Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0) Paper 3F: Reading and Understanding in Arabic

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Introduction

This is a full scale exam series paper since 2019 summer series after the unusual circumstances caused by COVID which resulted in special exams series in 2020 and 2021.

This Foundation Tier Reading and Understanding in Arabic exam paper is made up of 10 questions with a total marks of 50.

This exam for this Foundation Tier is 50 minutes long.

The paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all themes and topics covered in this qualification specification. Candidates are assessed on their understanding of standard written Arabic texts based on the aforementioned topics/themes. In addition to two literary texts (Q04 and Q06) from a variety of sources mainly novels and stories and a short text in Arabic for candidates to translate into English.

Candidates will respond to multiple choice response and open response questions and translate a short text into English, all based on various texts that cover the following five themes: (1) Identity and culture (2) Local area, Holiday and 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 paper is divided into **three sections**:

- Section A consists of six questions with instructions and texts set in Arabic and candidates in this section are required to respond in English.

- Section B consists of 2 questions set in Arabic and candidates are required to answering Arabic.

- Section C consists of 1 translation question. Candidates should allow enough time for the translation question (10 minutes are recommended).

The vocabulary list must be studied extensively to enable candidates to understand and express themselves with themes, reading and understanding

authentic material. Teachers should present and exploit a range of vocabulary relevant to the themes and topics in the specification.

Note: in this series Non-Vocabulary words were NOT used in the question papers.

This Foundation Tier question paper targets grades 1 to 5:

- question 1: targets grade 1;

- questions 2 and 3(a): target grade 2;

- questions 3(b) and 4 : target grade 3;

- question 4 targets grades 4;

- questions 5 and 6: target grade 5;

- question 7: targets grades 3, 4 and 5;

- question 8: targets grade 4;

- question 9: targets grade 5;

- question 10: targets grades1 to 5.

Questions 5,6, 8 and 9 are crossover questions with the Higher Tier question paper.

Below is a summary of how this series cohort performed per each question:

Section A

Q01 (6 marks): The candidates' performance in this 'fill in the blanks' question, can be confidently described as a good performance. There was a significant number of candidates who scored the full 6 available marks. There was the odd 0 score which indicates, on the whole, that this question was, at various levels, accessible to the majority of candidates.

Q02 (5 marks): Some excellent candidates' performance in this question, a large number scoring either the full 5 available marks or 4 out the 5 marks.

There was a common mistake in (a) as a result of candidates confusing the word 'والدة' (mother), which is the correct answer with 'والد' (father). Adding the

Arabic letter 'ة' renders the word feminine and candidates should be able to differentiate between feminine and masculine in this form. This mistake has happened in another question in this paper too, which proves the importance for teachers to familiarise students with the feminine/ masculine grammatical gender rule.

Q03(a) & **Q03(b)** (Total: 5 marks): This is an open response question divided into two parts with two connected texts.

Generally, candidates did better in Q03(a) but there was a noticeable number of candidates who struggled to understand 'numbers names' (أسماء الأعداد), such as " أربع"، "ثماني". Examples of candidates' answers for Q03(a)ii were: '80' instead of '8', and for 3aiii were: 'Wednesday' instead of 'every four years'.

 Many candidates were successful in answering both questions in part Q03(b). However, it was noticed that many of the candidates' responses for Q03(b)ii were accurate. Examples of these responses are: 'football and running', 'football, racing, swimming', 'racing', 'exercise', etc. when the correct answer is 'olympics games/olympics'. The case could be that candidates attempted in answering the question is to explain the word 'olympics', while the term 'ألعاب أولمبية' (olympic games) is in the vocabulary (page 188), but this effort didn't go in their favour.

Q04 (5 marks): The overall candidates' performance in this multiple choice 'literary text' question is good and a number of candidates achieved the full score of 5 marks. However, a noticeable number of candidates scored 2 or 3 marks out of the 5 available marks due to getting part (iii) incorrect, when the candidates missed the word 'شقة' (flat) and offered a random answer such as: (hotel) or (youth hostel).

