

Examiners' Report November 2007

IGCSE

IGCSE Arabic (4308)

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4308 PAPER 01

General Comments

This paper was divided into three parts.

Part one was a text extract from an article by 'Tawfeeq Al-Hakeem' titled "the Art of Literature", in which he compared reading a story in a book to watching it in a film. The candidates' task was to answer 5 questions in their own words and style reflecting on the text's meaning and content. The first 4 questions assess the candidate's comprehension and understanding of the text and require answers derived directly from the text, while the question 6 aimed at testing candidate's ability to show a clear general grasp of the article and be able to respond to tasks accordingly.

The second part was an article about the development of means of communication throughout history. The candidates' task was to answer two questions which were designed to test their general reading comprehension and understanding of the text. There were 10 marks allocated for each of the two questions.

Part three was a test of grammar. This part was presented into four questions which were designed to test the candidate's ability in the use and analysis of some of the grammatical points included in the syllabus. The mark total for this part was 20. Five marks were allocated for each of the four questions.

Part 1

Most candidates showed a good level of understanding. This was clearly shown in their answers of questions 1, 2 and 4. Questions 4 and 5 were good differentiators where higher level candidates were able to show their linguistic ability and strength. Candidates who rely totally on copying material directly from text without any relevant input of their own were not able to score well.

Part 2

Question 1: Candidates were asked to give a summary of the text in about 100 words. Most of the candidates responded appropriately to the task, with the exception of some who simply relied on a 'cut and paste' style. Candidates should not be copying solely and sometimes arbitrarily from text. Rewriting the exact wording of the provided text with no input of their own may not award them satisfactory marks.

Question 2: This was a more demanding question which required from candidates to write about 100 words in a form of a letter to a friend in which they could show their level of understanding of the text and how they were able to emphasise the relevant points from it. In spite of the more demanding task here many students produced satisfactory pieces of writing and managed to secure higher marks.

Part 3

Candidates here showed greater understanding of grammar than previous years. Many precise and well structured grammatical comments were noticed especially in answering questions 1 and 4. Question 2 appeared to be the most popular as almost all candidates managed to give satisfactory answers to it. Question 3, which required candidates to identify certain grammatical elements in the given text, proved to be a good differentiator where good candidates could show their strength.

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PAPER 02

General Comments

The candidates in this paper were asked to choose two topics out of six, and to write around 300 words about each of them. The maximum mark for each was 30. The 30 marks were awarded to content and communication (18 marks), language application (6 marks) and accuracy of writing (6 marks).

Questions 4 and 5 proved to be the most popular among candidates. Some good pieces of writings were produced here especially in answering question 4. Fewer candidates chose questions 1, 2 and 6. It has been noticed that there were still some candidates who relied on pre-learnt material in answering question 6. Candidates should write a story showing the relevance of what they see in the picture to its events rather than using the picture as a reminder of a pre-prepared story.

Question 3 proved to be the least popular among candidates despite its easily understood wording. Candidates should be encouraged to read more poetry and learn how to appreciate poetical styles.

In comparison to previous years candidates seemed to be more confident and well prepared in their writings and answers and a greater number of them managed to score well in all the questions at this exam.

Statistics

Paper 01

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 1 grade boundaries	70	51	47	43	39	30	21	13	5	0

Paper 02

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 2 grade boundaries	60	47	42	37	32	24	16	9	2	0

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