

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

General Comments

This paper is designed to test candidates' understanding of written Urdu and their ability both to write accurate responses to text-based questions and to provide a response in concise and accurate Urdu to a question asking them to draw information from both passages and to add their own opinion.

There are two passages, each on a related theme. The theme this session was somewhat different from previous sessions, focusing on the relationship between two personalities and the British Raj. The first passage was about the life of an African slave who fought for the abolition of that heinous trade, while the second concerned a descendant of Tippu Sultan Princess Noor Un Nissa who died for the Allied cause in World War Two.

It was considered that this session's paper was linguistically somewhat easier than in previous sessions. In part this was due to the biographical nature of the passages.

The overall written performance of candidates was satisfactory to good and there were some excellent scripts. It was disappointing to note that some comprehension questions were not attempted at all. This automatically reduces the number of marks available to candidates. On the whole, the problem for candidates is not so much in writing Urdu but in answering the questions in accordance with the given rubric.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates are required to write sentences in their own words illustrating clearly the meaning of words taken from the first text. This was mostly well done, with most candidates scoring at least 4 out of the 5 marks available. Marks were lost either if candidates copied a sentence directly from the text or if they wrote a sentence which contained grammatical parts of speech that had been incorrectly manipulated. Candidates are reminded that the meaning needs to be illustrated **clearly**. Where this is not the case they cannot be credited.

Question 2

In this question candidates were required to identify the antonyms to given words. This was generally adequately if not well done. A few candidates wrote synonyms not antonyms. Most candidates scored 3 or more marks here out of the 5 marks available.

Question 3

The five comprehension questions in this section were based on the text in Passage A. It was clear from analysing the responses that, except for a minority, candidates' understanding of Urdu was sufficiently good to make understanding the text reasonably straightforward for them.

The quality of candidates' responses depended on 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 answers that are too long, over six lines in some cases and amounting to well over 100 words. This type of response cannot be credited highly at this level. All of these comprehension questions can and should be answered in a straightforward way and relatively concisely.

Considering each question in turn:

(i)

اس مضمون کا کوئی مناسب عنوان تجویز کیجیے۔ اور اس کی وجہ تحریر کیجیے۔

“Suggest a suitable title for the passage and give a reason.”

This was a quite easy introductory question and was, as expected, well done, except for those few candidates who did not give a reason for their suggested title.

(ii)

اس خصوصی نمائش کے انعقاد سے کیا مقصد حاصل ہوا؟ تین باتیں لکھیے۔

“What purpose was achieved by the exhibition?”

Put simply in English, the reply could have included reference to any of the following:

- To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade;
- To show the effect of the increase in the tobacco and sugar trade;
- To commemorate the life of Equiano.

This was well done by most candidates.

(iii)

ایکویانو نے اپنی پہلی کتاب سے کس حد تک کامیابی حاصل کی؟ اور کیوں؟

“How successful was Equiano's first book?”

An answer like the following would get the full 3 marks: *It was not very successful: although he sent it to the King as well as to politicians, it did not change his mind nor did it stop the trade.*

This question was reasonably well done by most candidates, although quite a number mentioned the success of Equiano's second book rather than his first.

(iv)

ایکویانو نے غلامی کے خلاف تحریک میں کیا کردار ادا کیا؟

The question asked **“What role did Equiano play in the anti-slavery movement?”**

Most candidates answered this question well and got the full three marks.

- (v) This was an inferential question, asking the candidates' opinion.

آپ کے خیال میں ایکویانو کی زندگی کے منفی تجربات کا اس کے مستقبل پر کیا اثر پڑا؟

“What effect do you think the negative experiences in Equiano's life had on his future?”

This question was well tackled by most candidates who were able to identify at least 3 relevant points.

Question 4

As in **Question 3** the candidates here had to respond to comprehension questions, based on Passage B.

Overall, candidates did not perform as well on **Question 4** as they had done on **Question 3**. While most displayed an adequate comprehension of the text, there were a surprisingly large number of scripts where one or more of the questions had not even been attempted. As mentioned earlier, this automatically reduces the marks available to the candidate. It is always better to attempt a question even if one is not sure of the answer.

Considering each question in turn:

(i)

ٹیپو سلطان کے بارے میں برٹش راج کی کیا رائے تھی اور کیوں؟

“What was the British Raj's opinion of Tipu Sultan and why?”

A concise response was: *They thought that if Napoleon had had the same bravery he would have conquered Europe. This was because Tipu Sultan had proved himself to be a very brave fighter against them.*

Most candidates scored on this question, although some scored just one mark instead of two because they simply quoted from the text.

(ii)

نور النساء نے کس شعبے میں تعلیم حاصل کی اور اس کا کیا فائدہ ہوا؟

This question was very straightforward. The question asked “**What did Noor Un Nissa study and what benefit did she get from this?**” There were at least three subjects that could be mentioned, namely: Music; Child Psychology, and Story Writing.

Many candidates talked about French which was not mentioned.

The benefit was that as her stories had been on the radio she was accustomed to radio work.

