

SINHALA

Paper 3205/01
Composition

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they answer one question from **Section A** and one question from **Section B**
- adhere to the word limits specified
- ensure that their work is legible, accurate and logically presented
- ensure that they present their response in the form stipulated in the question (e.g. letter, dialogue etc)
- plan their use of time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work.

General comments

In general, candidates performed well on this paper, and most seemed to have been well prepared for the examination. On the whole, this year's compositions were of a higher standard than last year's.

Some candidates did not seem familiar with the basic grammar rules of Sinhala, or with Sinhalese idiom, and would benefit from further practice in these areas. Candidates should be encouraged to read more widely (e.g. books, newspapers) to help consolidate spelling and grammar.

Candidates also need to be aware that they should adhere to any word limits given in the questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report or Speech, Dialogue

Candidates were asked to write a response of approximately 120 words on one of the three given topics.

Question 1(a), which asked candidates to write a letter to their neighbour suggesting ways to improve road safety in the area, was the most popular question in **Section A**. Some candidates produced very good answers and demonstrated that they were familiar with the rules of letter writing. Candidates wrote about the difficult experiences that they had had while traveling to school along poor quality roads.

Question 1(b), which asked candidates to compose a school-leaving speech, was also popular. Those who selected this topic generally produced interesting speeches based on their experiences at their school.

Question 1(c), which asked candidates to produce a dialogue between a mother and child as she taught the child to dress himself, was chosen by a number of candidates. Those who selected this topic were able to imagine the situation clearly and showed that they were capable of understanding the child's mentality. Candidates demonstrated their creativity when answering this question.

Section B – Essay

Candidates were asked to write an essay of approximately 200 words on one of the four given topics.

In general, candidates wrote creatively in this section.

A number of candidates selected **Question 2(a)**, which asked them to imagine that they were participating in an event at the Olympics and to describe the atmosphere and their emotions. Many wrote creatively here.

Question 2(b), chosen by a small number of candidates, asked them to give their opinion on the saying “The grass is always greener on the other side.”

Those who selected **Question 2(c)** (“Write an essay about your favourite television programme”) generally produced interesting essays, although in terms of language there was a mixed response to this question: some essays were accurate but others demonstrated lack of control of the basic grammatical rules of Sinhala and of the norms of essay writing. Some essays contained many grammatical and spelling errors.

Answers to **Question 2(d)**, which asked candidates to write an essay presenting their views on the saying “You are what you eat”, tended to be satisfactory.

SINHALA

Paper 3205/02

Translation and Reading Comprehension

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they plan their time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work
- ensure that their work is legible and logically presented
- read the translation passages carefully before beginning to translate.

General comments

Overall, candidates' performance on this paper was of a high standard. This year, performance on **Question 1** was similar to performance on **Question 2**.

Candidates should be encouraged to read a variety of books and newspapers in Sinhala as this will increase exposure to a wide range of Sinhalese vocabulary, grammar and idiom, and will help candidates to improve their writing skills and reading comprehension skills. In some cases, candidates' grasp of grammar and/or spelling was so poor that it rendered the answers unintelligible.

In a few cases, handwriting was so poor as to render answers illegible. Candidates need to make sure that their work is tidy and legible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation

Question 1: Translation into English

Generally, the translation into English was tackled very well. Many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the passage and provided translations that were clear and accurate.

Question 2: Translation into Sinhala

Most candidates made a good attempt at this translation. Words which some candidates struggled to translate included 'summer', 'excited', 'traffic jam' and 'complain'.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

On the whole, candidates made an excellent attempt at this section and most scored good marks here. Candidates generally demonstrated very good understanding of the reading passage and gave suitable answers to the questions.