

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8681/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

The majority of candidates performed well or very well on this paper. They engaged with the reading passages and were able to show good understanding of the information and ideas that these contained.

The quality of language demonstrated in candidates' responses was generally good. There were some instances of inappropriate use of expressions and grammatical structures, and a few candidates copied out long portions of text from the reading passages, which was not always selective enough to indicate sufficient comprehension. Candidates should be reminded that, as far as possible, they should use their own words in response to **Questions 3, 4 and 5**.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was generally tackled well. Some candidates were unable to answer parts **(c)** and **(e)**.

Question 2

There was a mixed response to this question. Part **(a)** was handled well by the majority of candidates and part **(b)** was answered correctly by many. Fewer candidates were able to provide a suitable response to part **(c)**.

Question 3 and 4

The majority of candidates were able to show very good to excellent levels of comprehension in their responses to these questions. 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 reading passages in the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these reading passages. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from the candidate's personal knowledge.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question. Many candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages 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 reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer as required by part **(b)**
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

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Essay

General comments

This is an Essay paper in which candidates are required to compose one essay from a choice of five topics. The essay is marked out of 40, with 16 marks available for Content and 24 marks available for Quality of Language.

Most candidates could write fluently showing that they were competent in the use of Chinese. In terms of their language skills, many candidates demonstrated good command of the language, though with some lapses. To achieve a mark in the highest band for Quality of Language, 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.

Some candidates wrote empty rhetoric and flowery language that made little contribution to the development of ideas, thus limiting the mark for Content. In order to achieve a mark in the higher bands for Content, it is important that candidates give their 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 rewarded highly.

Many candidates adhered to the character limits specified in the question paper. A few candidates exceeded the specified character limits: candidates should be reminded that going beyond this does not improve the quality of the work presented and may indeed increase the likelihood of errors occurring.

Candidates need to remember that where a question has two elements, they need to address both parts of the question in order to have access to the highest marks, e.g. **Question 5** asked about the impact of environmental pollution on humans *and* ways that the situation can be improved.

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 attitudes towards money, candidates wrote on the much broader Set Topic, which was 'Human relationships'.