

Report on the Components

June 2006

1921/MS/R/06

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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General Certificate of Secondary Education

GCSE Dutch 1921

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1921/01 - Listening

The examination went well this year.

Section 1

Exercise 1

Hardly any mistakes were made in this exercise.

Exercise 2

Most candidates received full marks for this exercise. Some candidates had trouble with 'onweer' and 'bewolkt'.

Exercise 3

Most candidates did well in this question.

Section 2

Exercise 4

Many candidates did well in this exercise.

Exercise 5

This second exercise of section 2 was quite difficult. The better candidates did not encounter problems, but the weaker candidates seemed to have a tendency to guess the right answer, which usually led to the wrong answer.

Section 3

Exercise 6

The first exercise in this section was done surprisingly well, bearing in mind that this was a new type of exercise. Please note that a word can be misspelled and still be awarded the full marks since this is a listening test.

Exercise 7

The better candidates did not encounter many problems in this exercise. The differences in the choices in these questions are sometimes very subtle. Most mistakes were made in Questions 34 – 36, where it was important to listen to all the information in the text, not just the gist of it.

Exercise 8

Better candidates managed to score full marks for this exercise. As expected there was some confusion about some of the announcements.

Conclusion

There were no major problems in this year's examination.

1921/02 - Speaking

This year's examination went well. The candidates seemed well prepared and most Examiners were very supportive towards the candidates, which helped them to show their language skills. Candidates should be reminded that they should talk as much as possible, since this is a speaking test. Especially in section 3 and in the General Conversation we are looking for an open conversation, not an interrogation of the Question- Answer – Question – Answer type.

Some candidates meet the examiner for the first time shortly before the test is taken. It would be very helpful for candidates to meet the examiner before the actual day. If this is not possible, it can still be very useful to meet a little earlier on the day itself.

The administration was handled well. Where the appropriate forms were not available, most Examiners gave us details of the candidates on a piece of paper, which was very helpful.

At times the recordings of the speaking tests are not of optimal quality. It is therefore very important to position the candidate as close to the microphone as possible and the Examiner a little further away. It could be useful to record a little conversation before the tests start, to determine how much or little the machine picks up. Please remember that it is not permissible to stop the recorder at any time during the test.

Role Play section 1

The Role Plays in section 1 caused very few difficulties. Most candidates received full marks for their first Role Play. Answers can be quite short and still receive full marks (e.g.: 'Wat wil je drinken?' 'Koffie')

All Role Plays in this section were done well. It is permissible to indicate to candidates that they have forgotten a task but please make sure the answer is not given away in doing so.

Role Play section 2

Some candidates had trouble keeping to their role in the Situation in Booklet 1 (party in the Netherlands). Most Examiners dealt with the confusion in an inventive way and made sure they asked the required prompts. Overall there were no problems in the Role Plays in section 2.

Role Play section 3

This narrative Role Play is meant for the candidate to show that he or she can 'narrate a story that happened in the past'. A good way to start the section 3 Role Play seems to be to prompt the candidate in a natural way ('Ik heb gehoord dat je iets raars/ leuks is overkomen toen je gisteren naar de stad ging, vertel eens?'), rather than say 'explain what you see in the pictures'. All candidates who were invited to tell what happened to them the other day started off well and managed to tell a story close to the pictures. The risk of asking the candidate to explain what he or she sees is that they may start giving very short information (e.g. 'hij staat op', 'hij ontbijt', 'hij gaat naar de winkel') which triggers the Examiner to ask short closed questions as well (e.g. Hoe laat ging je ontbijten? Waar ging je naar toe?). It is important in this section to keep the questions open and invite the candidates to tell as much as possible by themselves.

Sometimes Examiners did not ask questions at all during this role-play. Candidates are also marked on how they respond to queries of the Examiner, so it is vital to ask some questions during the story.

