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# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

October 2020

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level  
In Arabic (WAA01/01)  
Paper 1: Understanding and Written Response

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## Introduction:

This unusual autumn series, where we used the summer 2020 paper is the 6th series of the WAA01 examination. The paper is fair and comparable to previous exam of this specification. It was clear that students are now more familiar with this type of exam and their exam techniques improved noticeably. The quality of language was much better than previous seasons, and so was the performance generally. The students seem to benefit from accessing past papers and the SAM.

Generally, most candidates coped well. Passages were set to be current and of interest to candidates. All passages were from authentic Arabic sources and were chosen to suit candidates of all levels of language.

Examiners think that there was some evidence of improvement in the standard of candidates' answers and there were some very interesting opinions expressed especially with the Q8.

## Section A; reading:

### Q3

This is a gap filling question. Candidates were given a text with gaps to be filled using words from the words provided. The text is about health and wellbeing, which is one of the topics in the spec. Many candidates responded very well to this question with few mistakes which seem to be related to misunderstanding the meaning of the word or context.

Most candidates managed to answer this question correctly and got the full marks. A few candidates were unable to correctly answer Q3(e), Q3(f) and Q3(i). For example in question Q3(e), instead of using (الساعة) they put (المكونات) or (الدراسة), and for 3(f), instead of putting (كافية) they used (منتظم) and 3(i), instead of writing (الاسبوع) they wrote (الشهر).

### Q4

This is a comprehension question where candidates read a text and answer short question. candidates are required to respond to 5 short questions (a-e) using their own words each part worth 2 marks. It required knowledge, deep understanding of the text. The text was clear, and questions were to the point.

The passage is more complex, and it is meant to stretch more able candidates and differentiate.

Most candidates responded correctly to the question in general. However, in answering Q4(a): Most candidates lost marks in this part because they did not use the word (لأن). Please advise the students that when a question begins with the word (لماذا). the response should begin with (لأن). In responding to Q4(b). Some candidates copied the whole paragraph which includes the right answer; such behaviour suggests that the concerned candidate was not sure about the right answer.

Q4(d): Candidates that chose to use the response (هي أكثر ندرة) from the extract did not complete and specify which butter they were referring to. This is an issue relating to copying from the text/extract. A noticeable number got Q4(e) wrong too; they were not able to make a comparison between both shea trees in term of their medicinal proprieties. Students need to read and understand different types of questions.

## Section B; Grammar:

### Q5

This is a grammar question, connected to the previous passage used for reading comprehension. In this question candidates need to demonstrate their ability to manipulate grammatical structures in Arabic by changing the structure of sentences that appear in a previous exercise and reforming the sentence around a given word without changing the meaning. In this question students need to use the word between brackets correctly and not to add to it or change its spelling.

This question carries 10 marks, one for each sentence, all of them are high demand.

This is the most challenging question where only few candidates got a full mark. Many candidates responded correctly to Q5(a); However, they did struggle with 5(b),5(c),5(d) and 5(e). Weaker candidates also struggled with 5(f), 5(g), 5(i). The reason behind that could be their weakness in grammar, or they have not familiarised themselves with the new exam.

Q5(b): Most candidates found this question challenging and lost many marks. They struggled to structure the sentence by adding either a `,' or a `و' before the word (لكن).

Q5(c): Most candidates lost marks when they did not change the word (صفراء) to (أصفر) to have gender agreement.

Q5(e): not many candidates answer this part correctly. The candidates needed to use the word (مثال) as is without any change.

Many candidates got Q5(f) wrong because they added (unnecessary) vocalization, which was incorrect, they wrote (المكرر من زبدة الشيا له طعماً لذيذاً).

Q(5i): Many candidates did not understand that the verb needed a Subject after using the verb (يختار).

Q5(j): in several responses candidates used the preposition (في) rather than (من). Candidates must concentrate on the structure of the sentence, so they know which preposition to use.

It was noticed that most of candidates did not find any difficulties to answer the Q5 (g-j) correctly.

## Q6

This is a vocalization question. Students are required to vocalize **all** the letters of the **underlined** words.

It seems to be understood by most students this series, so the majority vocalized the words reasonably well. However, candidates need to be advised on how to put the "haraka" on the right place on the letter, not to forget to vocalise the "alif" too. Few candidates tended to vocalise the last letter in the word and get it right which suggests that they are capable of vocalising the other letters correctly, but they did not, so lost marks unnecessarily and some still confusing (همزة الوصل وهمزة القطع). Another thing to point out, some candidates struggled to use the (شدة) especially with the (كسرة) where they put it underneath it, not knowing that makes it a (فتحة).

## Section C; continuous writing:

### Q8

A short passage is used as a stimulus for question 8, which is a continuous writing. It is about youth over spending, where they had to give their opinion on the phenomenon, the problems .

This question was clearly interesting for the students, you can tell from the way they responded that this is a topic that they are passionate about. Most of the students presented bright ideas and they reflected their knowledge about the subject and covered all points in the question however, a few of them did not answer in detail or not cover all the points and therefore they were unable to gain higher marks.

Many candidates scored high marks for Communication but lost marks on Quality of Language, through poor spelling, misuse of pronouns, and repetition of vocabulary. Very strangely, some candidates were very good in communicating their ideas and got a high mark on quality of language, however they did not expand on the subject content i.e. reasons for spending among youth, they missed marks on content part. Many candidates wrote a long introduction compared to the other points or forgot to express their opinion on this phenomenon. We also noticed that some student used a pre- learned the introductions example: (اكتب باحرف ذهبية من لغتنا العربية). There are some students who used dialect to express their ideas instead of MSA.

On average, many candidates answer Q8 successfully. In general, students have to be trained more on how to answer and develop their ideas in relation to this question.

### Summary:

Based on their performance on this paper, students should:

- Read the text, including the title, to get the overall meaning.
- Read all the questions carefully before answering.

- In Q8.
  - read the stimulus and make use of it.
  - Read the question carefully to understand it.
  - Write a reasonable introduction, not too long.
  - Address all the bullet points.
  - Check your essay, language, and contents.

Teachers are advised to:

- use past papers and mark scheme as well as examiner's report.
- help students to get familiar with questions and rubric.

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