



Examiners' Report June 2012

GCSE Arabic 5AR04 01

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June 2012

Publications Code UG031733

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#### Introduction

The examination paper has been designed to accommodate a wide range of student profiles, and rewards work from grades G to A\*. It consists of two tasks that require writing in Arabic. Students have one hour to complete this paper and it carries a maximum of 50 marks.

The questions in this paper were well prepared to give students a chance to express their knowledge of Arabic language. In general, candidates' performance was of a high standard this examination series. Most of the questions proved accessible for a considerable number of candidates and there was no indication that English words or phrases in the question paper posed difficulty for the majority of candidates.

#### Section A (Short writing task):

Task 1: Students were required to produce a short writing task in Arabic (30-70 words) in response to a choice of four questions in section A that relate to both prescribed themes;

1. Media, Travel and Culture, 2. Sports, Leisure and Work.

Candidates were asked to choose one question out of four. The task was assessed for content and communication (10 marks) and knowledge and application of language (10 marks) only. The maximum mark for this task is 20.

#### Section B (Longer writing task):

Task 2: Students were required to produce a longer writing task in Arabic (120-150words) in response to a choice of four questions in section B that relates to both prescribed themes;

1. Media, Travel and Culture, 2. Sports, Leisure and Work.

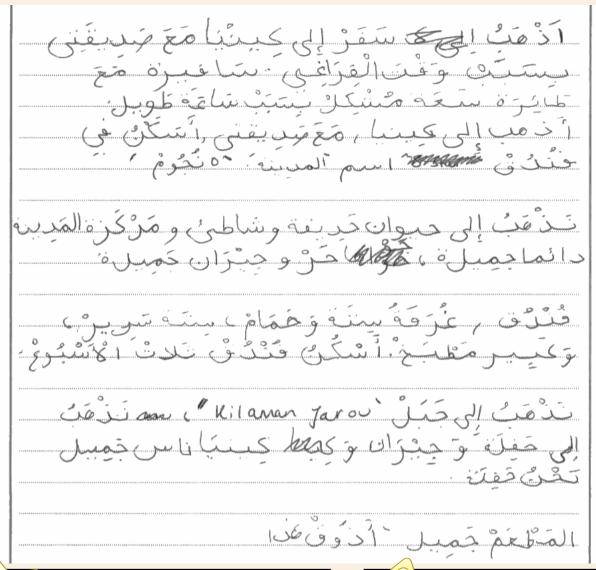
In task two Candidates were assessed for content and communication (15 marks), application of language (10 marks) and accuracy of writing (5 marks).

The maximum mark for this task is 30.

# Section A (short writing task): Question 1 (a)

This was the most popular question attempted by candidates in this section. It asked candidates to write a short article in Arabic describing a holiday they had with friends. They were asked to mention the places they visited, how much they enjoyed their time and why. The majority of responses showed an excellent level of performance from the vast majority of candidates. They seemed to understand the requirements of the task with no ambiguity or vagueness. Most candidates answered in detail, covering all the required points. A small minority though did not score high marks in this question as they did not have good command of Arabic language. Others were those who ignored what the question was asking for and wrote about a past holiday experience with their family and/or wrote a pre-learnt essay about another trip.

The following candidate managed to mention some of the information required by the question but failed to mention why the trip was enjoyable.



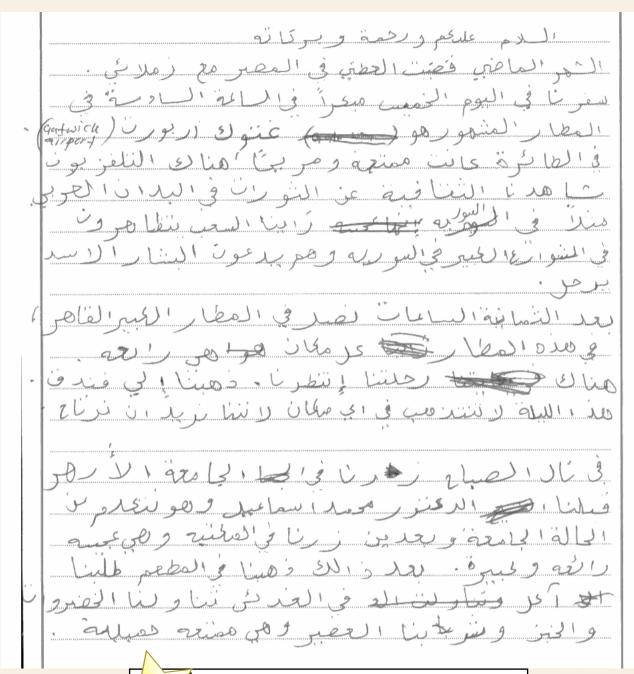


Good enough to score but not a very high mark as the task is incomplete.



