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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0) Paper 1H: Listening
and Understanding in Arabic

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Introduction

This was the first year of testing 1AA0 1H, based on the new 2017 GCSE specification. The higher tier exam is 45 minutes in duration, including 5 minutes' reading time; 50 marks in total representing 25% of the total qualification.

This paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all the themes and topics, students are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken Arabic by one or more speakers in a range of public and social settings. Students will respond to multiple-response and short-answer open-response questions based on a recording featuring male and female Arabic speakers. Section A is set in Arabic. The instructions to students are in Arabic, section B is set in English.

To prepare students adequately for this assessment, teachers should present and exploit a range of vocabulary relevant to each theme listed and build on the Key Stage 3 Programme of Study.

Summary

The paper is based on five themes: (1) Identity and culture (2) Local area, holiday, travel (3) School (4) Future aspirations, study and work (5) International and global dimension. All themes and topics must be studied in the context of both the students' home country and that of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken. The vocabulary list must also be studied extensively to enable students to understand and express themselves with the themes, reading and listening to authentic material.

Generally, responses were good, and demonstrated evidence of preparation according to the specification. Section A is shared with the foundation tier, which elicited very good answers from the majority of students; however, some found selecting words to fill sentence gaps particularly challenging. Section B had a wider range of challenges and the performance reflects this, however multiple-choice questions proved the most challenging of all due to the lack of student adherence to instructions or classroom practice for multiple choice.

Section A

Question 1 (a-e) & Question 2 (a-e)

Question 1 (a-e) and question 2 (a-e) were based on the environment and technology, shared with the foundation tier and both stimulus and responses are in Arabic. The majority of students performed well, by using the provided words accurately to complete sentences, demonstrating confidence with listening skills and understanding of content.

Section B

Question 3 (I-IV)

This multiple-choice question was challenging for a large number of students, they confused between choices, often resorting to obvious guessing. This means that teachers should provide further opportunities for students to practice multiple choice questions of a similar style.

Question 4

Over two thirds of students achieved 2 or 3 out of a possible 3 marks for question 4, answered with confidence for the single multiple-choice question.

Question 5 (I-III)

A large number of students found this question challenging, in particular 5ii and 5iii, yet most answered 5i accurately.

Question 6 (a-d)

Students were required to answer with full sentences in English, however some lost marks for answering in Arabic or incomplete responses (despite clear instructions). 6c proved the most challenging for students, which may be due to a lack of understanding to the listening material or an absence of note taking during the listening period.

Question 7 (a-d)

The majority of students were able to answer 7a and b accurately, though few were able to answer 7d correctly, which may be due to a lack of understanding to the listening material or an absence of note taking during the listening period.

Question 8 (a-b)

Question 8 is a longer question with 6 sub-questions of multiple choice. A significant number of students found 8b more challenging than 8a. These questions increase in challenge to differentiate for students working at grades 5 to 9, which may be attributed to the performance observed.

Question 9 (a-b)

The final two questions of the paper represent the highest level of challenge for students to respond to, of the 8 sub-questions there were opportunities for all ability levels with 9a iv and 9b ii the most challenging for respondents.

Question 10 (I-II)

Question 10 consisted of two multiple choice questions, choosing two lettered options for each. The majority of students were able to identify E for both sub-questions, yet found the choice of C and B more challenging to choose - dependent on their understanding of the stimulus.