

PORTUGUESE LITERATURE

Paper 8672/04

Texts

General Comments

Most candidates were well prepared for this year's paper. It seems that most Centres worked well with candidates not only by helping them understand the story between the lines but also the author's intentions. There were some very good answers where candidates focused on passages, wrote coherently with much detail and using good illustrations.

Candidates should be reminded that it is important to specify which questions they are answering. Giving the title of the book is not sufficient and there is no need to copy the question. Candidates are advised to write the question number and then indicate whether they are attempting to answer **Question (a)** or **(b)**. If they choose to answer **Question (a)** they will need to answer both **Questions (i)** and **(ii)** and when doing so, it is not compulsory to separate the two. However, candidates must ensure that they answer both parts of the question to fully cover the required content and be able to gain higher marks. Unfortunately, a small number of candidates this session failed to answer three questions, each on a different text. If **Question 1b** is chosen, candidates cannot answer **Question 1a** anymore. This is explained in detail in the instructions on the front page. Teachers are advised to stress to candidates the importance of reading the whole paper carefully and following the instructions as well as to explain the different answering options prior to the examination.

This year candidates used more quotes than ever to justify their answers but they should be reminded that they do not need to write page numbers which are not relevant because there are various editions of the same book. In future exam sessions, Centres could ask candidates to refer to chapters instead.

Although this paper does not have a separate section for grammar and quality of language in the Mark Scheme, candidates should make an effort to focus on accuracy in their use of language. There were a lot of spelling mistakes, some interference from other languages (mainly English and Spanish) as well as grammar mistakes such as the wrong use of direct and indirect object pronouns, incorrect prepositions and subjunctives.

This year there was not a question that stood out in popularity; all questions were equally popular apart from **Question 6**.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) and **(b)** were very popular amongst candidates who did not seem to have any difficulties to come up with examples from the passage or the rest of the novel to justify their answers. Some candidates still felt tempted to write as much as possible about the whole book but that was not asked in the question.

Question 2

(a) Many candidates could have done better on this question. Most mentioned the different roles water played but were not able to develop a very thorough response with examples.

Question 2 (b) was also very popular but not everybody was able to fully explain the meaning of the title. There was a lot of symbolism here and especially the role of the water was justified by many in a rather simplistic way.

Many candidates who picked **Question 3** preferred **Question (b)** which did not seem to be difficult to answer as they had to go through the whole story to identify the three phases in Bento Santiago's life: *Bentinho*, *Dr Bento Fernandes Santiago* and *Dom Casmurro*. A great number of candidates either identified a lot more phases than these three or just decided to write everything they knew about this character, losing focus and forgetting what the question was all about.

Section 2

Question 4 was in general very well answered. Candidates had a good knowledge of the book, there were a lot of illustrations and good insight when discussing characters. The understanding of the author's intentions and of underlying themes were very clear in candidates' answers.

Question 5 (b) was very popular as well. Beresford was one of the main characters in the play and candidates knew a lot about him. Unfortunately, some decided to write more about the play and only very little about Beresford.