Practice how to answer questions.

This is an excellent example of how Q1a should be answered.



# Results lus

A very successful response when it comes to content and communication as well as knowledge of language.

This candidate obtained full marks.



Pay attention to the question's requirements to secure an excellent score.

This candidate wrote a pre-learnt essay about a trip he/she had previously made instead of writing about a holiday that the question is asking for.



The response is about a trip made to the candidate's home country with his/her family and as a result they did not score high marks.



Read the questions carefully.

Any English remarks or words in the answer paper will be ignored.

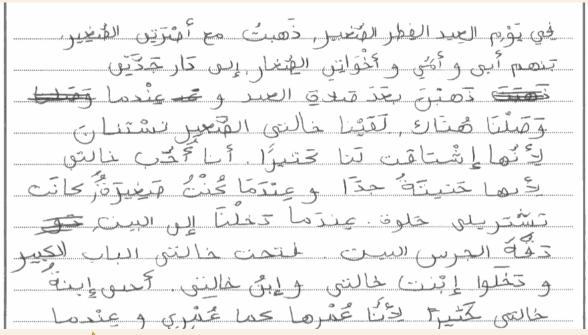
#### Question 1 (b)

Even with the least popular questions such as this one, most of the candidates who attempted it were able to give good relevant material and managed to score well.

In this question candidates were asked to write a report to their teacher about a festival or a cultural celebration that they had attended. They were asked to mention certain points such as the reason for the festival or the cultural celebration, the people they met there and what they did.

Some of the weaker responses spoke about a cultural event without mentioning how this related to them on a personal level. Some responses were very detailed and covered all the required points, while others addressed the task in a very general way.

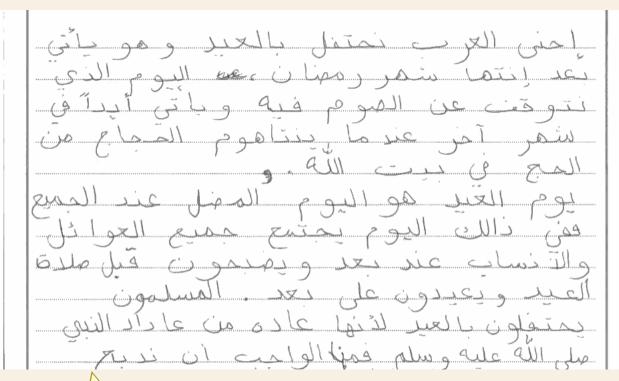
This question was less popular than Q1(a) but the majority of candidates who attempted it had a very good level of performance.





Very successful, managing to cover almost all the points required by the question and using good command of Arabic language.

This candidate spoke generally about one Eid celebration without mentioning the rest of the details that the question asks for.





The response gained 4 marks for content and communication and 6 marks for knowledge of a language. The main reason for losing out on marks was for speaking generally about the cultural celebration and not addressing the issues that the question is actually asking for.

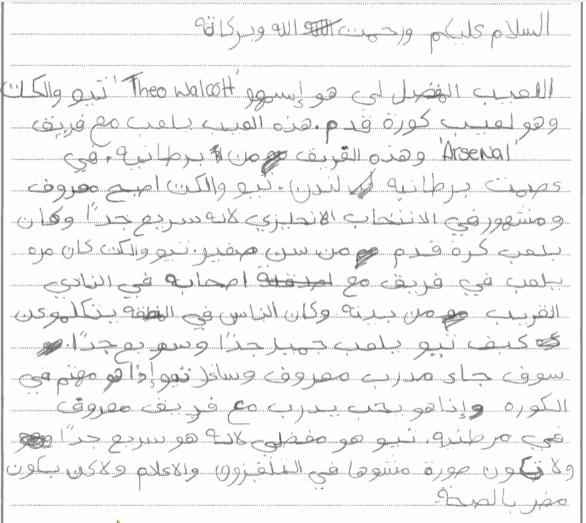


Candidates should make sure that they tick the requirements needed.

#### Question 1 (c)

This question was also very popular amongst candidates. It required them to write an email to an Arabic-speaking friend about their favourite sportsman or sportswoman. They were asked to include how and why they became famous and the reason for their choice.

A large number of candidates attempted this question and were able to mention all the required details producing a pleasant style and scoring excellent marks. However, there was a minority that failed to pay attention to the requirements of the question and just wrote pre-learnt essays about their favourite sport. Those responses did not score high marks as a result.





