

URDU

Paper 8686/02
Reading and Writing

Introduction

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to read and understand written Urdu and their ability to write accurate responses to text-based questions in an accurate and concise way.

There are two passages of about three hundred and fifty words, each on a related theme. The theme this session is the effect on the atmosphere of human activities resulting in the greenhouse effect.

There were a few candidates who seriously misunderstood sections of the paper compared with others whose careful reading of the texts and close adherence to the rubrics enabled them to produce appropriate, relevant responses.

The overall written performance of candidates ranged from satisfactory to good, with a few excellent scripts. The problem for most candidates is not writing Urdu but answering the questions in accordance with the given rubric.

Question 1

This question requires candidates to write their own sentences clearly illustrating the meanings of words taken from the first text. This was mostly well done, with most candidates scoring at least four out of five marks. Marks were lost either if they copied a sentence directly from the text, such as:

'gas ki miqdar qwdratī indhan ke istemal se hui', which is almost identical to the sentence in the text, or wrote a sentence such as:

'sahyt ke liye mwtavazan ghiza zaruri hai', which is the incorrect grammatical part of speech. *'mwtavazan'*, *'balanced'*, is the adjectival form of the noun *'tavazan'*, *'balance.'*

On the other hand a sentence such as:

'Zindagi men zahni kam awr jismani kam ka tavazan hona chahiye.' does illustrate the meaning.

Question 2

This question required candidates to find the antonyms to the given words. This was adequately, and occasionally, well done. A few candidates wrote synonyms, *'mwtaradyf alfaz'*, rather than antonyms, *'mwtazad alfaz'*. The most difficult word seemed to be the antonym of *'qwdratī'*. The closest antonym was *'masnuī'*. A number of candidates wrote phrases such as *'insan se bani hui'*, which was not accepted.

Most candidates achieved three or more marks.

Question 3

The five questions in this section are based on Passage A. It was clear from the candidates' responses for some their reading and understanding of Urdu was not good enough to make understanding the questions reasonably straightforward.

The quality of their responses depended upon the extent to which they followed the rubric. Candidates are expected to write concise answers as far as possible in their own words. There are still too many answers which are simply lifted from the text with minimal alteration, or more than six lines of response, and in some cases well over 100 words. All these questions can be answered simply and relatively concisely.

Taking each question in turn:

- (i) 'Suggest a suitable title for the passage and give a reason.'

Responses to this introductory question show how well the candidates have understood the overall context of the passage and was generally well done.

- (ii) 'What was found out from research into the atmosphere? Name three things.'

The responses should have included three of these points:

An Increase in carbon dioxide (as a result of increase in human activities).

Two types of carbon dioxide.

The difference in carbon dioxide levels between the north and south.

This was reasonably done by most candidates.

- (iii) This question was reasonably well done, although many candidates copied out great chunks of text and therefore did not necessarily demonstrate their understanding.

- (iv) This question asks 'Why did scientists research into air bubbles in the ice?'

Most candidates did not answer this question but chose to write about what scientists found out from the bubbles. The question could not be answered correctly by simply lifting sentences from the text. Rather candidates had to infer from the text why the scientists were doing research. A good answer would mention something like 'They wanted to find out more about carbon dioxide.', or 'To prove that there was an increase in carbon dioxide.'

Some candidates appeared to answer the question but wrote something like '*Sainsdanon ne is liye tahqiqat ki ky unhen pata chala ky.....*' and then proceeded to write down the results. This response did not achieve any marks.

- (v) This question was well done by most candidates because there were at least six points that could be mentioned and most candidates wrote at least three of them.

Five marks were available for **Question 3** for overall linguistic standard. Many candidates scored four, and a few got full marks. If a candidate scored zero for content on a question a mark is deducted from the overall language mark. While a high proportion of candidates could write excellent Urdu, if they relied too heavily on sentences copied from the text this does not demonstrate their own language skills and therefore they can not receive good marks for use of language.

Question 4

Candidates are required to write responses to five questions based on Passage B. This passage focused on the greenhouse effect. Most candidates displayed at least an adequate comprehension of the text but, once again, some let themselves down by not following the rubrics.

- (i) 'What is meant by the greenhouse effect?'

'Greenhouse effect se kya murad hai?'

A concise response was:

'In gason ki mawjudagi jo global warming ka sabab hain.'

Many wrote at great length about the reasons for the greenhouse effect and then repeated the same points, incorrectly in some cases, in the next question.

- (ii) This question was not well answered at all. The question asks 'What natural processes create the greenhouse effect?' There were at least three points that could be mentioned, namely, 'evaporation of water in the atmosphere', 'the effect of clouds on the temperature of the earth', 'blocking of infra-red rays' and 'heat prevented from escaping the atmosphere'.

Most candidates wrote about carbon dioxide, nitrogen and other gases. Gases are chemicals *not* natural processes, therefore no marks were achieved.

- (iii) This question was reasonably well answered by most candidates.
- (iv) In this question candidates were required to mention *current* changes in the weather. Many candidates wrote a mixture of current and future changes. Even if candidates were not fully conversant with the science they should have been able to distinguish linguistically between '*ho rahi hain*', 'are happening' and '*ho sakti hain*', 'can happen'.
- (v) Candidates lost marks here because they did not distinguish linguistically between present continuous and future tenses.

