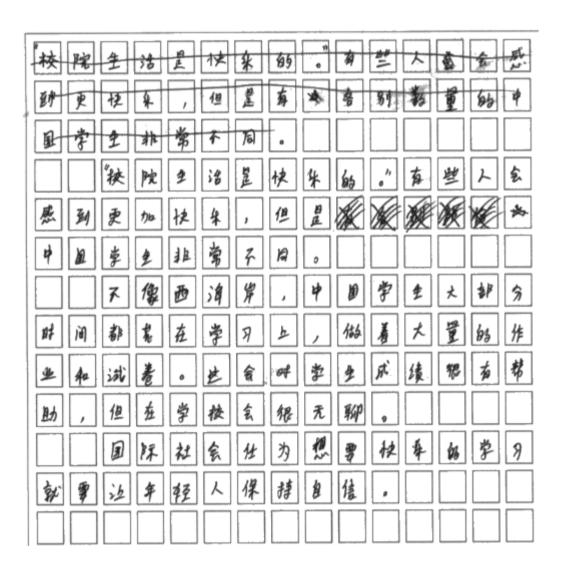
Results Language Section, "but the experience of many Chinese students," lost 1 mark because the meaning of "many" (很多 /很多) was missing. Another language section,

"International research has found that," also lost 1 mark because "research" should be 研究/研究rather than 採訪/采 访.



This example demonstrated very good translation skills. However, candidates should double check the product whether it has fully rendered the original text or not.

Despite the efforts made, the following piece of translation scored 5 out of 20 marks.





The candidate found this question very challenging, only being able to translate five language sections into Chinese accurately:非常不同;大部分時間都花在學習上;做著大量的作業;讓年輕人and自信.



The example showed that the grammatical structures were generally correct, but there were a lot of missing words and inaccurate Chinese characters. In order to enhance the quality of translation, candidates must familiarise themselves with the vocabulary items in Chinese.

Section B

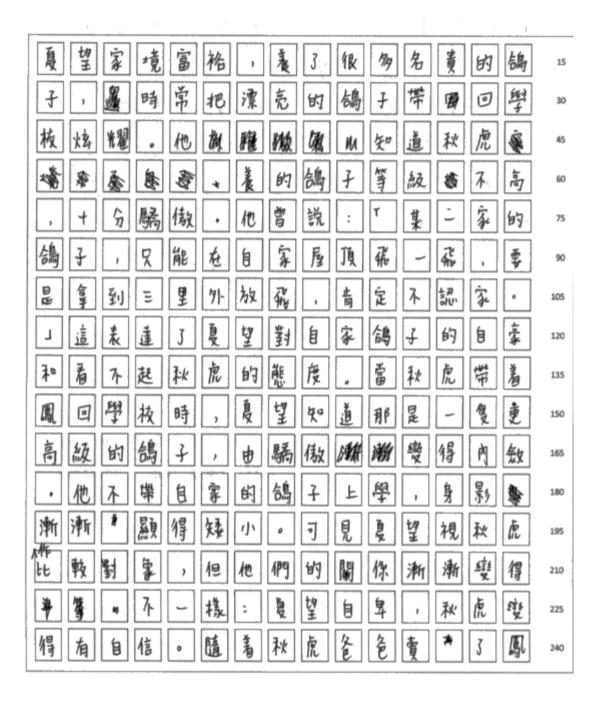
Compared with Section C (films), many more candidates attempted the questions on literary works. Candidates should be aware that evidence must be based on the original literary works. No credit will be given for essays on literary works that are based on the film versions adapted from the literary works.

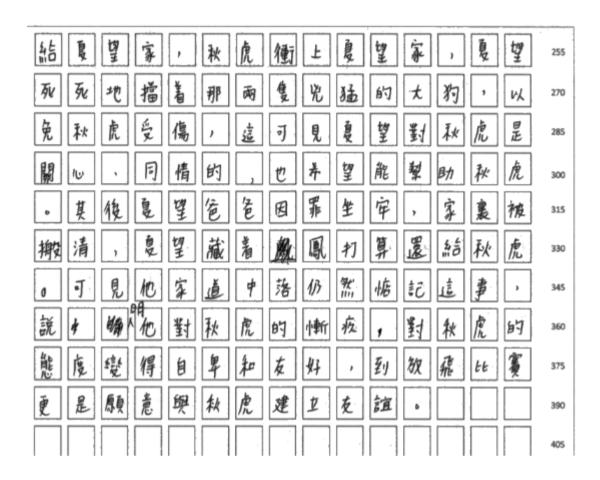
Question 2

Most candidates were able to demonstrate that Xiawang's behavioural and emotional changes towards Qiuhu. More able candidates provided thorough analysis supported by concrete examples of the key events in the fiction. Less able candidates shifted their perspectives between Xiawang and Qiuhu, leading to a loss of focus in their responses. In sum, candidates were **unable to gain high marks** if they

