

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE Chinese (4CN0)
Paper 02

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Examiner Report

Section A

Part 1

The aim of this part was to assess candidates' ability to understand and use information from a range of texts which included matching basic vocabulary to pictures, selecting the right answers to multiple choice questions, answering comprehension on a passage.

Generally, the candidates did well in these tasks with many of them achieving full marks, demonstrating their ability to recognise some basic vocabulary within the specification as well as to identify and note down the chief points.

Part 2

Candidates were required to write about 50 characters on the topic related to the final reading passage in Section A Part 1. This response was assessed for communication and language.

Most candidates responded to the questions very well, demonstrating their ability to describe the place where they live, to express their opinions and feelings, to infer and draw conclusions. However, only some candidates wrote about their daily activities rather than the place where they lived. Thus they failed to give the relevant information which led to the loss of content and communication marks.

Section B

Part 1

Candidates were asked to answer questions on one reading passage. Candidates were assessed on their ability to extract specific details, identify main points and understand grammatical structures and functions in context.

The questions were attempted well but candidates did differ in their performance. Some candidates failed to read the specific details in the question such as the negatives and the degrees.

Part 2

Candidates were expected to read a longer passage and to respond to a series of questions. The candidates were required to show the ability to manipulate the language of the original text and to use their own words and phrases to express ideas from the text.

The nature of these open-ended questions offered an excellent opportunity for candidates to show what they understood and to rephrase the answers in their

own words. We did come across more candidates this year who answered the questions with full sentences and with no grammatical mistakes at all. The questions also served as good discriminators between different abilities.

Question (a) was generally handled well by candidates despite a few candidates giving answers such as “中国”, “英国”.

Question (b) was also handled very well. If errors occurred, it was because candidates did not write the characters correctly.

Question (c) was answered well by a majority of candidates. However, some candidates, who missed the details in the question, answered “八点” or “上” instead of “上八点”.

Question (d) was dealt with extremely well. A very small minority of candidates failed to understand the text, and thus answered the question wrong.

Question (e) was handled well in general but few candidates gave answer such as “成人”, “大人”.

Question (f) carried two marks, which included 2 questions. Some of the candidates didn't get full marks although they understood the text without problems. The error that many candidates encountered was to answer the “how many” question as a “what” question. Despite this, many candidates scored full marks.

Question (g) was answered well. However, some candidates wrote “王先” or “王生” instead of “王先生”.

Question (h) was answered well. However, some candidates made incorrect use of pronouns.

Section C

Candidates could select one writing task from a choice of three. The three tasks were equally favoured by the candidates. Most candidates did well, responding fully to all the first three bullet points. They completed the bullet points with their language, employing a wide variety of vocabulary and sentence structures. Even lower grade candidates tried to put down some details. Very few candidates turned the bullet points into questions and answers rather than linking their writing into a continuous piece of composition. The fourth bullet point carried more content marks which allowed candidates to express their opinions and points of view.

Task (a)

The bullet points differentiated between candidates' writing abilities. The higher grade candidates managed to write a detailed description of their school, the subjects they studied and activities they did, as well as offer their feelings, opinions and justifications as to why they liked or disliked the school. On the

other hand, some lower grade candidates only managed to write some simple sentences such as:

“我的学校在.....国。我喜▪我的学校，因▪有意思。”.

Task (b)

As with task (a), the bullet points also helped to differentiate the writing abilities of candidates. The stronger candidates responded to the bullet points with detailed information about one family member or a friend. However, some candidates neglected to read the instructions carefully and went on to write a lengthy description of all their family members or several friends.

Task (c)

Most candidates performed very well on this task with full responses to the bullet points. Many candidates used their own life experience to describe the typical activities they enjoyed with their friends. Candidates were allowed to express their ideas with various writing skills so that even the weaker candidates could respond to the bullet points with simple sentences. However, a few candidates forgot to mention the time and money they spent on the activities, hence lost marks in the content score.

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