

CHINESE AND CHINESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8681/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

The majority of candidates performed well or extremely well on this paper. They engaged with the texts and were able to show good understanding of the information and ideas these contained. Although the quality of language demonstrated in written responses was generally good, there was some inappropriate use of expressions and grammatical structures. Centres should remind candidates that wherever it is reasonable to do so, they should use their own words when phrasing their answers and avoid merely lifting chunks from the original text.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a), (c) and (e) were usually answered correctly by candidates. (b) and (d) proved more demanding.

Question 2

Candidates had few problems coping with (b) and (c), but (a) sometimes caused problems.

Questions 3 and 4

The majority of candidates were able to show very good to excellent levels of comprehension. Where candidates did not score full marks for a question it was often because the answer they provided, though correct as far as it went, was incomplete. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

It is also worth reminding candidates that reading comprehension questions are intended to test the extent to which candidates have understood the texts on the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these texts. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from personal knowledge.

Question 5

Once again there were many excellent answers in which candidates drew relevant material from both texts in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the texts for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer as required by (b)
- writing a general summary of the two texts rather than answering the specific question.

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Essay

Most candidates could write fluently showing that they were competent in the use of Chinese.

In terms of their language skills, many candidates scored a mark in the 16-20 range, demonstrating good command of the language, though with some lapses. To achieve a mark in the highest band, candidates needed to be able to show that they were not just competent users of the language but that they could produce a more sophisticated piece of writing, e.g. by making use of appropriate idiom and varied vocabulary.

Most candidates seemed to have researched around the Set Topics published in the syllabus and knew their chosen subject well. As a result they had plenty to say on the various issues raised by the questions. In order to achieve a mark in the higher bands for content, it is important that candidates give the essay a clear focus and argue their case coherently with proper transition from one point to another. Bullet points and lists do not provide a suitable structure for an answer and cannot be highly rewarded.

Candidates should be reminded that on the question paper they will see the general Set Topic, as stated in the syllabus, followed by the specific question they must answer. In some cases, candidates wrote on the broad topic area instead of answering the specific question, e.g. for **Question 1** instead of writing on the specific issue of arguing with parents, candidates wrote on the much broader Set Topic, which was the 'Generation Gap'.