BENGALI

Paper 3204/01
Composition

Key messages

- It is important that candidates carefully identify the key points required to answer each question and then provide a range of well-developed responses relevant to the chosen item.

- It is expected that candidates write accurately following correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar rules.

- A range of sophisticated language that draws interest to the reader with well-linked sentences as well as the successful reference to different time phrases will assist candidates to excel.

- Candidates should proofread their responses.

General comments

In general, this year, candidates have performed reasonably well. Almost all candidates answered both sections of the paper as required, regardless of their ability.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

In **Section A, Question 1** was less prevalent, and approximately 7 per cent of candidates responded to this question. In **Question 1**, candidates were required to write a report on an 'inter-school cultural competition'. Most candidates who attempted this question portrayed realistic answers from their experience. This question was slightly less common in format, and those who answered were well prepared. Interestingly, those candidates tended to be more organised and did better in language features and accuracy. Their references appropriately vivified their experience in inter-school cultural competitions. Most of them wrote in detail referring to all bullet points, and some candidates could do better in responding to the third bullet point on 'three main benefits of such competition'.

Question 2

In this section, for **Question 2**, candidates were asked to write a letter about 'hobbies both at present and in the past'. This was a preferred question in **Section A**, and approximately 93 per cent of the candidates chose this question. Most candidates presented their views with valid justifications for their interests. There were many well-articulated letters with appropriate vocabulary and varied sentence structure referring to all bullet points. A few students deviated from the theme and understood hobbies as their aim in life. Some candidates could have conveyed the required information for bullet point one by referring to how much time they spend on their hobby each week rather than how frequently they do so. Some candidates' responses to the fourth bullet point were inconsistent.

Section B

Question 3

In **Question 3**, candidates were expected to write an essay on 'their ambition in life and how they should prepare themselves for this'. Approximately 37 per cent of candidates had chosen this question, hence the second most chosen essay title this year. The overall quality of this response was quite good. For most candidates, it was an authentic narration of their life aims. Candidates took a great interest in narrating how their study revolved around the plan and affiliating to the world of work experience at this stage of their life which has helped them to bring originality to their writing. However, there needed to be more balance in justifying the reasons behind selecting their ambition as well as how they are preparing for this. There were occasional abstract responses such as 'to becoming a true human being', 'a good father', or 'some dream job they are already doing' as their aim in life.

Question 4

In this question, candidates are expected to write an essay about their 'first ever picnic with friends'. Approximately 57 per cent of candidates had chosen this question and the most chosen essay title this year. Some candidates gave a memorable description of a picnic as it happens traditionally. However, many candidates missed out on the focal point of this essay and deviated a lot in their narration. Such answers mainly emphasised traveling, camping, adventure and sightseeing rather than having a detailed reference to preparing and cooking the food and eating afterward. In these responses, the excitement of having a picnic was missing. It is worth noting that from many responses, a similar description of a few details, such as 'collection of firewood', 'the crow has done its job on someone', etc., were presented in a memorised language pattern. A few candidates could improve their writing by avoiding deviation, inconsistency, spelling, and grammatical errors.

Question 5

In **Question 5**, candidates were expected to write an essay about the 'importance of wildlife conservation'. Approximately 5 per cent of candidates had chosen this question which stands out as the least popular essay topic this year. The best responses addressed the terminology and jargon associated with significant aspects of the importance of wildlife in nature and ways to conserve wildlife and supporting it through justified examples. These were exceptionally well-argued and logically organised. Fewer candidates could not identify the importance of wildlife conservation and wrote more about the forest, wildlife, and pollution.

General comments and recommendations

Section A

To score in higher bands in **Section A**, reference to all bullet points with good vocabulary, correct spelling, varied sentence structures, and relevant tenses are required, and most candidates were able to present their ideas rightly, addressing the questions in this section. Weaker answers in this section were characterised by a lack of good presentation, missing reference to bullet points, spelling errors, dialectical language, and improper use of tenses or idioms.

It is recommended that candidates should read all parts of the question and provide an accurate account of the specific event as demanded in the question. To reiterate from the point of fewer candidates attempting a particular type of question in **Section A**, candidates will benefit more if they prepare several responses for **Section A**, such as letters, reports, dialogues, and speeches.

Section B

In this section, responses that consistently referenced the essay title across their work, with a clear and sophisticated style and ability to establish their thoughts with appropriate vocabulary, logic, correct spelling, idiomatic language, varied sentence structures, and tenses, were credited with higher marks. Some of the candidates tried to deliver a creative piece of writing by using imagery, similes, a wide range of adjectives, and in some cases, idioms, and proverbs.

Sometimes, by a few candidates, the essay theme needed to be adequately addressed, not missing the correct balance of the required parts of the essay title. Some wrote answers that needed to be longer or shorter, parts of the response were digressed or deviated from the original theme, and some used

inconsistent spellings, which led to lower marks. Some weaker candidates had attempted to use idioms and proverbs, but, in some cases, it was rarely successful or relevant.

It is vital that candidates carefully identify the key points required to answer each question and then provide a range of well-developed responses relevant to the chosen item. Candidates are expected to write accurately, following the correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar rules. A range of sophisticated language that draws interest to the reader with well-linked sentences as well as the successful reference to different time phrases will assist candidates to excel. This could have been achieved by drafting a plan before writing the piece.

