

SINHALA

Paper 3205/01

Composition

The performance of the candidates is praiseworthy. Some candidates have performed extremely well. Most of the candidates were fluent and accurate in writing Sinhala, while a small number of them misspelled words and did not seem to be familiar with important grammar rules. As a result of these weaknesses, some candidates could score only moderate marks.

Most of the candidates were well prepared for this examination in Sinhala and followed the instructions given on the paper. However, infringement of the rubric, such as exceeding the recommended length for the letter and the essay occurred in the case of a small number of candidates.

- All the candidates selected one topic only for the letter and essay according to the instructions.
- Candidates attempted in general not to exceed the required number of words.
- A few, however, exceeded the recommended length.

Section A- Letter, report, dialogue or speech.

Candidates were given the option to select one of the 3 topics under (a), (b), and (c).

- (a) This was the most popular topic out of the three in **Section A**. Many candidates attempted it and produced interesting letters. They correctly understood what is expected of them and, keeping to the recommended length, wrote in clear and simple Sinhala about when and where they had gone cycling and what they had seen in a busy village. Most candidates showed their ability in creative writing.'
- (b) This topic was selected by some candidates and they wrote interesting speeches on the issue for a raise in the minimum age for driving a car. Some candidates mentioned personal experiences also in their speech.
- (c) Only a few candidates attempted this. But those who did write interesting reviews though there were some defects in their writing as they were not familiar with the Sinhala words suitable for this kind of writing.

Section B- Essay

Four topics were listed for writing an essay on one of them in about 200 words. Most of the candidates maintained the length while only one or two exceeded it. All the options were selected except topic (c). Most of the candidates attempted option (a) i.e. 'Should wearing a School uniform be compulsory?' and (b) 'I was about to pay for my groceries in the shop when I noticed there was no money in my pocket.' This was a very popular topic with the candidates. They built up interesting stories displaying their talent for imaginative writing. Topic (d), 'Describe the scene at a wedding', was a very popular topic for the essay. All the candidates who selected this topic wrote very interesting essays.

The general approach, understanding of the subject and experience in essay writing is of a commendable standard. Those who selected (a), described personal observations and experience in the usefulness of wearing a uniform for School. Some of them attempted to show both the advantages as well as disadvantages of the School uniform. Essays written on this topic were interesting to read as the candidates expressed their genuine feelings on the subject. The candidates, who opted for topic (b), tried to create stories which seemed to be more realistic than fiction. While writing interesting essays on their selected topics, some candidates failed to follow important rules in Sinhala grammar such as the agreement of the subject and verb.

Descriptions and the content of essays were of a high standard considering the age of the candidates. Most of them used personal experience rather than repeating stereotyped essays picked up from text books or exam guides.

It would be beneficial for candidates if they were encouraged to write in a legible, clear hand, and tried to produce a neat script, especially in the essay and the letter tasks. Further, candidates should pay more attention to correct spelling in Sinhala. For improving writing skills in Sinhala, candidates should be encouraged to read Sinhala newspapers as well as novels and short stories by good writers.

SINHALA

Paper 3205/02

Translation and Comprehension

General Comments

The overall performance was excellent. Most candidates translated the 2 passages well and accurately. *Section B*, Reading and Comprehension proved challenging for a few candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section A Translations

1. Translation from Sinhala into English

Candidates seem to have had no major difficulty with this passage. Understanding of the passage on the whole was satisfactory. Most of the candidates translated the passage accurately into English. Therefore they scored the full marks for this question.

2. Translate from English into Sinhala

Most candidates have performed well. Understanding the passage and command of English is appropriate and acceptable. Candidates seem to be more confident in their use of English than Sinhala, as they have grasped correctly the meaning of the original.

Section B Comprehension

Performance in general was satisfactory. Candidates in general read the passage well and carefully, though a few of them seem to have rushed through it. Furthermore, a small number of candidates have not understood correctly some questions and as a result have not given correct answers. Candidates appeared to enjoy reading this passage on Lance Armstrong and his achievements.

On the whole, performance of the candidates in both the papers was encouraging and of a high standard. However, more attention should be paid to spelling and basic rules of grammar and the idiom of written Sinhala. Furthermore, it would be to the advantage of candidates if they avoided using words and terms found in colloquial Sinhala.

Compared with the standards of the candidates of previous years, standards of the candidates of this year seem to have improved.