

GCSE

BENGALI

Unit 4 Writing
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

Overall this year students performed slightly better than last year. This was the third year of the current specification. As in the last two series, there were three questions to answer: Question 1 (a short list), and Question 2 and 3 where students had a choice of topics and were required to produce longer answers. Similar to last year, some students were totally unaware of the basic requirements of the examination and wrote answers to all questions: 1, 2(a), 2(b), 3(a) and 3(b).

To obtain higher marks for Question 2, students had to use a variety of grammatical structures (referring to two time frames) and express their personal opinions. In Question 3, students were required to write descriptively or imaginatively, expressing and explaining ideas and points of view. As in Question 2, they had to use a variety of grammar structures, including two time frames. The stimuli were written in Bengali and the suggested content points were in English. Students are required to include an opinion to obtain 4 Content marks. Highest marks were awarded to those students who used a range of vocabulary, formed well-developed sentences with a range of subordinate clauses, made reference to past, present and future events and gave personal opinions with justification. The standard of written Bengali in the examination was fairly high, however it has to be noted that using regional dialects (খলা, তুমার, বালফাই, ভিগান, বাংগালী, সখ, খাজ, সররিল সাইজ খরত, যন্নদিন' তুমি বাল বনদু রাকা দরখার, তমি খরতাম ছায়লে খরা ওছিত, ওনেক ভইস, বাল লেকাপরা হই etc) is increasing year on year.

Students who used English vocabulary, repetitions and who confused tenses and mismatched verb forms, also failed to gain high marks. However, as in previous years, there were a few students who did not have a sufficient command of English to understand the instructions. Some students also lacked appropriate examination technique, whereas others clearly lacked the skills to deal with the requirements of the examination. Some students, whilst clearly understanding what was being asked of them, produced poorly punctuated pieces of work, with little or inappropriate use of commas and very poor spelling. There were also some very untidy and sometimes barely legible scripts which made scrutiny difficult. On the whole, the more able students found the paper well within their reach and attempted the questions very well. The answers provided by the majority of students were well structured and to the point.

Question 1

Most students obtained the two marks allocated to this question. In this question, students were asked to list four types of fruits needed to prepare a fruit salad. This question was very well answered and the majority of students did not face any difficulty in writing the names of four fruits in Bengali. Full credit was given to students even if there were some spelling mistakes in their answers. Some of the popular correct answers were: আম, কলা কমলা, তরমুজ. A small number of students wrote English words in Bengali such as বানানা, which were not credited. Almost all students scored full marks for this question.

Question 2 – General comments

Students had a choice of topics. They could either choose writing about Lifestyle (personal relationships) in Question 2(a) or Education (school, future plans) in Question 2(b). This question was fairly well answered with Question 2(a) being more popular as writing about family relationships seemed to be more enjoyable than writing about school and future plans. Although not compulsory, the suggestions are designed to help students to express points of view, which are required for accessing marks in the higher bands for Content. It should be stressed that marks given for Range of Language and Accuracy are related directly to the mark awarded for Content.

Question 2(a)

In this Question, students were expected to express their opinions/points of view in replying to the stimulus of a girl's concerns regarding her relationship with her parents. The students' answers were split into two categories. There were either direct replies to the letter (as in stimulus), or reply letters based on the suggested points. Similar to last year, many answers contained simple statements written in very simple language and lacking details, variety and confidence eg, আমি বাবা-মা বাল ফায়না; তমি পল কাও, বাবা-মর কতা সুন; তমি কেলাদুলা কর; বনদু সাত্তে ফনে কতা বল না। Due to the fact that most of these answers were written using a single tense and did not contain any opinions, they were not awarded high marks for Content and hence even lower for Range of Language and Accuracy. On the other hand, many students managed to write interesting pieces emphasising the importance of good family relationships. The guide lines provided were not prescriptive as the students were given a choice to display their own ideas on the theme. This has resulted in a number of students scoring high marks for Content. However, a number of students were reluctant to use the required time frames and inappropriate language manipulation displaying inappropriate verb forms/verb endings and so scored fewer marks in Range of Language. Quite a few responses were direct replies to the stimulus and many responses contained simple statements written in very simple language, lacking a variety of structures. However, it was good to see that more able students handled the response well as they applied exam techniques fairly well. It is quite obvious though that there were often wide variations in students' expressions, and heavy reliance on the regional dialect, and so were penalised for Accuracy.

