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Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Russian (1RU0) Paper 3H: Reading and
Understanding in Russian

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Overview

This paper was worth 50 marks and was divided into 3 sections.

Section A was worth 28 marks and required answers in English.

Section B was worth 15 marks and required answers in Russian.

Section C was worth 7 marks and was the translation into English.

Students had 1 hour and 5 minutes to complete the paper.

Question 1.

Students were asked to read a text about a school exchange and answer questions in English. Part a) was answered well by the majority of students.

In b) unsuccessful students lost the mark by failing to be accurate. The answer was *'English schools were bigger/newer'* or *'English teachers were kinder/nicer'*. While the rubric states that students need not write in full sentences, they must write enough to convey a correct answer. *Bigger'* *'newer'* or *'kinder'* is not sufficient.

c) was accessible to most students, although surprisingly many guessed *'castles'* apparently not understanding either *'дворцы'*, *'музеи'*, or *'кинотеатры'*. Several unsuccessful students wrote *'theatre'* instead of *'cinema'*.

Question 2.

Students were asked to read a short literary text and answer questions in English.

- a) Was successfully answered by the majority of students, although several less successful students wrote *'grandfather'* presumably confusing *'дедушка'* with *'девушка'*.
- b) Again was well answered, although some less successful students did not read the question carefully and confused *'what'* with *'who'* confusing *'дедушка'* with *'девушка'* again. Others wrongly guessed *'his phone'* or *'his wallet'*.
- c) Successful students inferred that he had got on *'the wrong train'*. *'He was on the train to Paris'* was not enough for the mark, whereas *'he was on the train to Paris, but wanted to go to Minsk'* was.
- d) Successful students answered *'he will never speak on the phone again at the station'* while less successful students guessed wildly or just wrote *'he will never speak on the phone again'* which was not supported by the text. *'At the station'* is necessary for the mark.

Question 3.

Students were asked to read a text on the environment and answer questions in English. Although there was some difficult vocabulary, it was not tested, as the emphasis of the question was on inferring the correct answer, rather than translating each word. Students should be encouraged to read for gist and interpretation of the text, rather than expect to understand every word.

- a) Most students were successful here.
- b) Students generally coped well with this question, answering correctly either '*alternative*', '*different*' or '*other methods of energy* or '*solar/sun energy*'. '*Renewable energy*' was not acceptable as it could have been a guess. Many of the words targeted were cognates.
- c) Students did not find this question challenging. The most successful students understood '*turn off the light*' and/or '*save electricity*'.
- d) Less successful students failed to understand that Kolya's concern was *litter* and mentioned *catastrophes* like *flooding*, which were in the text, but not tested.
- e) Students were generally successful in naming Sonya here.

Question 4

Students were asked to read a literary text and answer multiple choice questions by crossing a box.

(i), (ii), (iv) were the most successful answers and it was pleasing to see that many students understood '*бедный*'.

(iii) required the new skill of inference, so caused some difficulty, although many were successful here.

(v) Unsuccessful students failed to understand that '*два стула, стол – это всё!*' indicated '*uncomfortable*', many crossing the box for '*well furnished*'.

Question 5.

Students were asked to read an article about animal conservation and answer questions in English.

- a) – d) required a name from a given list.
- e) and f) required fuller answers in English.

The most successful answers were a), b), c), d). Questions e) and f) proved more challenging as fuller answers were needed.

For e) the most successful students answered that '*people / humans were more important*', inferring '*человек*' from '*человечество*' and understanding '*почему мы должны волноваться о животных.....?*'

For f) the most successful students answered '*disease*' or '*hunger*' or '*drinking water*'. Some less successful students guessed '*poverty*'.

Question 6.

Students were asked to read an article on volunteering and in (i) tick 3 correct statements from a list, In (ii) and (iii) students had to answer questions in English.

- (i) Most students gained high marks crossing ABD correctly. Some students also mentioned G. Students should be encouraged to only tick/cross only the number of boxes required.