Again five marks are available for linguistic accuracy. Most candidates achieved three or more marks because a good proportion wrote excellent Urdu.

Question 5

This last question requires candidates to write a response to a question referring to both texts and to give their opinion on a question that arises from the texts, but not directly so. The quality of these responses was variable. While a few were excellent and a very few were very poor, the majority of candidates performed at least adequately in these tasks.

- (a) The first task was to use information from both texts to comment on the changes in the greenhouse effect. Unfortunately rather too many candidates merely pulled out large chunks from the two texts. It was not necessary to go into too much detail, because there were only about 100 words to write and going into too much specific detail prevents high marks from being achieved.
- (b) The second task requires candidates to give their opinion on what they can do to help prevent an increase in the greenhouse effect in their area.

This was usually better attempted than **Question 5(a)**. Some candidates were perhaps over-ambitious in suggesting the passing of laws to stop cars and factories in their neighbourhood, however most scored decently on this section.

Candidates clearly understood the tasks in most cases and most were able to write appropriate responses. What let many down, however, was the fact that they ignored the rubric instructing them to write about 140 words overall. Many candidates wrote well over that *on each task*, which reduced their ability to achieve the highest marks.

URDU LANGUAGE AND URDU

Paper 8686/03

Essay

GENERAL

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to write a composition in Urdu on one of a range of five topics. Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a good proportion of excellent scripts. The problem for most candidates is not writing accurate Urdu but responding to the stimulus topics in an organised and well-structured way. A small number of candidates chose to write essays on the general topic headings, such as 'Media' or 'Education', rather than on the specific essay title. An essay that does not address the specific essay title will not achieve many marks for content.

Candidates are required to write between 250 and 400 words. The essay is marked out of 40 with 24 marks awarded for quality of language and 16 for content, structure and organisation.

Comments on specific questions

1 **'Nasli fasla'** 'Generation gap'

'Nawjavanon ko hamesha baron ki izzat karni chahiye'

'Young people should always respect their elders.'

The topic of the generation gap was the most popular and is a highly pertinent subject in the lives of most candidates, which is one reason why one might expect many very good compositions. It is easier to produce a good essay if the content is heartfelt. Some essays were passionately written but lacked structure, such as an introduction and conclusion. Others were often, to a greater or lesser extent, one sided. In fact most essays on this subject seemed predictable and lacking imagination. Many candidates simply agreed with the proposition in the title and wrote a sequence of things that young people should do,

'Nawjavanon ko karna chahiye'

'Young people should'

Some essays did apportion blame for some of the problems on the older generation. There were however some outstanding essays on this topic, the best of which, in addition to being well structured and balanced in the viewpoints of both the young and old, were very interesting and enjoyable to read.

2 **'Zarai – e – iblagh'** 'Media'

'Nasl parasti ke mwamle men zarai e iblagh ka kyrdar'

'The role of the media in the matter of racism.'

This title was completely misunderstood by most candidates who attempted it. The term '*nasl parasti*' is generally accepted to be the appropriate Urdu term for 'racism', however it was obviously taken as meaning something to do with '*nasl*', 'generation', which led candidates to write mostly irrelevant material in their essays.

3 **'Ta'leem'** 'Education'

'M'eyari ta'leem ke husuul ka inhisar dawlat par nahin hona chahiye'

'Quality education should not depend on wealth.'

This was the second most popular title and was generally well answered because candidates had interesting things to say, strong opinions to express, and had clearly thought about the subject. Quite a number of

candidates, however, while writing well about the problems of education in their country, the injustice to the poor and the negative effects on the country's development, did not address a point included in the title of the essay which was 'm'eyari', 'quality' education.

While several shades of opinion were expressed on this topic the vast majority of candidates agreed with the proposition and argued cogently that education not dependent on wealth was of benefit to society as a whole as well as the individual.

That being said, most wrote competently on this topic and the best essays were very well written and made very valid points.

4 **'Taraqi pazir dunya'** 'The developing world'

'Aap ke mulk ki taraqi ki raftar men mahawliati masail ka kyrdar'

'The role of environmental problems in the rate of progress in your country.'

Of the candidates who attempted this title a high proportion seemed to misunderstand the meaning of the word 'mahawliati', 'environmental'. This led them to include all kinds of irrelevant (in terms of the essay title) problems facing developing countries. Many wrote powerfully on topics such as education, corruption, inflation and the like, but while these are all important problems facing many countries, they are not environmental problems. This clearly had a negative effect on their content marks.

5 **'Saqafat'** 'Culture'

'Kya saqafat ki baten syrf amiron ka khel hai?'

'Is culture just a plaything of the rich?'

Few candidates attempted this essay title.

Conclusion

While the overall performance was good, with most candidates displaying very good writing skills, many essays would have been much improved by stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the prescribed word limits. It is the second part of the assessment criteria, on content, planning and organisation, where candidates tend to lose marks. Many candidates do not conform to the rubric which requires candidates to write concisely on the topic. Failure to contain the essay within the prescribed word limit reduces marks for content.

The best essays in any topic area were those which produced a structured and considered response to the title, with an introduction, several cogent points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph. Linguistically, many were almost error free, with a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences containing dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and where appropriate relevant quotations.