

TAMIL

Paper 9689/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should take care to understand the full demands of the question before attempting to answer.

In **Question 5**, candidates should avoid repetition of ideas.

General comments

In general, candidates performed well on this paper. Performance was a little better than last year.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

The majority of candidates answered this question well, choosing appropriate synonyms for the given words.

Question 2

Responses to this question were generally adequate. Some candidates struggled to use the words given in **Questions 2(c)** and **2(e)**.

Question 3

There was a mixed response to this question. A few candidates could not find an appropriate answer for **Questions 3(d)** and **3(e)**.

Question 4

Overall, candidates answered this question very well.

Question 5

Question 5(a) was generally not answered well. Some candidates seemed to have rushed through this part of the paper: they need to remember to plan their time so that they can make a good attempt at all parts of the paper.

Candidates may find it helpful to make a brief plan of their summary by jotting down a few short notes or points before they start to write.

Some candidates did not seem to understand the requirements of a summary, as they gave their personal opinion about the impact of religion in society. A few candidates invented material that did not appear in either of the reading passages. No credit can be given for such material.

In **Question 5(b)**, candidates are expected to offer a personal response. A small number of candidates answered well. A number of candidates repeated material from the reading passages: they needed to use the first person and to give their own experience/opinion.

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Paper 9689/03

Essay

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to ensure that they answer the specific question asked and that they understand the focus of the question before beginning to write their answers.

Candidates need to ensure that they expand their answers.

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 ஏ, 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 were many good responses to this question. These were characterised by well-structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 2

There were some excellent responses to this question.

Question 3

Overall, performance on this question was good.

Question 4

This was the most popular question and there were some excellent responses. Weaker responses were characterised by poor spelling and a lack of focused content.

Question 5

Performance on this question was generally satisfactory.

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Paper 9689/04

Texts

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to ensure that they answer the specific question asked and that they understand the focus of the question before beginning to write their answers.

Candidates should be reminded that, in passage-based questions, the passage is a stimulus to be used as a springboard to give them a starting point for their answer.

Candidates need to ensure that they expand their answers.

General comments

Overall, performance on this paper was not very good. In many cases, candidates seemed to have memorised their class notes and written all of them down, without selecting the relevant bits which would have answered the precise questions set. This demonstrated a lack of understanding. Candidates need to learn how to extract the relevant ideas from what they have learnt in order to provide focused answers.

It may be useful to carry out some 'mock' examinations with future candidates so that they can learn to understand the requirements of the paper. 'Mock' examinations can be carried out with past papers.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Answers to **Questions 1(a)** and **1(b)** were generally poor. Most responses were unfocused and seemed to be a general list of everything the candidates knew about the set text. This meant that many answers were irrelevant. In **Question 1(b)**, candidates were generally unable to provide sufficient information relating to the genre.

Question 2

Questions 2(a) and **2(b)** were the most popular in the paper, and they were generally tackled very well. A few candidates did not develop their answer using quotations from the set text.

Question 3

Answers to **Questions 3(a)** and **3(b)** were generally poor. Most responses were unfocused and seemed to be a general list of everything the candidates knew about the set text. This meant that many answers lacked relevancy.

Section 2

Question 4

Most candidates answered **Questions 4(a)** and **4(b)** very well. Some candidates forgot to give quotations from the set text.

Question 5

There were too few responses to **Questions 5(a)** and **5(b)** for any useful observations to be made.

Question 6

There were too few responses to **Questions 6(a)** and **6(b)** for any useful observations to be made.

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Paper 9689/05

Prose

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should ensure that they read through the prose passage carefully before beginning to translate. When translating, candidates should bear in mind the context of the passage: it is not enough to translate individual words or short phrases from the text without regard for the context in which they are found in the question paper.

Candidates should try to allow themselves a little time at the end to read over what they have written to ensure that it makes sense and to check their spelling and grammar.

General comments

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

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

Weaker answers were characterised by spelling errors, faulty sentence construction and incorrect translation of vocabulary items.

Stronger candidates were able to break up some of the longer sentences into two separate sentences and produce a meaningful translation that was largely correct.

Some candidates encountered difficulty with the phrases *“When we arrive at the traditional village”*, *“...that her husband does not come home every evening: he regularly goes fishing and hunting for several days at a time”* and *“The village will soon be dark except for some small wood fires.”*