Also, in part (v), some candidates gave as their answer: (D) (standing still, feeding), or (A) (feeding their young), which is 'guess work' as the correct is (B) (flying around the trees).

Q05- crossover with 3H (3 marks): Candidates found this open response question quite challenging. While, a very small number of them managed to answer all three questions correctly, a large number of candidates struggled with this question with a significant number of fully or partially blank responses. Example of candidates responses for part (b): 'it is expensive', 'it was gold', 'it was signed by a poet', .etc. answers that show there was a guess work there when the correct answer is: (encouragement award' or 'because he has special needs).

Q06 crossover with 3H (5 marks): In this open response 'literary text' question, candidates performance varied from one part to another. For example, in (a) there was a common mistakes with confusing the word 'ابنة' (daughter), which is the correct answer with 'ابن' (son). The Arabic letter 'ة' renders the word feminine and candidates should be able to differentiate between feminine and masculine.

The majority of candidates gave the right answer for (c), and to a lesser extent candidates performance in (b) was good. The most challenging part was (d). While some candidates managed to give the correct answer 'the stick wants to talk/speak', many gave imaginary answers such as: 'turn into a snake', 'fly', 'break', obviously not grasping the meaning of the specific part in the text.

However, the overall candidates performance in this question was satisfactory.

Section B

Q07 (5 marks): It was clear that this cohort candidates found this target language question very challenging. Hardly any candidate scored the full mark and a significant number of candidates submitted blank response. However, there were scores of 1, 2 & 3 marks. Part (e) was answered correctly by a good number of candidates, while parts (b) and (c) were hardly answered correctly.

As all the words 'in the cloud' are in the vocabulary list, and so as those in the text, the importance of studying the vocabulary list extensively to enable candidates to improve their performance in target language questions such as this one, is emphasised again.

Q08- crossover with 3H   (5 marks): In this question multiple choice target language question, a noticeable number of candidates managed to score the full 5 available marks. There were candidates crossing the wrong box, which could have been based on either they didn't understand the key word in the statement or misunderstood the whole text, for example selecting the opposite box to the one intended. Example of this scenario is few candidates' answers to part (iii) when they crossed (A): pollution makes breathing 'easier'! instead of crossing (C): pollution makes breathing more 'difficult'.

Q09- crossover with 3H   (5 marks): This is a 'fill the blanks' target language question. Candidates' performance in this question is similar to Q07 & Q08, with similar trends of submitting blank responses or randomly select the name to correspond to the statement resulting in 0 score. A very small number of candidates scored 3 or 4 marks out of the 5 available, with odd full mark scores.

Section C

Q10- translation (7marks):

Some good performance by few candidates, with scores of full 7 marks and others scoring 6 marks or 5 marks. However, there was a noticeable number of candidates who struggled with the translation into English and their response were incomplete, full of gaps, a totally different content to what is in the stimulus, or blank, which led to getting a 0 score in the latter two examples.

Conclusion and advice:

- As mentioned in the introduction, the exam paper will cover all topics and this means it is very important for candidates to familiarise themselves with all the topics and themes of this qualification specification.

- Candidates should be **very** familiar with the vocabulary list (foundation tier only) as all questions would contain these words in them, sometimes these words will act as the 'key word' and will help the candidate in understanding the question and subsequently with the answer too.

- As expected, candidates performed better in multiple questions compared to open response questions. More emphasis should be put on practising and familiarising candidates with working with open response type of questions.

- To avoid losing marks, candidates should be made aware of the techniques of answering the multiple choice questions, i.e. crossing only the number of answers/boxes they were asked to give (not to cross less and not more).

- Candidates should be able to differentiate between feminine and masculine. Some candidates lost precious 2 marks in Q02 and Q06, due to not being aware that the letter 'ة' renders the word feminine. This proves the importance for teachers to familiarise students with the feminine/ masculine grammatical gender rule.

- It seems that this cohort struggled with the three target language questions, which leads to a feeling that the preparation for this type of questions was insufficient.

- Candidates need to have structured tuition on translating short Arabic texts into English. Candidates have 7 marks available for the translation question.