

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

IGCSE

IGCSE Arabic (4308)

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4308 PAPER 1

General Comments

The paper was divided into three parts.

Part one was a text extract from an Arabic magazine about a most common issue of a marriage process, in the form of a dialogue. The candidate's task was to answer seven questions in their own words and style about the text content. The first five questions were directly questioning certain parts of the text, while the sixth and the seventh questions tested the candidate's ability to show a clear general grasp of what each speaker in the dialogue meant and be able to respond to tasks accordingly. Question six demanded candidates to be involved in the text while the seventh asked them to give their own opinion by selecting their favourite character and to justify their selection. The total marks allocated for this part were 30, and were divided amongst the seven questions.

The second part was a short story about acting on one's own imagination rather than on facts. The candidate's task was to reflect on the event of the story by answering two questions which were designed to test the candidate's 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 five 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. Questions 1 and 5 have 5 marks each, questions 3 and 4 have 3 marks each and question 4 has 4 marks.

Candidates' answers showed greater understanding of the syllabus and its requirements than last year. Candidates seemed to be well prepared in both knowledge and organisation of writing.

Part 1

Questions 2, 3, and 7 were the most popular and in answering them most candidates showed good understanding and enjoyment of the text. Candidates who used good clear language and style and were able to support their answers with evidence from text were able to score full marks in these questions.

Part 2

Question 1: Candidates here were expected to come out with a short story or an incident from their own experience which is in line with the meaning and the message given in the text. More than half of the candidates responded appropriately to the task, with the exception of some who simply rewrote the same story as in the given text with characters of their own. Candidates who used their own words and style managed to gain good marks here.

Question 2: This was a more demanding question which required from candidates to write about the emotions, sentiments and imagination of the main character in the story and about the possible outside influences which led to his wrong decision at the end of the story. Many students produced satisfactory pieces of writing and managed to secure higher marks.

Part 3

Questions 1 and 4: The five questions in this part were common in style and most candidates were aware of their task in each one of them. Question 1 proved to be the most popular among candidates and many of them managed to score well here. Candidates also did remarkably well in questions 3 and 5 which was an indication of good preparation. Many candidates found the first two sections of question 2 more accessible than the third one, and managed to secure at least 2 marks here. Question 4 was attempted by most of the candidates with varying results. A small printing mistake in the first line of this question was noticed but it had no impact on students' answers or on the awarding of marks.

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4308 PAPER 2

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).

The principle strength of the candidates this year lay in the variety, interest and imaginative treatment of the topics chosen, which was a clear indication of their commitment to pre-exam preparation. Some candidates showed considerable ability to integrate material from a variety of sources and develop a coherent argument. Quite a number of essays were well written showing an extremely sophisticated form of expression, as was seen in Question 2 and 4.

It was noted by examiners that there was a considerable number of candidates that chose topics that might be characterised as relating to current, popular culture or issues with which they are personally involved, as in Questions 1, 2 and 3.

In comparison with last year's exams, it was noted that there was a considerable increase in the number of candidates who pre assume the task required rather than reading the question carefully and respond appropriately in some areas as in question 5 and 6. In question 5 some candidates wrote about the advantages and disadvantages of the computer, rather than on the required task which was the ways to use the computer to save time and resources. In question 6 which is the picture question, there were still some candidates as in last year's exams who wrote a description of what they could see in the picture, while few others used the image of the picture as reminder of a pre learnt incident to write on.

Statistics

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Grade Boundaries	75	68	61	55	42	30	18	6	0

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