- (ii) The most successful students answered '*wanted to help others*' or '*hardworking*'.
- (iii) Successful students answered '*demanding work*' or '*living abroad*'. The most common answer was '*living without electricity*'.

Question 7.

Students were asked to read an email from Maksim and answer multiple choice questions by crossing a box. Most students were successful with many gaining full marks.

Question 8.

Students had to read a text about foreign languages and identify who thought what, using the names given in the rubric. a) was mostly correct, although some wrote '*Сергей*' instead of '*Виктор*'. The use of '*много*' by Viktor and cognates for exams and stress should have pointed students in the right direction.

b), c), d), e) were generally successfully answered.

Question 9.

Students were asked to read a website about travel and answer questions in Russian. This question was challenging, but several students were successful in their answers. Students at this level are expected not only to understand the language, but also to infer meaning from a text containing words which may not necessarily be familiar.

- a) Unsuccessful students confused the question words '*когда*' and '*куда*' and answered wrongly '*после университета*'. Successful students understood that Italy was the destination and gained marks even if the case in Russian was incorrect, as long as the meaning was clear.
- b) Unsuccessful students wrote that they visited the internet café to check prices, but failed to mention hotels or accommodation. Successful students understood the detail and inferred that they needed to find out the prices of hotels/accommodation or to book hotels/accommodation.
- c) Unsuccessful students confused '*как*' with '*какой*' and answered wrongly '*стюардесса*' or '*мужчина*'. Successful students understood the cognates '*адрес*' and '*агенство*' and gained the mark.
- d) Successful students understood that he thought '*everyone liked Spanish food*'. Unsuccessful students guessed '*he liked Spanish food*' or '*he wanted to cook Spanish food*' or '*he studied in Spain*'. Students were expected to understand '*всем известно*' and '*любят*' to gain the mark.
- e) Most students found this answer accessible and understood '*смеётся*', answering '*смешно*', '*забавно*' or '*весело*'.

In questions of this sort, lifting sentences from the text will not usually give the correct answer.

Question 10.

Students were asked to translate a passage of 4 sentences of varying length and difficulty into English.

This new task elicited the whole range of marks from students. Many scored full marks. It should be noted that minor spelling or syntactical errors did not prevent this as long as the meaning was fully conveyed. Some non-learner or Heritage students had some difficulty expressing themselves clearly in idiomatic English.

Surprisingly 'выбирает' was not understood by some students and several understood 'профессию' as professor. 'Как' was often mistranslated as 'how'. It was pleasing that 'удовольствие' was reasonably well known, although many made guesses. Some Heritage or non learner students clearly understood the word, but could not express it, writing 'got more happys' or 'a lot of delightness'. It was surprising that some students did not know 'в июне' confusing 'June' with 'young', but pleasing that many understood 'участвовал'. 'международный' was frequently mistranslated as 'local' or 'public', but most students coped well with 'фестиваль' and 'целую неделю' which was pleasing. There was some confusion between the verb 'прошли' and the adjective 'прошлый'.

Very few students successfully translated 'тысяч десять' correctly as 'about 10 thousand', but marks were not lost if the meaning of the passage was fully communicated despite minor errors. Several students wrote 3.10 confusing 'тысяч' with 'три' and very few understood the inversion, writing 1010.

A very small minority of students resorted to imagination eg 'The festival was held by Vladimir Putin and only eight people attended'.

Summary.

- Students should be aware that there will be unknown vocabulary in several questions and they should learn to read for gist and be aware of cognates.
- Students will be expected to use the new skills of inference and interpretation of written Russian.
- In the translation question full marks can be gained despite minor errors, as long as the meaning of the passage is conveyed.
- Students are advised to read the questions carefully, paying particular attention to which question word is used (in both Russian and English).
- Students should remember to write neatly and clearly. Marks cannot be awarded for illegible answers.
- Students should be careful to respond in the appropriate language. No marks are given for answers in Russian where English is required or vice versa.