General Conversation

The topics in this part of the examination open up the conversation quite easily. Most examiners were able to hold a conversation with a natural feel to it, which very often brings out the best in the candidates. The questions in the back of the syllabus should give examiners some ideas of what could be asked. They are only suggested questions though, and should not be asked one by one. It is very important here to create space for the candidate to elaborate. They can only achieve higher marks when they use longer sentences and show initiative in the conversation. One way of achieving this is to ask 'waarom' questions. (e.g. Waar woon je liever? In Nederland of in Engeland? Answer' In Nederland. 'Waarom? Vertel eens?') The best conversations were where the Examiner found a topic that was close to the candidate's heart. Asking candidates to tell about their home and family usually does not inspire the candidate to start talking. Many Examiners used the questions in the back of the Teacher's booklet as a 'starter-question' and picked up more personal information as soon as possible to make the candidate talk. This technique worked very well and made the candidate score high marks in most cases.

Conclusion

All in all there were very few problems with the speaking tests this year. Thanks to the good work of many Examiners most of the candidates were at ease and the conversations sounded natural. Thank you all for the good work!

1921/03 - Reading

General comments

The majority of candidates did very well in the 2006 examination, and both Sections 1 and 2 caused very few problems.

Occasionally candidates did not tick a box, write a letter in a box, or circle one of the options. It is important for the candidate to read both rubric and example carefully. In Section 3 quite a number of candidates filled in more than the required one word.

Some candidates do not write very clearly, which is especially important when writing one letter in a box. If the letter D is written over a B it is impossible to tell which letter the candidate intended.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section 1

Exercise 1: Qs.1-4

There were four multiple choice questions which were usually answered correctly, although some candidates ticked the wrong box in question 2.

Exercise 2: Qs.5-9

The candidates were asked to put the letters of the shops in the correct box next to each icon. This exercise was also done very well; very occasionally Q.9 was answered incorrectly.

Exercise 3: Qs.10-15

In this exercise candidates had to place ticks in the grid to indicate in which province one could enjoy a certain holiday. Again candidates did well, although this exercise was more demanding. Q.14 was sometimes not ticked at all, or wrongly, although it was the only specific winter holiday, while Q.15 also appeared more challenging.

Section 2

Exercise 4: Qs.16-20

Some of the categories in this exercise caused a few problems. Q.16-18 (railway poster, menu and invitation) appeared to be easier than Q.19 and Q.20 (recipe and bill) which were not always known.

Exercise 5: Qs.21-25

Most candidates did well in this multiple choice exercise. Qs.21-23 caused very few problems and almost all candidates ticked the correct answers of tin opener, boots and broken wrist. In Q.24 candidates often chose B rather than A (chemistry) and the Dutch for 'to like food' was not always understood in Q.25.

Section 3

Exercise 6: Qs.26-32

This exercise had seven multiple choice questions and the candidates were asked to circle one of three words or phrases within a sentence. Many candidates scored 5, 6 or 7 marks for this exercise. Qs.28 and 29 appeared to be the more difficult ones.

Exercise 7: Qs.33-36

This appeared to be the hardest exercise. The candidates were asked to fill in one Dutch word in each sentence. In Q.33 the only correct answer was 'wachten'. In Qs.34 and 35 many candidates filled in two or three words; in Q.34 this was usually wrong. However, in Q.35 the answer was still correct when two or even three words from the text were used,

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and here it was allowed. In Q.36 the only correct answer was 'voelen'. Many candidates thought people could not hear rather than feel the music.

Exercise 8: Qs.37-40

The majority of candidates answered all four questions correctly. If mistakes were made, Q.37 was usually correct, while one or two of the remaining questions were answered incorrectly.

1921/04 - Writing

General Comments

The majority of candidates did very well in both Sections 1 and 2, while Section 3 was as always more challenging. Most candidates communicated well in Section 1, but in Q.3 there were again a number of candidates who translated the questions into Dutch and did not answer the questions.

Section 2 produced some exciting school parties as well as eccentric grandmothers. The length of these essays was on the whole quite good, although a few candidates still wrote rather more than 100 words.

In Section 3 candidates wrote well about temporary jobs and exchange visits. Here the number of candidates who wrote far too much seems to have grown. Usually one page would easily produce the required 150 words.

