BENGALI

Paper 3204/01
Composition

Key messages

In order to do well on this paper, candidates need to demonstrate that they can:

- express thoughts, feelings and opinions in order to interest, inform or convince
- order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- communicate effectively and appropriately
- demonstrate adequate control of paragraphing, vocabulary, syntax and grammar, punctuation and spelling
- show a sense of audience and an awareness of register and style in both formal and informal situations.

General comments

In general, candidates attempted this paper very well and there were some outstanding performances. All candidates attempted both sections as required.

In both sections, the most successful responses were presented in paragraphs and demonstrated good use of language, including appropriate punctuation.

For **Section A** questions, it is a good strategy to address the bullet points in order. Starting a separate paragraph for each bullet point is also recommended.

In weaker scripts, the coverage of bullet points in **Section A** was the most frequent area for improvement: candidates are reminded that in order to score high marks, it is necessary to address all parts of the chosen question. Similarly, in **Section B,** it is important to address all parts of the chosen essay title.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report, Dialogue or Speech

Candidates were asked to write a response of approximately 120 words in Bengali to one of two given topics.

Question 1

Performance on this question was generally quite good.

In weaker scripts, there was sometimes misunderstanding of the situation. According to the question, the friend liked the movie and recommended it, but the candidate did not like it as such. Some candidates reversed the situation so that the candidate was the one who liked the movie and was recommending it to a friend who did not like it.

In quite a few responses, candidates used colloquial language rather than standard Bengali. For example, in the first bullet point, দে াস্ত, ছবিটা কই দেখলা? এত সুন্দর ছবিটা তো ামার ভাল লাগে নাই ক্যান বুঝতে পারতেছি না which should have been বন্ধু, ছবিটা কে াথায় দেখলে/দেখেছে? এত সুন্দর ছবিটা তো ামার ভাল লাগে নি কেনে বুঝতে পারছি/পারলাম না।

For the second and third bullet points, কে ান কে ান দিক indicates that more than one piece of information is sought. Some candidates did not provide more than one detail and were therefore unable to score the maximum marks available.

For the fourth bullet point, quite a few candidates overlooked the words তিনটি ব্যাখ্যা and came up with one or two suggestions; only partial marks could be awarded in this situation.

Question 2

Performance on this question was quite varied. Most candidates referred to the bullet points as required.

In weaker responses to the first bullet point, there was often misunderstanding of the information required. The first bullet point states তোমার বাড়ির সংক্ষিপ্ত বর্ণনা, but instead of describing their own house, some candidates described their neighbourhood, gave the address, or explained how to get there from, for example, the station. To address this bullet point successfully, candidates needed to give information such as the number of rooms, the décor, the different parts of the house, the size, the contents of rooms, and so on.

Almost all candidates attempted the second bullet point well and provided relevant information. A small number of candidates overlooked আশপাশে দর্শনীয় কী কী আছে, which indicates that more than one piece of information is sought.

Some candidates omitted to address the third bullet point or gave it only very light coverage. For example, a number of candidates provided sentences such as আমাদের বাড়ির কাছে একটা জাদুঘর আছে, সেখানে গেলে তোমার ভাল লাগবে.

In response to the fourth bullet point, many candidates omitted to ask questions although the stimulus states বন্ধুকে তিনটি প্রাসঙ্গিক প্রশ্ন. Some candidates asked questions, but the questions were not relevant, so marks could not be awarded.

Section B – Essay

Candidates were asked to write an essay of approximately 200 words in Bengali from a choice of three topics.

Question 3

There were some very good responses to this question, in which candidates presented their work by describing the role, duties and responsibilities of candidates in nation building. Most included authentic examples from recent events in which candidates had contributed significantly, with a positive impact on the whole nation. In a small number of less strong responses, candidates confined themselves to describing what candidates *should* do for their society; the ideas included were often rather clichéd.

Question 4

For this question, candidates were expected to make a comparison of rural and urban life and state their preference between the two, with reasons. Most candidates presented their argument logically with valid reasons, and their portrayal both of rural and of urban life was realistic. Such responses scored good marks. A few candidates omitted to state their preference between the two; some others wrote a long essay about their preference with reasons, but without a comparative study. These responses were less successful as they did not address all parts of the question.

