Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In Arabic (WAA02/01)
Paper 2: Research, Understanding & Written
Response

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Introduction

Students are required to draw on and apply their knowledge of Arabic language, grammar and lexis by selecting appropriate forms of words to complete sentences, as well as demonstrate an ability to manipulate Arabic language in continuous writing.

Students will be expected to recognise and use Arabic in a variety of contexts and in relation to the following general topic areas: Youth culture and concerns, lifestyle, health and fitness, environment and travel, education and employment, technology in the Arabic-speaking world, society in the Arabic-speaking world, and ethics in the Arabic-speaking world.

Question 1

Question 1 WAA 02 contains a passage of 200 words in English to translate into Arabic, most students were successful and achieved a good grade. Students generally performed well in response to the stimulus. The majority of learners provided an accurate translation of meaning. However typically, the more challenging words targeting higher ability learners were often mistranslated or transliterated into Arabic from the English stimulus, i.e. 'Sharjah', 'Mass', 'Sudan' and 'Doctors'. These words should have been translated into Arabic as 'Asharaqah', 'Jama'e (meaning large gathering), 'Assudan' and 'Atibaah'. Common mistakes were found where learners did not know the Arabic name for a place such as 'Sharjah' and 'doctors', writing a transliteration or substituting 'Sudan' with 'Saudi Arabia' and 'Mass' with the meaning of church mass.

Question 2(a)

The Discursive essay, students were required to write a story based on the events described in the given text which describes helping society with community projects.
A very popular and successful question for most learners, lower ability students lost marks due to the quality of the discursive essays produced which often largely copied the stimulus (even events and names). A key skill is to be able to produce discursive essays inspired by the given text but from the leaner's imagination.

Question 2(b)

Few learners chose the creative essay option, to compose an article for the media to encourage the youth to participate in community projects. Those who did choose this option were good quality as they pitched their article to the right audience, provided an engaging introduction, a persuasive argument and a conclusion linked strongly back to the stimulus with substation.

Question 3(a)

The first of two questions on Arab science, the students were instructed to discuss the important contribution Ibn Al-Barouni made to astronomy, together with some biographical details of the scientist's life and background.

One learner responded to this question, but unfortunately it was scored zero due to the irrelevant nature of the essay, which was not about Al-Barouni. Knowledge of Arab contributions to science seem to be limited, especially in terms of named scientists.

Question 3(b)

The second question on Arab science which gives students the flexibility to write an account about the achievements of an Arab linguist.

One learner responded to this question, but unfortunately it was scored zero due to the irrelevant nature of the essay, which was not about an Arab science linguist, instead they wrote about a 21st century poet.

Question 4(a)

The first of two essays Arab architecture and art, learners were asked to discuss national dress and reflect on its cultural significance. Only one dress style and country should be discussed with detailed and logical substantiated opinions. Of the learners who chose this question, the essay quality was good.

Question 4(b)

The second essay question on Arab art and architecture requires students to discuss one shopping mall and its cultural significance. Of the learners who chose this question, the essay quality was good.

Successful learners chose large shopping malls such as Burj Khalifa's mall, Mall of Arabia, and Citistars in Cairo, and were able to discuss how

it represented national identity, was a source of focus and popular with tourists.

Question 5(a)

In this section, Comedy in Arabic Cinema, learners must discuss the problems of rushing important decisions such as marriage in the film "Husband at Service", focusing on the social attitudes of divorce and the challenges made by the film to this and remarriage.

A popular question for students, but many failed to answer the question directly. Learners need to analyse characters, themes, and cinematography; simply retelling the general storyline of the film will not answer question.

Question 5(b)

In this section on Comedy in Arabic Cinema, learners must analyse the character of the protagonist Naguiba in the film "The Three Who Deceived Her" with substantiated opinions which must include an explanation of the relationship between the protagonist and her parents, teachers, employers and school with examples from the film.

A very popular question for learners, however the majority of did not score high marks as they chose to write a summary of the film instead of answering the question directly.

Question 6(a)

In this section, Tragedy in Arabic Cinema, students were required to evaluate the main issue raised in the film "'The Land'". Learners should avoid retelling the story, and focus on the power struggle between large land-owners and the workers, in particular the character of Abu Salim.

A popular question although most learners simply retold the general storyline. Those who were successful analysed the influence of power on the characters and avoided generalisations by giving accurate examples of power struggles on the characters with reflective analysis and technical cinematographic terms.

Question 6(b)

Tragedy in Arabic Cinema: Learners were required to explore Wajda is treated by her parents in pursuit of the bike in the film "'Wajda'" with references to events in the film.

Few chose this question, however those who did successfully answered the question with logical analysis of the treatment of the character. Fewer numbers of students gave a generalised summary of the storyline.

Question 7(a)

Arabic poetry: Learners were required analyse the poem "I will meet you tomorrow" by Al Hadi Adam and discuss the meaning and intent of the poem. No learners answered this question.

Question 7(b)

Arabic poetry: Learners were required to discuss the themes explored in the poem "The clay" and evaluate the methods used by the Elia Abu Madi to achieve these themes.
No students answered this question.

Question 8(a)

Arabic literature: Learners were required to analyse the relationship between the character 'Hamam' and Sarah and how they met in the novel " Sarah'".

Learners need to read the novel, and avoid watching the film which differs greatly from the original. Many responses to this question failed to answer the question directly, and make references to the novel. Those who were successful gave a strong account as depicted in the novel, with clear references and links to support statements and conclusions.

Question 8(b)

Arabic literature: Learners were required to discuss the difficult situation of the protagonist's family due to their father's reputation in the village.

Some lower ability learners relied heavily on the 'Call of the nightingale' film adaptation to write their answer to the literature question, which predictably generated inaccurate and irrelevant accounts of events and characters due to significant differences between the literature and film. This is a common trend each series. However, this question was more popular that 8 (a), successful learners provided substantiated accounts to support their statements and had a clear awareness of the differences between the novel and the film and were about to separate the two when writing about the novel.

Paper Summary

General student performance was good, with similar translation skills and creativity as the last series.

Long standing errors still occur, which are due to a lack of exam techniques. Some learners still answer questions on films and novels with generalised summaries of the storylines and completely bypass the actual questions; which results in scoring low to no marks. Learners need to be given plenty of opportunity to gain experience with essay questions, and practise techniques to understand the question's requirements and plan responses.

Questions on films, especially comedy and tragedy, continue to prove popular year on year. Few students choose to answer questions on poetry, which suggests some students may not be covering the full specification which can limit their awareness and opportunities.