

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/01

Reading

Key message

To do well in this paper:

- Candidates should take care to read the questions in Part 1 carefully, taking into account the number of marks available, in order to produce a relevant and full response. Candidates should use their own words as far as possible in order to gain higher marks for Language.
- Candidates should produce a structured response in Part 2, making each point briefly, rather than expanding on each point.

General comments

This year's paper was done well. Candidates showed good understanding of both texts. Generally, the language used was very good. A small number of candidates relied on lifting quite extensively from the texts, however. It is important that candidates formulate their own sentences as the quality of their language is assessed throughout the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates appeared to have understood both the gist and the detail of the text.

- (a) Most candidates answered this starter question correctly, but some lifted their answer from the text.
- (b) Most candidates had no problems paraphrasing the words of the author.
- (c) In this type of question it is good practice for candidates to look at the language and vocabulary used by the author. For instance, the author says: *'Ik had er tegenop gezien'* and *'Ik ging voor de leeuwen'*. The fact that he had tried to smuggle his mobile phone into the *drijvende bungalow* was another indication he was dreading the whole experience.
- (d) Most candidates did well here. It was good to see that some candidates managed to pick up on the irony of the sentence *'Een aantal van mijn ruim 3000 vrienden had me sterkte gewenst; dat gaf moed'*.
- (e) Candidates had to understand *'lang van stof zijn'* en *'niet in een nieuwsflits uit te drukken'* to produce a correct answer. The challenge was to rephrase the text and to show the meaning had been understood.
- (f) This question was answered well by most candidates.
- (g) This question was also answered well by most candidates.
- (h) Some candidates had difficulties with this question, giving answers such as *'Je krijgt makkelijk vrienden'*. The correct answer went a little beyond that in that it had to do with the need of some people to be seen and heard, a need that can be easily satisfied on Facebook.
- (i) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (j) This question was answered well, but some answers were incomplete. Candidates may need to be reminded that if a question is worth two marks, there are likely to be two parts to the answer.

- (k) Again, most candidates were able to give the first part of the answer (he did not hear anything). The fact that he needed responses from his friends to feel that he existed was worth the other mark, which a large number of candidates struggled to score.
- (l) The last question of the paper was done very well. The answer was personal, so the challenge here was for candidates to explain their answer. The majority of the candidates acquired the two marks on offer. It was very interesting to read the various motivations candidates gave for their answers.

Question 2

Most candidates seemed to engage with both texts. In general, this part of the examination did not cause many problems. Candidates seemed well prepared and knew they had to mention 15 points to get their 15 marks for the content of their answer. The highest marks were obtained by those candidates who put this comparison into a well structured response, as up to ten marks were given for organisation and language.

Many candidates started this part of the examination in draft with a table of comparisons between the texts. This proved an excellent way to ensure the summary remained focused to the question. It is worth reminding candidates that in order to compare the two texts effectively they should look at several different aspects, including the aim of the author and the audience for which the text has been written. Most candidates also commented on the different perspectives of the two authors (*geschreven door een deelnemer* versus *geschreven door een kijker*) and on some of the important questions raised in the texts (*Kun je leven zonder Internet?* versus *Ben ik een barbaar omdat ik liever naar een entertainment programma zonder diepgang kijk?*). It is also worth comparing the language used and the style of the authors for vital clues to the answer. Unfortunately, a few candidates lost sight of the task and compared the two reality-shows, which meant their answers were largely irrelevant.

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/02

Writing

Key message

To do well on this paper, essays should be accurate, use a wide range of vocabulary and structures, be well organised and coherent, with well-developed ideas.

General comments

The level of writing of the majority of the candidates was impressive. Most candidates had a good idea of how to write an effective essay on two topics.

Most candidates wrote interesting essays, however some would have benefited from planning their work before starting to write. Both compositions should be at least 350 words so it might be helpful for candidates to have an idea before the exam of how many words they write approximately on one line so they do not waste time counting.

Candidates are awarded two sets of marks for each of the two compositions, the first mark is for style and accuracy and the second, depending on the type of essay, on the argumentative, descriptive or narrative content.

Most candidates wrote grammatically correct compositions. However there were problems with simple spelling rules, which did not impede communication but could easily have been avoided, eg

- third person singular form of *worden* was often written without *dt*
- addition of a *t* after verbs ending in *d* in the past tense
- errors in the formation of irregular verbs
- confusion with the use of *ei* or *ij* in words such as *bijvoorbeeld* and *zei*
- confusion with the use of *oe*, *ui* or *eu*
- words written as two or more separate words when they should be written as one word

Candidates should be reminded of the requirements of the different types of essays. For example, in **Deel 1**, candidates should aim for a formal style, avoiding colloquialisms. Structure is also important, eg a discursive task requires an introduction and a conclusion, the middle section should include points for and against the statements given in the introduction and lead to a final conclusion.

In **Deel 2** different linguistic skills are tested. The candidate has a choice between a descriptive and a narrative task, each type of task requiring a different approach. In the task, '*Beschrijf een zonsopgangs*', a good start would be, for example, '*De eerste oranje stralen maakten de donkere zee gloeien als een lava stroom*' whereas '*Mijn zusje maakte me die dag vroeg wakker om dat we afgesproken hadden om de zonsopgang te zien*' does not describe what '*zonsopgang*' means to the candidate. It is important to focus on description and avoid story telling.

In the narrative task, the different sections of the story should be balanced and a climax carefully managed. Sentence sequences should be organised to produce effects such as the building up of tension or providing a sudden turn of events. In other words a straight story with only linking words as '*toen, en toen en daarna*' will not impress and here again carefully essay planning is recommended.

Comments on specific questions

Deel 1

Discussie en betoog

All four topics were tackled almost equally this year.

Whether newspapers were still necessary now all news appears on the Internet (**Question 1(a)**) was discussed by many candidates. Most candidates saw the use of paper as environmentally unfriendly, but only a few thought that computers also had an impact on the environment. Candidates often mentioned the difficulties of older people using the Internet, using grandparents as an example. Some candidates felt that newspapers were useful in the Developing World, but almost all thought that they personally did not need to read a newspaper. Some candidates saw the implications for unemployment if newspapers were abolished.

Candidates had a wealth of ideas of how to reduce carbon dioxide, eg changing from petrol cars to electrical cars, some on a global scale, other smaller-scale domestic changes (**Question 1(b)**).

In **Question 1(c)**, candidates were divided equally between those who favoured putting warnings on the packaging of unhealthy food and drinks, and those who did not. All recognised that obesity is becoming more common: some argued that as long as you only occasionally eat and drink unhealthily, there would be no serious long term consequences, whereas others argued that it would be good to remind people of the benefits of eating vegetables rather than crisps.

The best option in **Question 1(d)** - punishing naughty children or encouraging them in good behaviour - was to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of both strategies. Most candidates concluded that the best way to bring up children was to adopt a mixture of approaches.

Deel 2

Beschrijving of verhaal

A few candidates chose to describe the sunrise (**Question 2(a)**). Some candidates were able to come up with beautiful descriptions, but quite a few candidates fell into the trap of writing a story.

The pop concert, **Question 2(b)**, was a popular choice. Where candidates focussed on description, the reader could feel the beat, hear the music and smell the atmosphere.

In the narrative task (**Question 2(c)**), many candidates were able to convey the stories behind the haunted castle and there were some which successfully frightened the reader!

Many tropical islands featured in candidates' responses to **Question 2(d)**. The stranded group ate coconuts, caught fish and was able to find shelter. Most reactions were sensible, rather than panicky. For many, this was a short experience, even though mobile phones did not work.