- described the interaction between Xiawang and Qiuhu without focussing the attention on Xiawang.
- examined the writing techniques employed by the author in the fiction.
- analysed from Qiuhu's angle rather than from Xiawang's angle.
- provided wrong evidence, such as Qiuhu took Feng to the pigeon race at the end of story.
- summarised the plot of the story without making any relevant analysis.
- focussed too much on the different family backgrounds of the two boys or on how Qiuhu got the pigeon, Feng.

The following essay achieved 42 out of 50 (16 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 17 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 9 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The essay contained predominantly relevant response to the question. It analysed succinctly the gradual changes of Xiawang towards Qiuhu with appropriately selected evidence from the fiction. There was good use of grammatical structures, vocabulary and literary terminology.



There is a need to start the essay with an introduction. The last point (only one sentence) about the collection of the prize money needs further elaboration. In order to achieve higher marks, candidates need to focus on the organisation of the essay and make detailed arguments on key points.

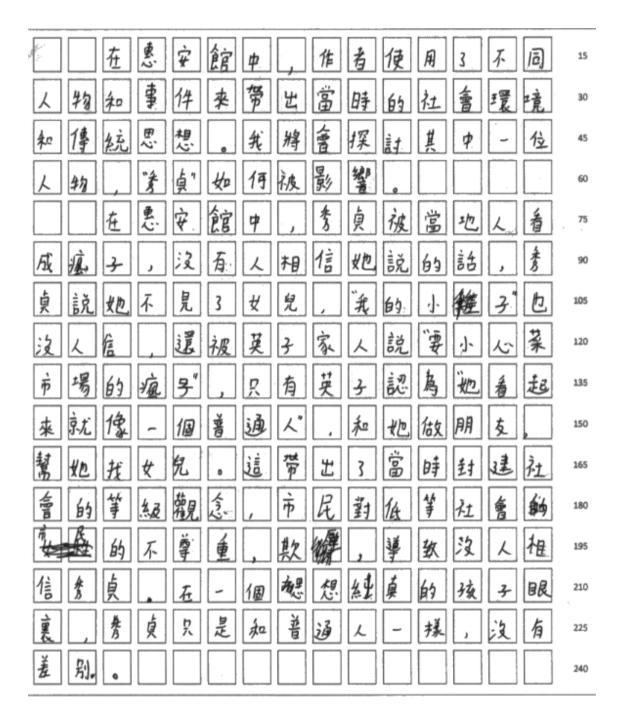
Question 3

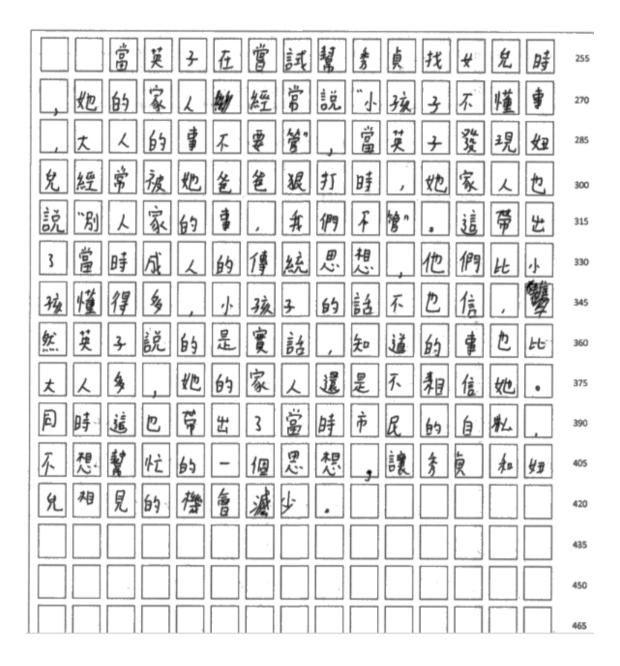
In general, candidates had a good understanding of the fiction, which is the longest one among the three fictions in the Specification. Most of the candidates were able to indicate, at least, that Xiuzhen was an unmarried mother and thus was seen by her parents as a disgrace to the whole family. However, many of them could not further their discussion to the socio-economic status of women in a patriarchal society.