Candidates need to answer the question set; those who had provided an answer for a question they had prepared for, rather than for the question on the question paper, were limited to low band marks. Candidates also need to be mindful of the word limit, accuracy of spelling, and appropriate use of idioms to achieve higher marks. The candidates should check the question they have selected and correctly written the number in the spaces provided and should proofread their responses.

BENGALI

Key messages

- It is important that candidates carefully identify the key points required to answer each question.

- It is expected that candidates write accurately following correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar rules.

- Candidates should proofread their responses.

General comments

The entry for this paper in June 2023 has been increased from June 2022. This paper comprises of the Bengali language use and comprehension. Candidates were tested on their knowledge of grammar, manipulation of sentences and comprehension skills through a variety of tasks. It was pleasing to note that most candidates had completed the paper within the time allowed. There were very few examples of unfinished or partially answered questions.

The performances of several candidates were outstanding, though there were examples of candidates who could have achieved better if provided embedded adequate and relevant exam techniques for this examination. Most candidates coped well with basic grammar tasks and the comprehension questions though at a varied level. The quality of the Bengali in answers was very wide. Some candidates demonstrated the ability to manipulate the language very skilfully. There were also instances where 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 the text cannot gain access to the higher marks for the quality of their language. On the other hand, attempts to write answers which make the effort to manipulate language are rewarded more generously, even when this results in increased inaccuracy, if it does not interfere with comprehension.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question A1: Combination of words (1 – 5)

This question comprises the task to combine 5 separated words. This task was quite straight forward except **A1(3)**and **A1(5)** where several candidates committed spelling errors to combine the words correctly. Many candidates found **A1(3)** difficult, where instead of the correct answer দিগন্ত they have written দিকান্ত. Similarly in **A1(5)** instead of writing নিস্তেজ using 'স', most of the candidates used either 'শ' or 'ষ'. The average score recorded was 6.

Question A2 (6 – 10): Idioms, Proverbs, and words in Pairs

This question comprises a gap filling task followed by idioms, proverbs, and words in pairs to be lifted in the appropriate gaps in 5 set sentences. It was pleasing to see the majority of candidates were able to answer this question correctly, though there were instances where a number of candidates struggled to lift the correct idioms/proverbs/words in pairs. In **A2(7),** some candidates picked a wrong proverb **(10)** দহরম-মহরম or (7)উলুবনে মুক্ত ছড়ানো, instead of হাড় হাভাতে **(9).** Similarly, some candidates misplaced **(6)** with **(6)**

whereas the correct answer was **(2)**. However, more able candidates scored full marks. The average score on this question recorded was 6 marks.

Question A3 (11 – 15)

The task comprises transforming sentences based on clues either at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. This question was answered well by able learners. However, less able candidates responded poorly, particularly on **Question 12**. They often struggled to manipulate particularly the essence of A12 appropriately and so scored 0. Many candidates failed to transform the sentence into an interrogative sentence. Instead of transforming the sentence into a rhetorical question keeping the meaning intact by adding the (negative) question tag **'না'**, they simply changed the sentence as **'গুরুজন কে কি সবই শ্রদ্ধা করে?'** which simply reversed the meaning. However, most candidates answered **Question 11**, **Question 13**, **Question 14** and **Question 15** correctly although some candidates came up with wrong answers in **Question 15** due to their lack of knowledge about differentiating direct and indirect speech. On the other hand, able candidates understood what was required to do to correctly, answering this question which was changing indirect speech to direct speech.

The average score recorded on this question was 8 marks.

Question A4: Cloze Test (16 – 25)

This is a gap filling exercise where candidates had to choose the 10 correct words from the word list provided. Performance in this section was mixed. Very few candidates answered all the questions correctly. Candidates found **Questions A4 (17), A4 (21)** and **A4 (24)** the most accessible. Except for one or two, almost all the candidates answered these correctly. While **Questions A4 (18), A4 (19)** and **A4 (23)** posed a challenge for many. Very few candidates struggled to lift and match the correct words for the gaps throughout the task.

The average score for this question was 12.

Section B

Question B5: MCQ comprehension (26 – 32)

The performance on this section was quite good. By and large, candidates have answered them correctly. The majority of candidates answered the questions correctly. In answering **Question 27** however, many candidates opted for **A** instead of **B**. A few candidates also had confusion with **Question 28** and **31.** The average mark scored was 12.

Section C

Question C6: OE comprehension (33 – 38)

This question comprises of OE comprehension followed by comprehension questions. Most candidates performed well on this section, particularly on **Question 33** and **34**. However, **Question 35** and **36** were moderately scoring for most candidates, and **Question 38** posed a severe challenge for most candidates.

In general, several candidates answered the questions without any manipulation of language simply by lifting chunks of text which prevented them from scoring well.

The average mark scored was 26.

Question C7: Vocabulary (39 – 43)

This was the most challenging section. On the whole, the performance was not as good as it should be. Hardly any candidate could score full marks in this section.

Several candidates found **Question 41** the most challenging and simply answered '**গ্রাম**' which was not acceptable. Further, some candidates faced a similar challenge with **Question 39** where they wrote '**ছেলেবেলা**' instead of '**ছেলেবেলায়**' and with **Question 43** where they answered '**বদলে**' instead of '**বদল**'.

The average mark scored was 6.