

TAMIL

Paper 9689/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

In general, candidates performed better than last year on this paper.

Section 1

Question 1

The majority of candidates answered this question well. Some candidates encountered difficulty with part **(d)**.

Question 2

Most candidates tackled this question very well, and there were some original and creative responses. A few were unable to provide an appropriate answer to part **(e)**.

Question 3

A number of candidates copied out long portions from the reading passage in their answers, and this copying of long portions was often not selective enough to indicate sufficient comprehension, resulting in marks being lost. Candidates should be encouraged to be selective in their answers and to use their own words as far as possible.

Candidates can improve by receiving more practice in expressing themselves in their own words.

A few candidates were unable to answer part **(e)** in sufficient detail.

Some candidates made spelling errors when using the Tamil letters for *na*, *la* and *ra* (Tamil has three different sounds for *na*, three different sounds for *la* and two different sounds for *ra*). Candidates would benefit from further practice in using these letters.

Section 2

Question 4

Here, performance was varied. Candidates tended to answer parts **(a)**, **(c)** and **(d)** quite well, but did not demonstrate adequate comprehension in their answers to parts **(b)** and **(e)**. A number of candidates gave their personal opinion in response to part **(e)**, which was not required; candidates were asked to draw the information for their answer from the reading passage.

Question 5

Question 5(a) was generally answered well. There were some excellent responses to **Question 5(b)**, with many candidates using their own words and selecting relevant examples to support their opinions.

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Paper 9689/03

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.

Overall, performance on this paper was good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

Weaker responses were characterised by a combination of misunderstanding of the question (leading to loss of marks for Content) and poor language skills.

The most common spelling errors occurred in the use of the following letters, which were often written in an incorrect form:

1. ல – ழ – ள
2. ந – ன – ண
3. ர – ற

Candidates would benefit from more practice in using these letters. Candidates should also be reminded that the letter ள, when conjugated with consonants, will become கே, சே etc.

Some candidates wrote அங்கை, இங்கை, எங்கை rather than அங்கே, இங்கே, எங்கே.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

There was a number of very good responses to this question. These were often well structured and contained complex sentences with few spelling and grammatical errors. Weaker responses were characterised by poor spelling and lack of focus.

Question 2

Candidates generally performed quite well on this question.

Question 3

Performance was varied on this question.

Question 4

This was a popular question. There was a number of strong responses to this question and these were characterised by well-structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 5

This was another popular question. The best answers contained well-structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

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Paper 9689/04
Texts

General comments

In general, candidates performed better than last year on this paper. In a few cases, candidates did not provide sufficient analysis of the texts; candidates would benefit from more practice in analysing texts.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

In general, **Question 1(a)** was generally not answered well, particularly part (ii), which asked about the genre of the poem (Neithal thurai). **Question 1(b)** was generally answered adequately.

Question 2

Both **Questions 2(a)** and **2(b)** were popular. Most candidates performed well here and many provided thorough answers.

Question 3

Questions 3(a) and **3(b)** were also popular. There were many good answers here.

Section 2

Question 4

There were some good answers to these questions. A small number of candidates misunderstood the question and gave a general answer without specific reference to the poems listed in the syllabus.

Question 5

Those who answered these questions tended to score very well.

Question 6

Candidates tended to produce good responses to these questions.

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Paper 9689/05

Prose

General comments

In this paper, candidates are required to translate a short passage from English into Tamil.

Performance on this paper was generally good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

Stronger candidates were often able to break up some of the longer sentences into two separate sentences and produce a translation that was largely correct. Weaker answers were often characterised by serious spelling errors, faulty sentence construction and incorrect translation of vocabulary items.

A few candidates encountered difficulty with the sentence "*Over 400 years ago groups of people from England landed on the East coast of North America and established settlements there.*" Some candidates did not know the points of the compass (north, south, east, west) and would benefit from more practice in using those.