

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2012

International GCSE Arabic (4AR0)
Paper 02

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General Comments

The candidates in this paper were asked to choose two topics out of six, and to write around 300 words about each of them. The maximum mark for each was 30. The 30 marks were awarded to content and communication (18 marks), language application (6 marks) and accuracy of writing (6 marks).

The questions were set to cover a variety of topics, and writing styles to provide candidates with wider range of options to write on.

None of the six questions posed any ambiguity and tasks were received clearly by the majority of the candidates. Examiners noticed that candidates were well prepared with clear indication of their good revision of paper 1 texts of previous exams. This was mostly noticed in the responses to questions 1 and question 6.

The most popular question among candidates was question 1, while the least popular was question 2.

Question analysis

Question 1: The tasks which require candidates to write on:

- the popularity of the use of emails in communication
- the advantages of the use of emails
- the disadvantages of the use of emails
- the advantages of the use of traditional letter writing
- the disadvantages of the use of traditional letter writing.

Candidates who addressed all the above 5 tasks, were rewarded higher marks in comparison to those who missed some of them.

It was noticed that some candidates started to write about the use of computers nowadays, but they forgot that they were supposed to concentrate on email usages, and hence, their responses were considered incomplete in addressing the required tasks, even if their responses were linguistically very good.

Question 2: Tasks which require candidates to write on:

- our rights to exercise our freedom
- the limitations of our freedom
- their opinion of the importance considering
- a real life example of how one should take into consideration other people's rights and freedom when exercising ours as an example.

Candidates who addressed all the above 4 tasks, were rewarded higher marks in comparison to those who missed some of them.

It was noticed that some candidates, in answering this question, forgot that the question required them to talk about how far they can exercise their rights, instead they went on talking about their rights and freedom as people to express their opinion of their governments, and used more recent development in the politics in the Middle East as an example. No matter

how good their response might be, they were not qualified for higher marks as they missed part of the task.

Question 3: Tasks which require candidates to write on:

- welcoming the audience and giving brief comments on the play in a speech or audience addressing style
- the role he or she was taking in the play
- how he or she feels about acting in that role with reasonable justifications.

Examiners found excellent responses which satisfied the task requirements. Examiners also noticed that the most common mistake among the responses which were not so successful were those when candidates spent almost all of their time writing a play rather than a speech with reference to the above mentioned three points required by the question.

Question 4: Tasks which require candidates to write on:

- How important are scientific experiments on human beings, and whether such importance justifies the use of experimenting on animals such as guinea pigs.

Examiners came across very good pieces of writings taking in consideration the required task. However, at the same time there were some responses that did not qualify for higher marks as the tasks were not to responded to accurately. The most common mistake among those responses would have been more suitable for a title “kindness to animals”, rather than for the question at hand.

Question 5: The task here required the coverage of the following points:

- The role of the media sources in news coverage nationally and internationally.
- How the media sources affect the way young people think or act in the candidate’s opinion.
- Giving a realistic example from everyday life.

This question was responded to very well by many candidates, however there were few who only wrote about the role of the media sources in news and other events coverage, without showing appropriate response to the rest of the task.

Question 6: the percentage of the candidates who responded to this question in this exam is much higher than in previous exams. The majority of the candidates responded with good stories and managed to score well. Few candidates spent their time describing the scene in the given picture, but gave no story with content and style that deserved higher marks.

General advice to candidates

- Check your answer prior to leaving the exam hall and make sure that you responded to two questions.
- Avoid writing on blank pages or under the given picture in question 6. There are provided spaces for you to write in the question paper. You should ask your invigilator about more writing paper.
- Writing too much on one topic may consume most of your exam time, and increase the possibility of spelling and grammatical mistakes which are normally taken in consideration during marking.
- The coordinative conjunction “and” which is equivalent to “و” in arabic is a separate word, whereas “و” in Arabic is not. For example, if you write: زرنا المتحف و المكتبة العامة you make a mistake as you put a space between “و” and the word that follows it, instead you should say: زرنا المتحف و المكتبة العامة .
- The glottal stop “الهمزة” is a consonant “حرف صحيح”, and should not be ignored in writing.

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