Individual Questions

Section 1

Q.1

Most candidates wrote a list of eight good answers, many of which were spelled correctly. Incorrect spellings were allowed, but they had to be more Dutch than English. There was a great variety in the spelling of 'cadeau' and most of them were allowed. Some English or German spellings such as 'card', 'sock' or 'Blume' were of course not acceptable.

There were some candidates who wrote more than eight words, two or three on one line. It should be pointed out that only the first word on each line counts.

Q.2

The majority of candidates answered the questions correctly, but in this exercise the correct spelling was also important. Answers to Qs.1-3 were usually communicated correctly, although the conjugation was not always right. The spelling of 'kasteel' in Q.4 frequently caused problems; alternative answers such as 'paleis', 'museum' and 'kerk' were permitted. The dog in Q.5 was easy, but the cook in Q.6 appeared more difficult: 'koker' instead of the correct 'kok' did not score as it has a different meaning. 'Ik ben aan het koken' was allowed.

Q.3

The majority of candidates did very well in this exercise, although the rubric was not always interpreted correctly. Not everyone realised that they were supposed to be on holiday. Q.1 was usually correct, but some candidates said who they were rather than who they were with. In Q.2 a number of candidates wrote that they were at home, which was not allowed, although subsequent answers of going swimming in Q.4 and going to the disco in Q.5 still scored.

In Q.6 the expected answer of going home on Saturday or next week was not always forthcoming, but answers indicating that they were going home at for instance 4 o'clock were allowed.

Some candidates tried to write a long letter rather than a note with short sentences. Writing six short sentences is the best way of dealing with this question.

Section 2

Q.4

Candidates were given the choice of writing about their school's 100th anniversary party or about the time their grandmother came to look after them when their parents were away. Both topics were quite popular and many candidates did well.

In Q.1 there were some memorable parties. Some candidates did not say anything about their school other than that it was 100 years old, which was in the rubric, while others did not mention what they were going to do after the party and thus did not include a future event. Going home to bed after the party was a common answer.

In Q.2 most candidates enjoyed having their grandmother there and most of the time she was a good cook and did a lot of cleaning. Some candidates just said that their grandmother was old, which was not really a description of her.

Many candidates did very well, but marks were sometimes lost by failing to cover all the required elements and not using a past/perfect tense and/or a future tense/future reference.

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A few candidates answered both questions, but only one answer was taken into account. In cases like this usually some tasks were omitted.

Section 3

Q.5

In Q.1 many candidates wrote enthusiastically about their temporary jobs and their plans for the future. They did not always mention how they had got the job. A small number wrote about the work in general and did not mention what happened yesterday, producing a limited number of past tenses. Quite a few candidates chose an interesting future job, but not everyone reported why they wanted it.

The candidates could also relate to Q.2 as they are still at school. They wrote about the exchange successfully, although not everyone understood that the exchange had already happened. Some candidates did not seem to realise that an exchange visit was an 'uitwisseling' and failed to communicate properly.

There were some very long essays this year. One page generally contains more than 150 words and candidates should be aware that the quality of language is decided in the first 150 words. The opinions and justifications in the last two tasks should produce some excellent language with good sub-clauses, but they should appear in those 150 words.

Some candidates did very well and wrote a separate paragraph about each task, making sure that they did not omit any points.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education Dutch 1921
June 2006 Assessment Series**

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
01 - Listening	40	34	29	24	20	16	13	10
02 - Speaking	50	41	35	29	24	19	15	11
03 - Reading	40	34	29	24	20	16	13	10
04 - Writing	80	66	57	48	40	32	25	18

**N.B. Component marks are scaled to a weighted mark out of 50.
Each component represents 25% of the overall award**

Overall

	Max	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200								
Percentage in Grade		27.6	40.3	14.0	8.4	5.0	2.8	1.1	0.2
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		27.6	67.9	81.9	90.3	95.3	98.1	99.2	99.4

The total entry for the examination was 494

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