In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks if they

- summarised the story without any exploration of Xiuzhen's fate and the related factors.
- provided wrong evidence from the work, such as Xiuzhen's baby was abandoned under a tree.
- focussed on one single fact that Xiuzhen was an unmarried mother.
- re-told Xiuzhen's love story, her friendship with Yingzi and her reunion with Niu'er
- failed to provide details to make their argument (e.g., on social circumstances and traditional moral standards) convincing and coherent.

The following essay achieved 24 out of 50 (8 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 10 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 8 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The response related to the work, but was not well-focussed on the question. The points of view showed superficial interpretation. For example, the response did not go more indepth to explain why Xiuzhen was mad. The evidence illustrating how Xiuzhen's life was confined by the traditional ethical code was hardly convincing. The language was in general accurate.



There is much room for improvement, such as a relevant focus on the question, an in-depth understanding of the story, and a logical presentation of arguments.

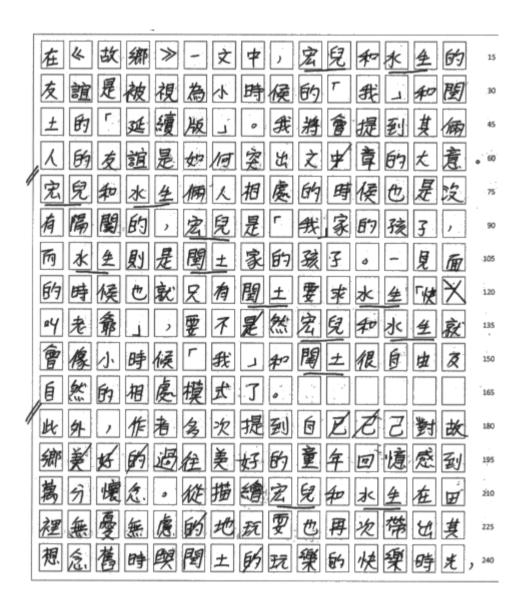
Question 4

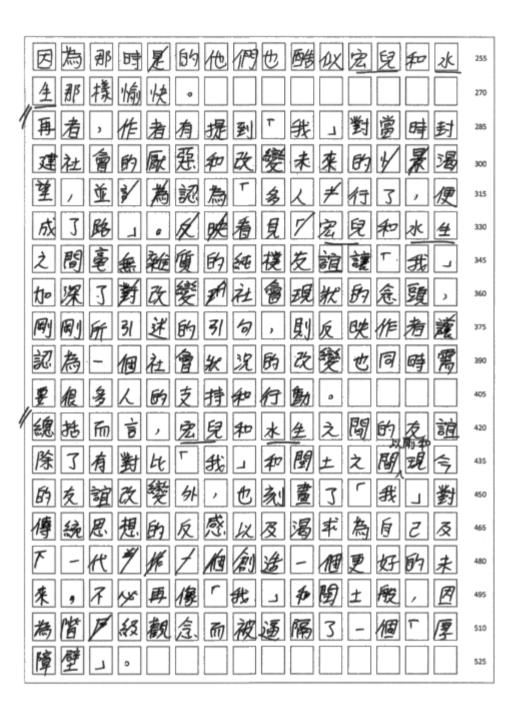
Most of the candidates did well by analysing how the friendship of Hong'er and Shuisheng mirrored the childhood friendship of the narrator and Runtu. However, quite a few candidates failed to mention that these two young boys' friendship gave hope to the narrator.

In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks if they

- failed to juxtapose the friendship of the two young boys with that of the two middle-aged men.
- lost focus in the content. For example, some candidates described in length the friendship between Runtu and the narrator "I".
- did not sufficiently provide evidence from the work to justify how the friendship of Hong'er and Shuisheng was almost identical to that between the narrator and Runtu.
- mistook Hong'er as the narrator's son.
- mistook the narrator as the writer, Lu Xun.

The following essay achieved 34 out of 50 (12 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 13 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 9 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The response was relevant to some aspects of the question. For example, it described Hong'er and Shuisheng started the friendship without difficulty, quite similar to the start of the friendship between "I" and Runtu. The evidence selected from the work was relevant, but some of it was ambiguous (e.g., Hong'er was the child of "my" family) and inaccurate (Hong'er and Shuisheng played happily in the field). There was occasional loss of focus when the response connected their friendship to the idea of changing society.



