

# PORTUGUESE

Paper 8672/04

Texts

## General comments

Overall, this paper appears to have been well received by candidates, there were some excellent scripts and I should congratulate the Centres for having done such a good work. The standard of some candidates' work was quite high and I'm sure it was partially because the books were well discussed and analysed in class.

Some candidates were able to look beyond the immediate material and show some understanding of the author's intentions, focusing on some passages, demonstrating coherence, choosing a detailed approach and using good illustrations. Some candidates approached their answers in a very similar way, which makes me think that they were using what they had learnt in class.

The only major problem was that some candidates forgot to link the story of the book to the question; they wrote a lot but did not justify what they were saying.

Unfortunately, there were also a minority of candidates who answered three questions from the same section and others who forgot that **questions 1(a), 2(a) and 3(a)** were divided in two (i) and (ii), and that therefore they had to answer both of them.

As has been said in previous years, Centres should make sure that all the candidates read the instructions, and remind them that it is advisable to re-read the answers when they have finished the exam, as there are always things that can be corrected. By doing this better marks can probably be obtained.

The most popular questions this year were **Question 2(a), Question 3(a) and Question 4**, although **Question 1** was also answered by a number of candidates.

Candidates were not penalised for grammar or spelling mistakes. Nevertheless, some candidates should work on:

- Accents;
- Subjunctive (mainly Imperfect: *falasse* vs *fala-se*)
- Prepositions
- Accuracy in gender and number in the same sentence;

Candidates should always make an effort to write legibly, and make sure their handwriting is clear, which is not always the case.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1**

In **Question 1 (a)** most candidates were able to work with the extract given in order to answer the questions and to relate these to the whole novel by focusing on other passages. Only a few became confused over the content of the novel, and therefore were not able to produce a clear answer. In general, **Question 1 (b)** was fairly well answered, candidates mentioned all the action involved in the fall of the Visigothic monarchy and the beginnings of resistance in the Asturias, and they were able to relate and compare the role of the action and space in this novel.

**Question 2 (a)** was very popular amongst candidates. I do not think it was a difficult question as the majority were able to explain the reason why Calisto and Teodora did not love each other when they were married, but unfortunately many could not explain in detail the reason for Teodora's letter, using the paragraph to do so. Again in **Question 2 (b)** some candidates showed good insight when distinguishing between the old and the new Portugal, analysing and relating the examples, but others merely gave simple and superficial answers, probably just based on what they had heard of the book.

**Question 3 (a)** was also very popular but not everybody understood the real meaning of the "disgrace" mentioned, so it was interesting to read some answers where candidates tried a bit of everything just to make sure they would score some points. The major problem I found in this question was the superficial approach and difficulties some candidates had in evaluating what was really important to highlight from everything that they knew about the novel. Once again we should stress to the candidates the importance of linking the questions to the passages given.

## **Section 2**

**Question 4 (a)** was chosen by the vast majority of candidates and although they all knew who the women were, some failed to analyse the impact these women had in Napumoceno's life. In general **Question 4 (b)** was well answered, candidates compared Carlos with Napumoceno and gave good examples of how Carlos tried to take charge of his uncle's business.

In **Question 5 (a)** the few candidates who chose this question were not able to see the relation between River/Man, so the answers were very vague with limited insight.

**Question 6 (a)** had some good answer, and some poor ones where some candidates became confused over details that were not relevant: the same applies to **Question 6 (b)**.