Very successful: the candidate managed to provide all the information required by the question.

The following candidate missed out on content and communication but managed to obtain marks for knowledge of the language.

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It is very important for candidates to realise what the question is asking them to do before answering.

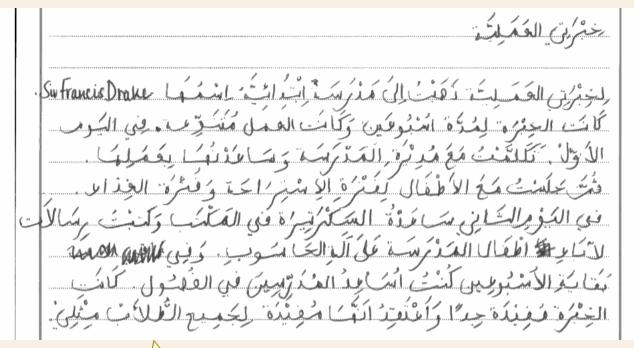


A perfect example, where the candidate provided almost full information and had enough language to obtain full marks.

#### Question 1 (d)

This question was not very popular but most of the candidates who attempted it were able to give good relevant material and managed to score well.

The question required students to write a report about a work experience that they had had. They were asked to mention the kind of job they did and whether work experience is useful to young people. The majority of candidates who attempted this question were able to produce constructive short essays and score good marks. They have been well trained for these kinds of questions and many have actually had work experience themselves. The less successful students, however, wrote about their days at the job and did not specify how it had (or had not) benefited them.





A very good example, ambitious, with good command of the language.



This is a good answer. The response has most of the information required and has satisfactory command of the language.

The following was a very successful answer, a pleasure to read.



Excellent command of Arabic language, satisfying the requirements of the question.

# Section B (longer writing task):

#### Question 2 (a)

This was the most popular question in this section. The majority of the candidates who answered this question managed to give good details and descriptions and hence scored high marks. Candidates were required to write an essay about a day where they acted as a guide for a group of Arabic-speaking tourists around a city they know very well. They were required to mention the places they took them to and why, the tourists' comments and what they thought of the whole experience.

The essays produced by the majority of candidates who attempted this question showed very good awareness of vocabulary relating to holidays and travel in general. Many of these essays showed good command of Arabic language, expressed opinion and were a pleasure to read. A very few candidates however did not pay attention to what the question was really asking them to do and just wrote about their own trip or holiday and what they did. Thus, they did not satisfy the requirements of the question and lost marks for communication as a result.

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This is an unsuccessful answer where the candidate has managed to key in some words which describe where the event took place; however there is a failure to communicate or write the essay in good language.



Practice writing essays.

The following essay is a perfect example that can be used for future reference.

عو يعني الساد العن الذي لا لند و اول مان زناه کان 1've 210". Oil أحد الساح الذي رافق is legge ets elec تناولنا لمعام الغذاء . دُونَا بعرها فر قرنا النماك الج وادر مي الريال الذين تعفي



A very successful answer. The essay satisfied all the requirements of the question and had excellent command of Arabic language, obtaining full marks.

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Another example where the response was not very successful, but was able to gain some marks when it came to content and communication.

# Question 2 (b)

A large number of candidates attempted this question, which asked them about which method of communication they prefer: emails or paper messages. They were able to cleverly link their answers to their own experience with e-mails, Facebook, internet, etc. They were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods of communication and wrote about how emails make our lives simpler yet make us extremely dependent. Those candidates managed to score very good marks. A few candidates missed out on the requirements of the question and deviated by writing about mobile phones and text messaging and as a result had lower marks.

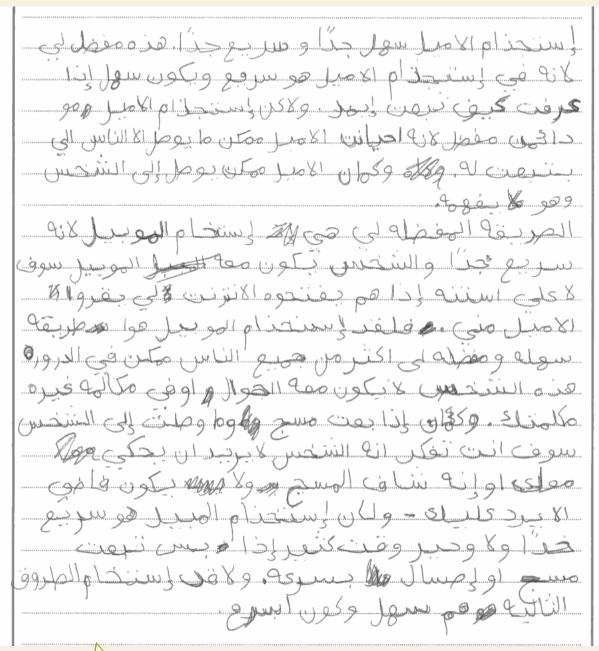
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Results lus

Examiner Comments

This is very successful, losing a few marks in accuracy but managing to satisfy most of the requirements.

