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Paper 3196/01

Composition

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All topics on this paper allowed a wide range of candidates to show their qualities. There was some excellent work at the top of the range and there slightly fewer candidates whose work was unsatisfactory. The overall performance was very good.

Section A

Of the two optional questions, **Question 2** was slightly more popular than **Question 1**. Most candidates performed well in this section, demonstrating a high degree of imagination and knowledge relevant to the topic. At the top end, some answers were of outstanding quality and originality. At the bottom end, work often lacked relevance and was often too short in length.

Section B

Candidates who appeared to take the time to decide on key points wrote the best essays. **Questions 3** and **4** were the most popular. Almost all candidates who chose **Question 4** wrote about aliens.

The best essays showed evidence of planning in their structure. Such essays began with a clear introduction, outlining the main areas of discussion, and identified the main issues to be considered. Discussions of these issues were rounded off with an appropriate conclusion.

The most common deficiency occurred when candidates did not analyse the question properly before starting to write. Other candidates started well, but lost sight of the title as the essay progressed. Some essays had no conclusions and finished abruptly.

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General comments

The overall performance of the candidates was good. Many had come to the examination very well prepared and had obviously spent a lot of time practising the techniques involved.

Comments on specific questions

A1

This was generally done well.

A2

This was competently done and a fair number of very good answers gained full marks.

A3

This exercise was generally well answered.

A4

On the whole, candidates performed very well on this exercise, with many candidates gaining maximum marks.

Section B

This multiple choice exercise produced the full range of marks and proved to be a useful discriminator of candidates' ability. In addition, this task differentiated well between those candidates who closely considered the task set and those who did not take the time to read the text and questions properly.

Section C

Each question in this section carried 6 marks, 4 marks for content and 2 marks for language. There was a significant improvement in performance on last year, with fewer candidates lifting their answers directly from the text.

C7

This exercise was generally well done. However, candidates must be reminded that they will be not be rewarded for answering this question in English or any language other than Urdu.