

# PORTUGUESE LITERATURE

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Paper 8672/04

Texts

## General comments

The paper was tackled well by the greater majority of candidates. There were many good answers and some candidates were able to look beyond the immediate material and show some understanding of the author's intentions, focusing on some passages, demonstrating coherence, choosing a detailed approach and using good illustrations.

Candidates should always be reminded to link the story of the book to the question and give examples, with quotes, to justify what they write. There were some candidates who narrated the story of the book and forgot to link it to the question while others were unable to explain and justify their statements.

Please ensure that in future sessions candidates are reminded that it is important to specify which questions they are answering. Giving the title of the book is not sufficient. Every candidate is required to write down the question number and to indicate whether they are attempting to answer **Question (a)** or **(b)**. When candidates quote from the text, the page number is irrelevant because there are various editions of the same book.

For the past few years we have noticed that some candidates do not always pay much attention to the instructions. Unfortunately this results in candidates answering either too many or too few questions. The current layout of the exam has been amended to make this even clearer to candidates. Yet again there were a few candidates who failed to provide an answer to all three questions. Centres should stress the importance of these instructions to the candidates. Please ensure that the candidates are reminded to have a good read of the questions and are taught how to pre-plan their answer to avoid repetition and/or answering something different from what was asked.

The most popular questions this year were **Question 1**, **Question 2** and **Question 5**, although the other questions were also answered by a number of candidates.

Candidates did not have great difficulty with regard to vocabulary and grammar. There were some interferences from other languages, but it was mostly easy to understand what was meant.

Candidates should always make an effort to write legibly, and make sure their handwriting is clear.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1**

The majority of candidates did not have any problems with **Question 1(a)**, which was very straightforward. Candidates showed good insight when discussing the characters, had a sound knowledge of the text and were able to illustrate and develop points. In **Question 1(b)**, some candidates were able to give quite a few examples of romanticism and link these to the novel. A minority of candidates did not fully understand the question and only wrote about the romance between Eurico and Hermengarda.

**Question 2(a) (i)** was not fully taken into account by most candidates who answered Question 2. Candidates focused their attention mainly on **(ii)** describing the different roles women had in this novel.

**Question 2(b)** was very well tackled by most candidates, but some could have made better use of quotes. Appropriate use of quotes would have justified some of the statements written and therefore would have enriched the answer.

**Question 3(a)** was often answered in a very simple and sometimes superficial way. Some candidates tended to repeat the same points.

## **Section 2**

Candidates did not seem to have any difficulty answering **Question 4(a)** but some could have explained the importance of the matter more efficiently by reference to passages of the text.

In this section the majority of candidates answered **Question 5** and some produced very good answers. Some candidates were able to look beyond the immediate material and show an understanding of the author's intentions, by focusing on key passages, demonstrating coherence, choosing a detailed approach and using good illustrations. Some candidates approached their answers in a very similar way, which perhaps reflects the way they were prepared for the examination.

In **Question 6(a)** candidates were able to clearly show their knowledge of *plot* and *characters*. All the candidates knew that Alberto Soares was the narrator and made an effort to write about the importance of his role. This was mostly done in one or two paragraphs. Some candidates decided to write more about all the other characters and provided too much irrelevant information. It is very important that candidates fully understand the question before answering.

The vast majority of candidates who chose **Question 6(b)** provided some very good answers. There were one or two who ignored or did not understand the question, which asked them to explain the importance of three symbols of *nature* such as the mountain, the night, the sun, the fire, etc.