The following is an example where a candidate started talking about emails then deviated and spoke about mobile phones and text messages.





The response lost marks as a result of the deviation.



الله المكالمة على الهاتق المحول احسن الهاتق المحول احسن السيدة لكي محط التواصل مع اخرين.

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This is an example of deviation: the candidate chose to write about mobile phones and text messaging rather than emails compared to letter writing. It is very unsuccessful when it comes to covering the points required by the question.

#### Question 2 (c)

This question asked candidates to write about a webpage that they had designed for their school which encourages young people to exercise more. They were expected to discuss the features and links of that webpage as well as the benefits of joining a health club. Most of the students who attempted this question managed to answer it as an article rather than as a webpage. The majority of candidates wrote about the benefits of doing sports or joining a health club and very few addressed the part about features and links. There were very few responses which addressed the question fully, were of high standard and provided detailed answers.

تة الهفرد تكن محر؟ بسباب الحبان كولكلون turn page for writing here) اوالن اللكا: المتكلانة و زيدة و الالكوالسكاري لا يوفيدك كنيرن للزم تاكل شروية من الاكل بسبت مسالن الشكولاته الغدة بيدناج الكباحيد ريات (Carpanguates) كشيرن متن الحبر و الرز و البطاطة منظل منا بيفير يعلى الطفَّةَ بالجَسَمِ لو تقلل منبهة تكون نه ذ ع الخدرة والعكيهة محم جدن و سي لك في كل شي الهفرود تتاكل فص فاليو ( - A - DAY) = 2 Les 1 1 Hope of ago dup Holil (Protein) کاما مهم البروترن ها ف الحيوان و البيض هون موفيد سياب الا أبويقوي العذم بالجسم · ci limil though & a



Not very successful but the candidate tried to present the essay in the form of a webpage as much as possible and gained reasonable marks for it.

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Very successful, with beautiful handwriting.

# الرياعة مياة الانسان



Another very good example and closer to a webpage.

#### Question 2 (d)

Most of the candidates who attempted this question scored excellent marks. It proved accessible and was answered extremely well. Candidates have had training for this kind of essay and managed to express it well in words. Most were a pleasure to read. The task is brilliant and offers room for imagination and expression in writing. Those who chose this task produced outstanding results.

عبى المسرويات في الهدرسي، في منات دور كبير الذي يقالم الحياة في كليبوبات كان هي الجالهة جهيلة مخذ عبي منذ البونان فديه ما هذ تلك دورلانها مرأة لطيفات وللعالم أو لطيفات كان دور قيادة أي يكسيبني شهعة كنيرًا في وسط كان دور قيادة أي يكسيبني شهعة كنيرًا في وسط أصدقائي ونصلاتي و زملائي كان النهندلي ناجم مدّاء بشكر الجمه و الذي كان النهندلي ناجم مدّاء كاملة و بدن الور مع الساعة في العلمي العلوس في مكانة وممثلات المن مع الساعة في العلمي العلوس في مكانة وممثلات المن مورد و الضية كاملة كان منبي فحدًا المناج و من النهاية في السلام



Fair command of language but very good on content and communication.

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A very good answer, just missing out on some of the content and communication but gaining a very good mark.

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This was a pleasure to read and obtained full marks.



This is a good example to use as reading material for candidates.

# **Paper Summary**

Centres and teachers need to ensure that their candidates are familiar with exam papers. Students should be advised to avoid writing English words or literal translation.

Many strong candidates, most of whom are native Arabic speakers, achieved below the expected performance in some questions. It is clear that they do not possess the necessary language skills in English to be able to attempt these questions successfully. They depend on their Arabic skills, not paying attention to what the question is requiring them to do. This was seen in question 2d and candidates lost marks as a result.

Excessive use of dictionaries during the exam can be unhelpful. It was noticed that some students wrote their essays in English on the exam paper then translated them into Arabic using the dictionary, producing by that a non-readable Arabic piece of writing,

Centres are advised to further train their candidates to read well into the questions before answering, so that they do not to lose the information required by the questions.

# **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <a href="http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx</a>

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Order Code UG031733 June 2012

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