



Oral Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students were well prepared for the Conversation section and were able to converse effectively with the assessors about different subjects. However, their performance overall was not always strong, as some of them used dialects of Arabic in the Discussion section. Students need to be better prepared in terms of being able to use modern, standard Arabic spontaneously in unrehearsed situations. Well-prepared students were able to link effectively with the assessors.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

In this section students performed reasonably well. They spoke with confidence about areas of their personal world, such as school, home life, family and friends, future aspirations and leisure. While it is vital to prepare for this section, students must not rely solely on prepared statements and need to be aware that their responses should link directly with the assessors' questions and comments. Students who were less well prepared found it difficult to extend beyond 'yes/no' responses and were unable to follow up with more details.

Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of sub-topic is extremely important for the Discussion. Students should have studied their sub-topic for 15 hours in class and been exposed to different resources from which they could draw for their Discussion. This was not always done successfully. Some topics did not allow for lively discussion, and other topics were beyond the language skills of some students.

Sub-topics chosen by students this year included:

- the role women in the Arabic society
- the Arabic family in Australia
- the history of Arabic films
- the Arabic language
- a popular Arabic writer.

Students need to be more familiar with the structure and the requirements of the Discussion section. The study design recommends that students use three different resources; however, some students were unable to name their resources. Most successful students were able to outline the sub-topic within the one-minute introduction, giving the names of the three texts studied, the title of the sub-topic and a brief outline of the sub-topic, focusing on its issues.

Written Component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students generally performed reasonably well on the 2006 Arabic written examination. It is important for teachers to stress to students that they must read through the questions very carefully and highlight key words. Students must also practise their note-taking skills, particularly for the listening texts.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

In this section students were required to listen to three texts and respond to a number of questions. Students must understand the requirements of this section. They need to be able to respond to questions relating to language features of the text as well as analyse information from spoken texts and identify information relating to the content, purpose and audience of the text.

Most students attempted all questions and generally completed the task using the correct language (Arabic or English). Some students did not read the question carefully, which led to irrelevant answers. Weaknesses in language were

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evident, the most common being inaccurate sentence structure and tenses. However, overall, most responses were of a satisfactory linguistic level.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1

When the supply of oil is greater than the demand.

Question 2

- changes in the weather/the onset of European winter
- countries using alternative sources of energy

Question 3

Either of:

- oil is rock solid
- the supply of energy is outpacing demand.

Question 4

- supply and demand
- stockpiles of oil
- price

Question 5

Any three of:

- solar energy
- hydroelectricity
- hot rocks
- coal.

Text 2

Question 6

They marry content that is amusing and cheerful with depth of thought and objectivity. They are able to make the reader laugh, and produce happiness and a diversion of the soul

Question 7

(Enriched the) treasure.

Question 8

Either of:

- listeners
- program.

Part B – Answer in Arabic

Text 3

Question 9

She sees their portrayal as a barometer measuring the states of women.

Question 10

- vast body of literature
- dates back a long way
- role of women is continually evolving

Question 11

- they are two different matters/it does not reflect real life
- literature helps us to understand society
- literature transforms/effects change/regenerates society

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Question 12

- she is female
- she has achieved a lot

Question 13

President, lawyer, etc.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

There was a great deal of information in the two texts and some students had difficulty selecting the correct information for their responses. Each text must be read carefully, and unfamiliar or difficult words should be noted so that students can go back and look up the meaning in their dictionary. Students should read each text more than once in order to establish overall meaning.

Part A – Answer in English

Text 4

Question 14

- they had only pictographic writing to transmit their ideas
- no records remain of their calculations

Question 15

Their religious and nationalistic identity.

Question 16

- pictograms/hieroglyphs
- demotic
- Greek/Coptic
- Arabic

Question 17

They used seven different symbols, wrote the highest number first and read from the top down.

Question 18

Napoleon's soldiers found the Rosetta Stone, which contained three languages relating to each other and ancient Egyptian society. Francois Champollion unravelled the meaning/code of the three languages on the Rosetta Stone by recognising the name of a pharaoh.

Question 19

Any five of:

- its name, alchemy, which means chemistry
- information from papyrus literature
- engineering feats in extant structures such as the Pyramids, temples and obelisks
- a decimal system
- astronomy
- medicine.

Part B – Answer in Arabic

Text 5

Question 20

Any five of:

- repetition; for example, 'in it', 'with it', 'on it'
- adjectival phrases such as 'this miracle material' and 'this amazing product'
- stressing good qualities; for example, durability, lighter, cheaper
- addressing the audience directly; for example, 'we' and 'our needs'
- alluding to its superiority; for example, 'reigns' and 'paramount'
- humour; for example, 'The Tin Man' and the title
- has overcome previous difficulties to make life easier.

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Question 21

- rusting
- lack of durability
- heavy weight of construction materials
- high cost of materials
- limited range of natural materials

Section 3 – Writing in Arabic

Almost all students attempted this section. Responses covered the entire marking range, and some students produced excellent pieces. These students successfully structured their writing, including a beginning, sequenced ideas and an appropriate conclusion. Most students wrote in the appropriate text type, but common errors included incorrect vocabulary, linking of sentences and grammatical structures.