In order to improve the response, the candidate needs to pay full attention to the accuracy of the details from the work (e.g., Hong'er was the narrator's 8-year-old nephew). This is important to link the evidence closely with the arguments.

Section C

Not many candidates attempted each of the three questions on films. Candidates should be aware that evidence must be based on the original films.

Question 5

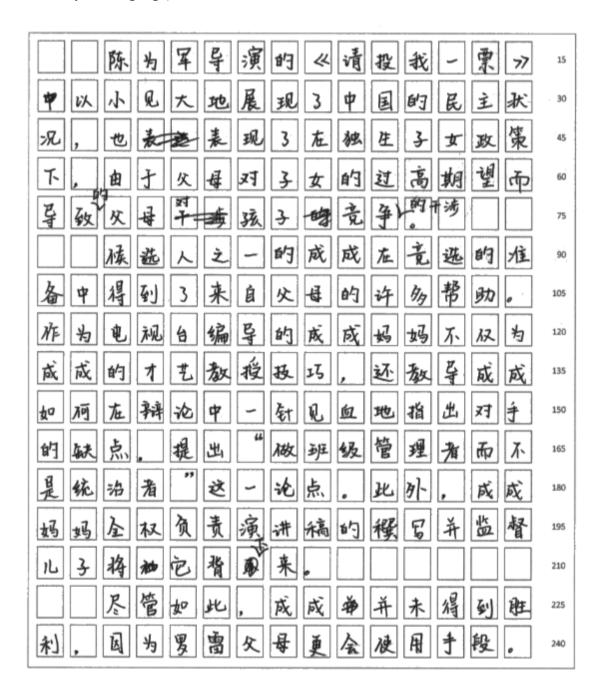
Most candidates addressed well on how the class monitor election campaign had turned to be a competition among the parents, by analysing how their strategies had influenced the process and eventually the result. A few candidates gave two much weight on one or two candidates. Some candidates did not even mention the film at all in the essay.

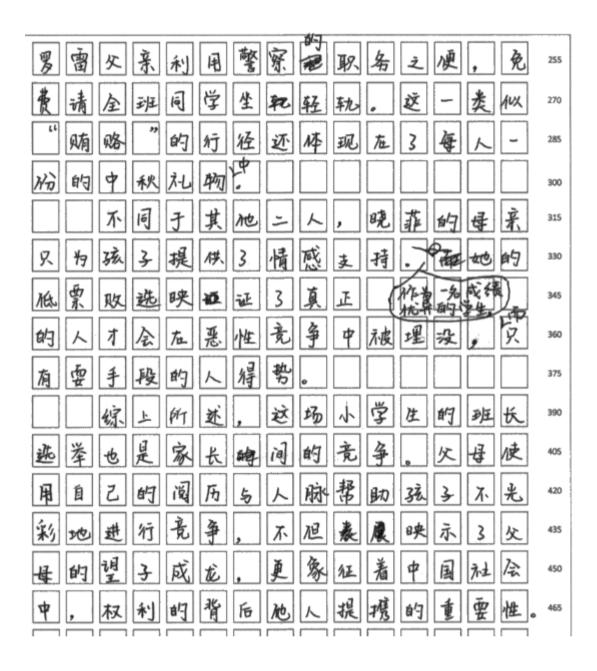
In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks if they

- simply described the election campaign without responding to the question about the competition among the parents.

- wrote a free-style essay about parental expectation on children without citing any scenes or characters in the film
- failed to show a good understanding of the film. For example, some candidates wrote that Xiaofei did not receive any guidance from her mother at all.
- miswrote the names of the characters in the film.
- over-emphasised one or two candidates of the election.

The following answer achieved 45 out of 50 (17 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 19 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 9 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The response consistently demonstrated a critical analysis of why the class monitor election was also a competition among the parents. The justifications were convincing with appropriate evidence from the film. On the whole, the essay was written with fluency and accuracy.



The response may attempt to provide more evidence from the film to support the analysis that Xiaofei had received emotional support from her mother.

Question 6

Question 6 was to examine how the director has used a number of scenes to depict the dream of the rural people for city life. Most candidates were able to explore at least a couple of these scenes, a few of them put too much emphasis on how Xiaogui got the bicycle or on another main character, Xiaojian.

In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks if they

- made a general description of the film without addressing the question.
- provided one or two scenes regarding the city dream of the rural people.
- failed to use cinematic language to make the analysis.
- explored Xiaojian's desire for the bicycle.
- limited their discussion to Xiaogui only.
- failed to delve deeper into the film to support their analysis, such as the scenes involving the attractive girl, Qin, and Xiaogui's rural friend.