Question 5

Many candidates attempted this question and a wide range of performance was seen. Some candidates wrote about their personal experience of a particular holiday, describing the events that took place on that day. A small number of candidates narrated the events of a month- or week-long holiday abroad. Some responses deviated from the theme: for example, a few candidates gave a lengthy introduction about their family members, or they imagined they were older and described a trip to their in-laws' house along with their sons and daughters, or they wrote about a plane journey abroad. Higher marks could not be awarded to such responses due to irrelevant, unrealistic or illogical narration. Sentences such as the following, for example, featured in some candidates' work: সেদিন অফিস থেকে ছুটি নিয়ে আমার স্ত্রী ও ছেলেমেয়েদের নিয়ে শ্বশুরবাড়িতে গেলাম. To perform well in this type of question, candidates need to present their work with realistic descriptions and their narration should be logical; it is advisable to plan the scenario before beginning to write the response.

BENGALI

| Paper 3204/02 |
| Language Usage and Comprehension |

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to make sure that they express themselves in clear, correct and concise language.

In addition, candidates need to:

- show that they can understand and adequately convey information
- understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- evaluate information, select what is relevant to specific purposes and express it in their own words
- exercise control of appropriate structures
- understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary
- recognise implicit meaning and attitude
- demonstrate an awareness of the conventions of paragraphing and sentence structure
- demonstrate adequate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar, punctuation and spelling
- ensure that their handwriting is legible.

General comments

Most candidates made a good attempt to answer all questions in the paper and the majority were able to complete the paper within the time allowed. There were very few instances of unfinished or partially answered questions. The performance of several candidates was outstanding. There were also examples of candidates who could have achieved a better result if they had been more familiar with the required examination techniques for this paper.

In general, candidates coped well with the grammatical tasks in **Section A**. A wider range of performance was seen in response to the questions in **Sections B** and **C**. The quality of candidates' written Bengali also varied widely. At the higher end of the range, some candidates demonstrated the ability to manipulate the language very skilfully. At the lower end, some candidates were unable to write answers in their own words, even at a very simple level. It should be noted that candidates who rely too heavily on wording lifted from the passages cannot gain access to high marks for the quality of their language. In contrast, attempts to write answers which made an effort to manipulate language were awarded higher marks, provided that the wording did not interfere with comprehension.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Exercise A1

This was a combination exercise and candidates found most of the questions quite straightforward. Candidates had more difficulty with **Questions 2** and **4**, where quite a few struggled to combine the words correctly. Candidates often missed the 're' kar, 'dirghoikar' and as a result were unable to score the maximum marks available. Only the strongest candidates scored full marks in this exercise; however, scores of 6 marks or higher were frequently seen.

Exercise A2

For this exercise, candidates needed to select the correct idiom, proverb or word-pair to fill the gaps in the five sentences given. Many candidates were able to answer most of the questions correctly, though there

were instances where candidates struggled to select the correct item to fill a gap. The questions candidates found most difficult were **6** and **7**. A number of candidates struggled to choose between 'idur kapale' and 'biraler bhagge…', and also between 'nijer dhaak…' and 'bhaalo-mondo'. Only the strongest candidates scored full marks in this exercise, but the majority achieved high scores.

Exercise A3

For this exercise, candidates were asked to transform sentences based on cues provided either at the beginning or the end of the sentence. Weaker candidates struggled with this exercise. They found **Questions 12** and **13** particularly difficult. Mid-range and above-average candidates usually scored high marks in this exercise.

Exercise A4

Most candidates performed well in this exercise. Scores of 16 or higher were frequently seen. Weaker candidates had most difficulty with **Questions 16** and **17.**

Section B5 (MCQ comprehension)

Many candidates seemed to find this exercise quite challenging. In particular, a number of candidates struggled with **Questions 26**, **27** and **28**.

Section C6 (OE comprehension)

This exercise comprised a reading comprehension passage followed by open-ended comprehension questions. The majority of candidates performed well in this exercise, and **Questions 35, 36, 37** and **38** were answered particularly well. A number of candidates showed confusion in their answers to **Questions 33** and **34**. Some, for example, gave their answer to **Question 33** in response to **Question 34**, and vice versa.

Exercise C7 (Vocabulary)

For this exercise, candidates were required to give the meaning of five specified words from the comprehension text. In general, candidates seemed to find the exercise quite challenging and had particular difficulty with **Questions 39**, **40** and **42**. To improve performance in this exercise, candidates are advised to read widely in order to develop a strong vocabulary and gain further familiarity with the meaning of words in context.