



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

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

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Introduction

This was the November 2020 year of testing 1AA0 1H, the 2011 series, 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 and this includes the instructions to students. 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 exceptionally 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 'Identity and culture', and 'school environment'. These questions are 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.

Question (1) was particularly good and noticeably clear, where most of the candidates answered it correctly. However, some chose the wrong answer for (c) as they were confused between 'Break' & 'Lunchtime' (وقت الاستراحة وساعة الغداء). Apparently for some, both periods can be regarded as the same thing.

Question (2) Good performance, but a considerable number of candidates did not achieve the full mark especially in (2d), which was more challenging. Most of them gave نقل as an answer instead of تزيد. This is maybe because the word قلة was mentioned in the transcript as well as the question. In (2e), some candidates were giving منفعة as the answer, where according to the mark scheme it is إقتصاد. Both were awarded the mark as منفعة was accepted as a valid answer.

Section B

Question 3 (I-IV), 4 & 5 (I-III)

The multiple-choice questions were challenging for a large number of students. Some 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 6 (a-d)

Students were required to answer with full sentences in English. The majority of candidates answered this question correctly giving a variety of answers, which reflects good understanding of the transcript as well as the question.

6a: Answers were such as: End of the school year, summer holiday or break after school ...etc.)

6b: It was very straightforward and noticeably clear to the majority of candidates.

6c: High percentage of candidates answered this question correctly.

6d: A straightforward question with most candidates answering it correctly. However, some lost marks for answering in Arabic. They did not know that شطرنج translates as chess and transliterated as "shatranj" instead.

Question 7 (a-d)

Generally, the majority of students were able to answer this question accurately, though some found 7c and 7d more challenging. This is may be due to a lack of understanding to the listening material or an absence of note taking during the listening period.

Answers for 7a, about the subject to be registered for, varied. Those who were able to find the correct answer wrote "middle eastern studies" while the majority wrote answers such as:

Studying the middle east.

The middle eastern college.

Study about the middle east.

Studies in the middle east.

For middle eastern course.

The studies of the middle east.

Middle east department.

Question 8 (a-b)

Question 8 is a longer question with 6 sub-questions of multiple choice. 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 9ai 9bii and 9biii as the most challenging for respondents. Some candidate showed good level of Arabic understanding by using their own words in their answers. most candidates found it straightforward and easy and accordingly provided correct answers.

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 B & D for 10(I), yet some found the choice of C and B more challenging to choose for 10(II) - dependent on their understanding of the stimulus.

Generally, both questions were straightforward for the majority of candidates. The demand of the November 2020 paper compares well with the summer 2019 paper. The level of difficulty between both papers are similar. For example, Q9 in 2019, was as accessible as Q9 in 2020, described above.

