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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

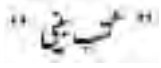
General comments

The majority of candidates performed very well and were able to cope with the different technical demands of the paper, the only limitation being that of the candidates' linguistic skills, and their ability to understand and respond appropriately to the texts and questions.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1 – Directed Writing

This was a task based on a letter writing competition on the topic of:



Reading books

Candidates were given three bullet points to be covered in a composition of 150 words.

They were expected to cover each bullet point in some detail in order to achieve the two marks awarded for each point. The three points were as follows:

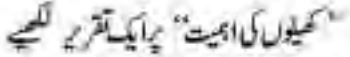
- books have been and still are the best way of acquiring knowledge
- the educational, practical and recreational benefits of reading books
- the importance of good, interesting books.

By and large, this task was satisfactorily accomplished by the majority of candidates. In linguistic terms, there were only a few candidates whose level of Urdu did not enable them to perform the task adequately.

Apart from linguistic competence, the main difficulties encountered were writing too much (i.e. in excess of the word limit), writing irrelevant material, and most significantly, giving insufficient attention to the bullet points. Many candidates wrote far too much for point one, covered point two adequately, but then wrote very little about point three, often simply saying that books should be interesting and failing to address why interesting books are important. For many candidates by the time they came to address point three, they were also running over the 150 word limit, so they either failed to cover the point adequately or wrote too much. The prescribed length of 150 words is chosen to allow candidates sufficient length to respond to the question fully but not expansively. Many candidates wrote far in excess of the word limit which meant that many of the points made towards the end of their writing could not be taken into consideration. The main reason for candidates writing too much was a tendency to write lengthy introductions on why they had decided to enter for the competition and using traditional letter writing formalities, which was unnecessary. If high marks are to be achieved, the importance of following the rubrics for each question cannot be over emphasised.

Part 2 – Letter, Report, Dialogue or Speech

This question gave candidates two options:

(a)  write a speech on a cultural or religious festival

or

(b)  write a dialogue persuading your parents to let you have a pet

Most candidates favoured the second option. The only real difficulty here was that a few candidates wrote the first task in the form of a letter instead of a dialogue. As always, it must be stressed that reading the questions and rubrics carefully is the candidates' first task in the examination.

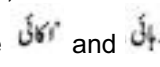
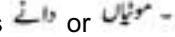
Only a few of the candidates who chose to write a speech wrote a good one. A speech should include an appropriate introduction, a central section on the importance or relevance of the chosen occasion, and some form of interesting concluding remarks. Many candidates simply described what happens at Eid: you get up, pray, put on new clothes, go to the mosque, visit relatives and friends, all of which would be familiar to any Muslim audience, whereas those few candidates who wrote very good speeches spoke to their audience of the importance of the festival and what Muslims should do to help their fellows.

As in previous years, the dialogue task produced some extremely interesting and well written dialogues. Many contained a lot of humour and were delightful to read. Many too were grounded in realism as Muslim children were described trying to persuade their parents let them have a dog, and expressing all the traditional views of Muslims concerning unclean animals such as dogs!

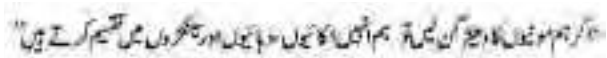
Part 3 – Translation

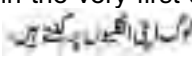
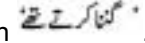
This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu. At this level candidates are not penalised for grammatical or spelling errors that do not interfere with the meaning.

The topic of the passage was counting and it was very successfully attempted by most candidates. Even the weaker candidates were able to give at least an approximate meaning of the passage, even if they were not always able to cover all the detail.

There were some words and phrases that caused candidates difficulties, and there were many English word transliterations, such as *tens*, *units* and *beads*. The first two words are , and *beads* is usually translated as .

The sentence beginning 'If we count out a pile of beads.....' proved difficult for many candidates. A good translation would read something like:



One unusual error occurred in the very first sentence of the passage, where 'People used to count on their fingers' was translated thus  i.e. in the present habitual tense instead of the past habitual with .

Paper 3248/02

Language Usage, Summary and Comprehension

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was good. Most candidates attempted all the questions. A small number of candidates were not able to complete all the tasks due to either inadequate language skills or mismanagement of time. Some candidates' responses to the tasks were concise, relevant and written in their own words, but there were a number of candidates who, despite having excellent language skills, wrote responses to most of the tasks that were far too long and unfocused. A small number of candidates misread one or two of the questions in **Part 3: Comprehension**. Some candidates did not have enough time to answer both sets of comprehension questions due to time spent on rough drafts.

Comments on specific questions**Part 1: Language Usage***Vocabulary*

These were generally well done but 'ankhain chaar howna' was interpreted in the sense of 'surprise', for example, 'usay aisi herkat kerte daikh ker meri to aankhain chaar ho gayen' or 'jab raaz khula to sab ki aankhain chaar ho gaeyn':

" اسی سے ایسی حرکت کرتے دیکھ کر میری تو آنکھیں چار ہو گئیں۔
" جب راز کھلا تو سب کی آنکھیں چار ہو گئیں۔ "

'mown ki khana' (to be defeated) was also misunderstood for example, 'woh apnay valid se mown ki kha ker (physically beaten) gir para':

" وہ اپنے والد سے منہ کی کھا کر زمین پر گر گیا "

'kisi garib ke mown ki nahin khani चाहیے' (depriving the poor of food):

" کسی غریب کے منہ کی نہیں کھانی چاہیے "

Sentence Transformation

This part of the exam was done well and most candidates secured full marks.

Cloze Passage

Again most candidates secured full marks but there were some isolated errors.

Part 2: Summary

Many summaries were too long and a number of candidates copied chunks of text directly from the passage to communicate the main points which is not acceptable. Good summaries were written concisely and in candidates' own words.

Part 3: Comprehension

Passage A

Question 14

This question was generally well done but a small number of candidates managed only one relevant response.

Questions 15 and 16

These questions did not pose any problems and most candidates provided relevant responses.

Question 17

This question required two pieces of information of the three available from the text, for example 'Pakistan's success in trade is due to the production of raw materials, increasing demand for export and better transport facilities.' A number of candidates only mentioned one reason for success.

Question 18

This question posed no problems for most candidates.

Question 19

Most candidates went along with the writer's suggestions in the text and mentioned 'business' as a better profession for youngsters. They may have found it easier to describe the benefits of being a businessman as the information was readily available from the text. Very few suggested that working for someone else was better with less stress and a steady monthly income. Quite a few candidates said that doctors were in great demand and not only serve society but also earn a lot of money.

Passage B

This part of the paper was done well. Most candidates secured high marks.

Questions 20-23

These were quite straightforward and candidates did well to secure maximum marks.

Question 24

There were isolated cases where candidates misread the question and instead of describing the difficulties of living in a village, wrote about the benefits instead. In such cases no marks could be given.