
GCSE

BENGALI

8638/LF: Listening Foundation
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This was the first Listening examination of this new GCSE specification. The paper differentiated well between the students for which it was set. It was good to see that many students understood a great deal of what they had heard and were able to respond well to the questions. Section B, the part of the examination where students have to understand questions written in Bengali, was more challenging. In some cases, basic items of vocabulary were not well known by students; intensifying expressions also proved challenging for some. Few students left questions unanswered, except in Section B where there were more students who did not attempt the most demanding questions on the paper. It was good to see that only very few students wrote their answers in the wrong language in Section B.

Teachers should remind students to maximise the 5 minutes' reading time for the Listening examination by:

- reading all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B;
- checking questions with emboldened words which asked for, for example, negative views or the most relevant option;
- looking at any examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- underlining key words which have been highlighted in the rubrics/questions;
- identifying the questions which have two or more parts to answer from the same utterance;
- sign-posting Section B as it requires answers in Bengali;
- being careful about listening to the question numbers in Section B as these are announced in Bengali.

Section A

Questions 1-3

This was found to be an accessible start to the paper and students answered most of these questions well. Question 1 provided a straightforward introduction to the examination, with about 86% of students getting it correct and 66% of students choosing the correct answer for question 02. In this specification, comprehension questions cannot test single lexical items, even at the lowest grades, and this means that questions of this type must contain suitable distractors; it was comforting to see that students coped well with these distractors and were able to choose the correct answer in a large majority of cases. Question 03.1 caused difficulties for many and was the least well-answered question of this paper. This part of this question was about a sale in celebration of mother's day. The lexical item '*maa-dibosh (mother's day)*' was not known and misinterpreted by many. About three quarters of students achieved the mark for the other part of this question (3.2).

Questions 4-6

An impressive 96% of students gained the mark on question 05, and 89% gained the mark on question 04 and question 6. These three questions assessed the topic of environment and students handled it well.

Questions 7-9

This part of the paper was about a student's performance at school and question 07 was accessible to most students. Question 08 and 09 had a lower success rate; about half of students

achieved the mark for question 08 and two fifths in question 09. Students appeared to struggle to understand the words '*baanaan bhool (spelling mistake)*' in question 08 and '*maanchitro (map)*' in question 09.

Questions 10-12

These were designed to be challenging questions and were handled quite well by students. Question 10 had two parts; one where students were expected to deduce the main reason from several reasons given, and one asking why someone had decided to be a criminologist. More than half of students failed to take account of the intensifying word 'main' on the paper and missed the correct option. About half of the students secured the mark on the second part of the question (10.2). Just over three quarters of students gained the mark on question 11.1. Question 11.2 was overwhelmingly not well-answered. The statement featured plausible distractors, but it proved to be difficult for students to pick out the correct option '*bor-konay (the bride and groom)*' and many appeared to guess it at random.

Questions 13-15

These questions did not appear to pose too many difficulties for the majority of students, with the vast majority getting question 13 correct, 69% gaining the mark for question 14 and just over three quarters of students gaining the mark for question 15. Most students are clearly comfortable with the topic of social media apps and are familiar with the vocabulary used to talk about social networking.

Questions 16-17

This was an overlap question with the Higher tier examination and asked students to identify the difference between Bangladeshi and British schools. There was evidence that the majority of students knew the key vocabulary '*ponchom sreyni (year five)*' and '*schoolborsho (school year)*' tested in question 16. Over half of students achieved two marks on this question and about three fifths achieved two marks on question 17.

Question 18

Students coped well with this longer passage. It was evident from their annotation that many had been well prepared, in that they recognised from the numbering (18.1, 18.2, 18.3) that all three questions were to be answered in one go. In 18.1, the clues of wishing to help out poor children led to just over half of students correctly selecting option B. For 18.2, about 71% of students selected the correct answer and almost 91% were able to gain the mark on 18.3, showing their understanding of the key words.

Questions 19-20

These questions were targeting the higher grades at Foundation Tier and were overlap questions with the Higher tier examination. Students performed well on question 19, with 10% getting all three options right and more than half selecting two correct options. Many students appeared to find question 20 challenging, with two fifths of students selecting both correct options and just over three quarters securing at least one mark. These questions discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said and those whose understanding was only partial.

Section B

Questions 21-22

The first two questions in Section B were a straightforward introduction to the Bengali section, with about 67% of students gaining a mark for question 21 and 66% for question 22. Although the vocabulary used here was relatively simple, the fact that the questions were in target language did make these questions more demanding.

Question 23

Students appeared to find this question challenging. It was nevertheless pleasing to see that many students attempted this item. Those who singled out the lexical items '*bikolpo route (alternative route)*' and '*sathay ki ana jabey na (things could not be brought with)*' picked the incorrect answer. Both questions 23.1 and 23.2 produced similar outcomes.

Questions 24-26

These were expected to be challenging questions and did indeed appear to be so. These questions also overlap questions with the Higher tier examination. On question 24, only about 14% of students got both options correct. Just under half of students secured the mark on question 25 and on question 26. Some students did not appear to fully grasp what they were hearing and yet had a go at the answer, trying to choose from what they heard. A very small minority of students did not attempt these two questions, which had the highest number of non-responses on the paper.

Advice to students

- Students must make sure that they make their final answer clear to the examiners, by writing legibly and using the spaces provided.
- If students change their minds about an answer, the final choice must be clearly signalled to the examiner and be placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.
- Give precise answers avoiding lots of details.
- Attempt all questions.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.