The following answer achieved 36 out of 50 (13 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 14 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 9 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The response showed a good understanding of the expectations of the question. The scenes and interpretations were in general appropriate with some good details. For example, the paragraph about Xiaogui cycling on his new bicycle in the city centre was well-written.

The essay was coherent with frequent use of cinematic language.



The response may improve by delving deeper into the attractive girl's background and her dream for city life.

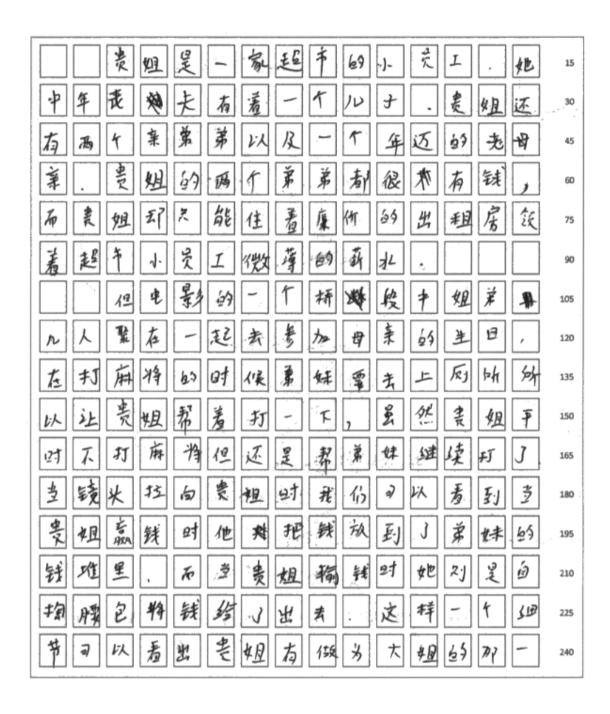
To improve the organisation of the essay, the candidate needs to write a conclusion to link all the arguments together.

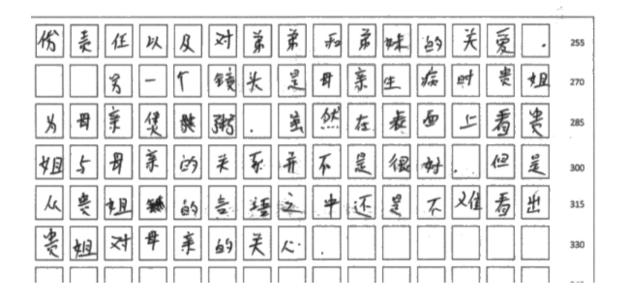
While most of the candidates were able to give a general picture of the relationships of Kwai to her mother and two younger brothers, they made quite a lot of mistakes in the details. In addition, it was quite often that some candidates misplaced the weight on one or two events, forgetting to analyse more events.

In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks if they

- identified only one or two events about Kwai's relationships to her mother and brothers.
- made inaccurate account of the details of the events (e.g., Kwai sent her hospitalised mother money rather than visiting her).
- provided irrelevant evidence (e.g., the relationship of the mother and her sons).
- failed to provide appropriate evidence from the work to support their arguments.

The following essay achieved 22 out of 50 (7 marks for Critical and Analytical Response; 8 marks for Range of Grammatical Structures and Vocabulary; 7 marks for Accuracy of Language).







The response was relevant to the question, but a bit brief. In particular, the hospitalisation of Kwai's mother lacked in-depth analysis.

The writing was in general coherent with some appropriate use of cinematic language.



In order to capture the main events, the candidate needs to pay full attention to its setting, plot, interaction among the characters, and significant events.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Since Section A (Question 1) is marked based on individual sections of language, candidates must do the translation carefully. Over-translation and undertranslation should be avoided. It is advisable to double check the translation against the original text, making sure that all meanings are rendered fully and correctly.
- To prepare well for Section B and Section C, it is of utmost importance that candidates are familiar with the works.
- When writing an essay, always organise it with an introduction, main body and a conclusion.
- Write the response critically, analytically and logically.
- Remember to justify points of view with appropriately selected evidence from the works.
- Avoid addressing a question by summarising the whole story or the entire film.
- In order to enhance clarity of communication, candidates must aim at producing a wide range of grammatical structures, vocabulary, cinematic/literary terminology, and a high level of accuracy of Chinese characters.

Grade Boundaries

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