Question 2(b)

This question was about current school, subjects, preferences and future plans. Both questions were of similar standard. Based on the content of answers and the smaller number of students who chose this question, one might conclude that the subject of school and future plans is rather challenging for less able students. The question required students to write a letter of reply to a friend who asked for information about the student's current school, likes and dislikes, future plans and preferences. The guide lines provided were not prescriptive as the students were given a choice to display their own ideas on the theme. This has resulted in a number of students scoring high marks for Content. However, a number of students were reluctant to use a range of structures and used inappropriate language manipulation by displaying inappropriate verb forms/verb endings and word order and so scored fewer marks for Range of Language. It was good to see that able students handled the response well and applied exam techniques fairly well. It was quite obvious though that there were often wide variations in students' expressions and, on occasion, heavy reliance on the regional dialect, and so were penalised for Accuracy. Those who chose this question provided more developed answers including points of view and explanations. More able students took the opportunity to express likes and dislikes about their current school, made comparisons with their previous school; they also were able to suggest possible improvements and displayed ways to make school life enjoyable. Obviously these students scored in the higher band of marks, eg, আগের স্কুলের চেয়ে এই স্কুল ভালো কারণ টিচাররা লেখাপড়ায় অনেক সাহায্য করেন। কিন্তু লেসনে মাঝেমাঝে মজা করলে বুঝতে সুবিধা হবে।

Question 3 - General comments

Students had a choice of topics. They could either choose to write a response to comments on free-time activities: Question 3(a), or comments and preferences on home celebrations: Question 3(b).

Although this question is aimed at the more able students, almost all students attempted it with some degree of success. Again, highest marks were obtained by those students who used a range of vocabulary, formed well-developed sentences with a range of subordinate clauses, made reference to past, present and/or future events and gave personal opinions with justification.

Question 3(a)

In Question 3(a), students were expected to express their opinions/points of view in responding to the stimulus about free-time activities. Here as well, the guide lines provided were not prescriptive as the students were given a choice to display their own ideas on the theme. This has again resulted in a number of students scoring high marks for Content. However, the reluctance in using the required time frames and constant mismatching of verb forms and verb endings led students to score fewer marks in Range of Language. It was good though to see that more able students handled the response well, as they applied exam techniques fairly well. A number of students also displayed the health issues relating to certain activities and made a good effort to express personal opinions and justify them.

However, heavy reliance on the regional dialect and major spelling errors as well as the use of wrong verbs led students to score fewer marks for Content as well as for Range of Language and Accuracy.

Question 3(b)

This question produced the best answers. Most answers were descriptive and detailed enough to be awarded high marks for Content. Students seemed to have enjoyed writing about events celebrated at home and in the neighbourhood. They also seemed to enjoy writing about the event they were going to celebrate after the GCSE examinations, including their points of view.

Less able students struggled to respond to this question and, on occasion, lifted the stimulus heavily and were reluctant to explore own their ideas on the topic of celebrations at home. As students were offered a choice to display their own ideas, they often felt reluctant to use the required time frames eg, জন্ম দিনে আমার খুব ভালো লেগেছিলো যখন আমার সব বানধবীরা সুন্দর করে শাড়ি পরে বলিউড ডান্ছ করেছিলো আর আমাকে নেচে নেচে শুভ জন্মদিন বলেছিলো। তখন নিজেকে একজন রাজকুমারী মনে হচ্ছিলো।

It was also evident that due to the heavy reliance on dialectical expressions, frequent spelling errors and constant mismatching of verbs, less able students scored low marks for Content as well as for Range of Language and Accuracy.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of our Website.

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UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion