

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3247/01
Reading and Writing

Key Messages

All candidates should spend time reading the instructions very carefully before attempting the questions. They need to read and understand the demand of the questions in order to achieve the highest possible marks. There are two parts in this paper: Part One Reading and Part Two Writing. All candidates are required to answer all questions in Part One and select one question from Part Two.

General Comments

The question paper was set on the new specification and was in a new style and format. The majority of candidates performed extremely well and answered the questions after having read the whole passage with care. It has been observed that this year the candidates' responses were generally of a high standard. It seems that candidates were very well prepared for their examination. Some candidates did not grasp all the details of the passage and did not fully understand what the questions required, and these candidates scored lower marks.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part One

Question 1

A passage was given about the advantages and disadvantages of the joint family system and candidates were asked to answer nine questions with reference to the given passage. A large majority of candidates were able to answer these questions correctly and were able to score either full marks or very good marks. The candidates showed a good command of language and structure, as well as content. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to write very detailed and comprehensive responses and showed confident use of complex sentence structures.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are advised to read the passage very carefully more than once and underline the main points. They should then read the question and try to answer in the light of the passage but using their own words to gain full marks. It should be noted that if the question is worth one mark, the Examiner will be looking for one point to be made, and if it is worth four marks, the Examiner will be looking for four points in the answer. Candidates should take care to write neatly and use either dark blue or black pen.

Part Two

Question 2

Candidates were required to write an essay on one of the 4 topics provided. The most popular topics were the argumentative, descriptive and narrative essays. A small number of candidates attempted the discursive essay.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are advised to spend some time deciding which topic to write on. Once they have decided, they should write down the bullet points and write a plan, then write their response. Candidates need to read carefully and understand the demand of the question to score high marks.

Argumentative essay

Question 2 (i)

To score high marks, candidates needed to describe what a balanced diet is. Responses that simply talked about normal food and exercise did not score the highest marks, as the question asked about the way in which a balanced diet and exercise are interlinked. There were some excellent responses from candidates who had fully understood the question and argued it very well.

Discursive essay

Question 2 (ii)

Very few candidates attempted this topic. Those who did were in favour of allowing women to work along with men in all spheres of life in order to lead a better family life and prepare their children for the future. Some excellent responses were seen on this topic.

Descriptive essay

Question 2 (iii)

This question asked candidates to describe a scene at train station. From the writing of some candidates it appeared that they had never travelled by train and thus could not describe the scene at the station in detail. Some candidates gave a very good description of everything that might be seen at a train station, like passengers waiting impatiently for their train, hawkers selling things, people trying to argue with the station staff and people reading newspapers. There were some excellent responses from candidates who described the scene in great detail.

Narrative essay

Question 2 (iv)

This question was the most popular choice amongst candidates. Those who wrote on this topic gave a detailed description of the scene at the zoo. In order to score full marks for structure, candidates needed to give their story a suitable ending.

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Paper 3247/02

Texts

Key Messages

All candidates should spend time reading the instructions very carefully before attempting the questions. They need to read and understand the demand of the questions in order to achieve the highest possible marks. There are three parts in this paper: Part One Unseen passage, Part Two Poetry and Part Three Prose. All candidates are required to answer Part One and select one question from Part Two and one question from Part Three.

General Comments

The question paper was set on prescribed texts and was first exam of the new specification. The majority of the candidates performed very well and selected questions from both parts one and two. It has been observed that this year the candidates' responses were generally of a high standard. Some candidates had not prepared Ghazals for the poetry section and so were unprepared for the questions in Part 2. The majority of candidates had carefully prepared all the texts prescribed in the syllabus, and answered all the questions, scoring high or full marks.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part One

Question 1 (Unseen Passage)

This was compulsory question in part one. Candidates were required to read the passage and compare two characters in the passage and explain what impact these two characters made on readers. Apart from this, candidates were required to write about the characterisation of the author in the light of the given passage.

The majority of candidates answered this question extremely well and scored very good marks. Some candidates did less well as they did not understand the question and copied the whole passage for their answers.

Advice to candidates

Candidates need to read the unseen passage very carefully and understand the demand of the question. Sometimes the question asks more than one thing, and to score high marks candidates must fully address every point. The bullet points given at the end of the question are there to help candidates, but it is not absolutely necessary to use these in order to score high marks. Higher marks are awarded where candidates are able to use their own words when answering the question.

Part two (Poetry)

Question 2

This question was less popular, but all candidates who wrote on Momin Khan Momin showed that they were fully prepared for this question and they gave excellent answers. Full marks were awarded to those candidates who wrote with the reference to his Ghazals and quoted verses from his poetry in the syllabus.

Question 3

This question on Mir Taque Mir was very popular question and the majority of the candidates answered this question. There was a variety of answers to this question. Some candidates wrote essay without including quotations from his poetry and some wrote mainly about the life history of the poet and not what the Question was asking. A good number of candidates answered the question with the reference to his poetry and scored full marks.

Part three (Prose)

Question 4

This was very popular and a well attempted question. Candidates showed that they had prepared this section very well, and answered using quotations from the text. The candidates who scored full marks described the full story and at the end justified how this text was realistic.

Question 4

This question was less popular but again those who chose this question gave full detail of the text and their answers were full of references from the work of the author. These candidates gave excellent answers and achieved high marks.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are strongly advised to read and understand the syllabus. All the set texts listed in the syllabus should be read by all candidates. Any question can be set on any text included in the syllabus.