

BENGALI

Paper 3204/01
Composition

General comments

Overall the performance of most candidates in this paper was good. All candidates attempted both sections and the more able ones showed a true mastery of the language. A small number of candidates however lost marks through having insufficient material, an illogical sequence and careless presentation in spite of their depth of knowledge of the language. Some candidates wrote a full length essay without referring to the word length in the rubric and hence much of their work was wasted. Quite a significant number of candidates avoided using foreign words which enabled them to express themselves in an original way, and achieved high marks. A significant number of candidates wrote their answers, crossed them out, then wrote them again from scratch making a confusing mess in their answer booklet. Some candidates even forgot to cross out their rough work, causing further confusion. Some candidates wrote excessively long introductions, ignoring the word limit and deviating from the original theme. In some cases, answers in both sections was up to four times higher than the actual word limit. Although some allowance can be made, work will only be marked within that allowance which has a significant impact on their final score. Centres should remind their future candidates about these issues.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates attempted this question and scored high marks as there was ample scope to write from real life experience. Candidates who answered according to the bullet points in a logical, reasonable and concise way, gained comparatively high marks whilst others gained fewer marks because they did not address the specific question asked. Some candidates completely ignored the third bullet point thus losing marks. Quite a few candidates were extra vigilant about the word limit resulting in a drastic ending of the task. A pre-planned scenario could have been quite useful here.

Question 2

Candidates who attempted this question managed well. However, quite a few candidates ignored individual bullet points especially the fourth one. Quite a few candidates did not grasp the meaning of 'Naubihar' (boat trip) and described their experience simply on the assumption that 'Naubihar' was the name of a place. Some candidates gave irrelevant information that inevitably increased the number of words. Centres could perhaps advise their candidates to refer to all parts of the question whilst sticking to the word limit.

Question 3

This was a very popular task that attracted most candidates. All those who attempted to answer this question performed very well. It was quite encouraging to see almost all candidates describe their emotional feelings successfully though at times they exceeded the word limit. Some candidates went even further with their real life experience on the last day at school. A small number of candidates however, did not compose a realistic plot.

Question 4

Quite a few candidates attempted this question and seemed very enthusiastic about it. Most candidates wrote this essay in an informed manner hence it sounded original and authentic. However, some candidates narrated it from a narrow perspective rather than a global view.

Question 5

This was another interesting question that inspired a significant number of candidates to write a full-length essay with imagination and rhetoric. A handful of candidates however, did not maintain consistency across the essay. Others wrote fiction or a fairy tale that did not match with the 'true story' beginning, such as writing that they were attacked and killed by ghosts or wild animals. This had an impact on the validity of their work.

BENGALI

Paper 3204/02

Language Usage and Comprehension

General comments

In general most candidates performed very well in this paper with all candidates attempting every question regardless of their ability. The majority of candidates' answers were concise and to the point for which they gained good marks. Most candidates presented their work neatly, however some candidates did not delete/cross out their rough work, which occasionally created confusion for Examiners. Most Centres deserve to be commended for the high quality of performance and neat presentation of scripts. It was also noticed that correction fluid was no longer in evidence thanks to all Centres' adherence to CIE regulations.

Comments on specific questions

Section A1

Questions : 1-5

Most candidates attempted this question and achieved reasonably high marks, although a number of candidates had difficulty with parts **1** and **4**.

Section A2

Questions: 6-10

The majority of candidates coped well with these questions. A small minority of candidates however struggled with sentences **8** and **9**.

Section A3

Questions: 11-15

Most candidates performed very well in these questions. Just a few candidates however, did not transform the sentences successfully in **13** and **14**.

Section A4

Question: 16-25

Some candidates did comparatively better in the cloze passage while others found it rather difficult. The real challenge in this gap-filling task is to distinguish between two words with similar meanings. Some candidates did reasonably well, but some failed to find the appropriate word for the corresponding gap. Some candidates appeared to have guessed the correct words. Candidates should compare the similar words and choose the most appropriate one for each gap.

Section B5

Questions: 26-32

In this exercise some candidates were able to achieve high marks. A small number of less able candidates though seemed to be confused and did not appear to have read the text and individual questions thoroughly. It is of absolute importance that every candidate reads all parts of the sentence closely as 'almost look alike' sentences often create a great deal of confusion in this type of multiple choice task.

Section C6

Questions: 33-38

Almost all candidates took the opportunity to show their command of the language in answering these questions, whilst a few candidates copied sentences from the text. The open ended comprehension questions require candidates to answer the main points as far as possible in their own words in a concise and original way. It is equally important to read and understand all parts of the question alongside the source text.

Section C7

Questions: 39-43

A wide variety of performance was noticed amongst the candidates. A small minority did significantly well; some struggled to work out the real meaning of individual words. Some candidates gave irrelevant answers by guessing, while others gave explanations that were far too long. Some candidates gave a number of different meanings amongst which there was probably one correct answer, but this was a matter of chance. Centres may advise future candidates on this issue in order to achieve good marks.