(iii)

نور النساء اور ٹیپو سلطان کی زندگیوں میں کون سی باتیں مختلف تھیں؟

“What things were different in the lives of Tipu Sultan and Noor Un Nissa”

This was probably the question that was least well answered by candidates. Very few got the full three marks available and many got only one mark. Some candidates did not attempt the question at all. Some candidates listed similarities between the lives of Tipu Sultan and Noor Un Nissa,

while others mentioned just one point, that while 'Tipu had fought against the British, but not for them.' Other points that were relevant included:

'He was a soldier whereas she was a radio operator.'

'He died in battle while she was executed in a prison camp.'

There was some confusion on the part of weaker candidates who did not realise that Britain was not fighting against the French, but with them against the Germans.

(iv)

نور النساء کا فرانس میں رہنا کیوں ضروری تھی؟

"Why was it necessary for Noor Un Nissa to stay in France?"

This was well answered by most candidates who scored two marks.

(v)

قید کے دوران نور النساء نے کس حوصلہ مندی کا مظاہرہ کیا؟ اس کی کیا وجوہات تھیں؟

"What courage did Noor Un Nissa show while in prison? What were the reasons for this?"

While most candidates scored two or more marks, many simply wrote that she was very brave. Good answers included the fact that she refused to cooperate or to give any information and that she had tried to escape twice. The reasons were that she did not want to let down or betray her colleagues. The fact that she had Tipu's blood in her veins was an acceptable reason also.

(vi)

جنگِ عظیم کے اختتام پر اس کی کونسی خواہش کو پزیرا رکھی گئی؟ تفصیل سے لکھیے۔

"At the end of the World War how was Noor's hope realised?"

A number of candidates lost marks here as they misunderstood the question. They wrote in response to the question that Noor was awarded the George Cross for bravery. This missed the point of the question, namely that she was quoted as having said that if Indians showed bravery and were rewarded for it, this would improve relations between the countries, as occurred. Many did not distinguish linguistically here between present continuous and future tenses.

Five marks were available for both **Question 3** and **Question 4** for the overall linguistic standard of candidates' work. Most candidates scored 4, and a few got full marks. If candidates scored zero on a question they lost a mark from the overall language mark. While many candidates were able to write excellent Urdu, over-reliance on Urdu copied from the text and relatively little use of their own language led in some cases to candidates not getting many marks for their own use of language.

Question 5

This last question required candidates to write a response to a question referring to both texts and to give their opinion on a question arising out of the texts. The quality of these responses was very variable at this session and the Examiners felt it had been tackled less well than at previous sessions.

(a)

دونوں عبارتوں کی روشنی میں مختلف قوموں کے ساتھ برٹزرانج کے رویے کا موازنہ کیجیے۔

"In the light of both texts, compare and contrast the behaviour of the British towards different communities."

The response to this was to be based on the given texts. However, far too many candidates used this as an opportunity to write on the British Raj in the subcontinent in general and on what it had brought in all kinds of material not in either passage. Others simply summarised the two passages without drawing any comparison or contrasts. Candidates do not need to go into a great deal of detail - there are only around 100 words to write in this section. The important thing is to select information relevant to the question and within the word count.

Specific detail about Equiano's life and books did not add much that was relevant to the title. Giving facts about how the British behaved on the other hand and drawing comparisons was important to this question:

"While the British enslaved Africans to work in the sugar plantations, in India they fought battles to control the country. Later on some Indians helped the British, as Noor Un Nissa did."

(b) The second part of this task required candidates to give their opinion on what the individual should do to achieve justice.

This was better attempted on the whole than **Question 5(a)**. Most candidates scored at least three out of the 5 marks available on this section.

What let many down, however, was the fact that they ignored the instruction in the rubric to write about 140 words overall. Many candidates wrote well over that **on each task**, which reduced their ability to score the highest marks.

Conclusion

Overall performance was good and, in a few cases, excellent, with many candidates displaying sound comprehension skills and writing in a way that was accurate and varied. Candidates are advised to read the passages and the questions more carefully to increase their opportunity of gaining high marks.

The area of greatest concern at this session came in candidates' responses to **Question 5(a)**. Far too many otherwise able candidates could not be credited with high marks as a result of being unable to distinguish between

"compare and contrast"

موازنہ

and "summary"

خلاصہ

Performance overall on this paper can be improved by focusing efforts in preparation on **Question 5**.

URDU

Paper 9686/03

Essay

General Comments

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 high proportion of excellent scripts. The problem for most candidates is not with writing accurate Urdu but with responding to the questions set in an organised and well-structured way. Candidates are expected to write between 250 and 400 words on their chosen topic.

1

Youth

نوجوان لوگ
نوجوان اپنے بڑوں کی غلطیوں کے ذمے دار نہیں۔

Young people are not responsible for the mistakes of their elders.

2

Tourism

سیر و سیاحت
سیاح اپنے ملک کے سفیر ہوتے ہیں۔

Tourists are ambassadors for their country.

3

Pollution

آلودگی
آلودگی کی انسداد میں تعلیم کا کردار۔

The role of education in preventing pollution.

4

Scientific and medical discoveries

سائنسی اور طبی انکشافات
بعض طبی ایجادات فطری نظام سے متصادم ہیں۔

Some medical discoveries go against the natural order.

5

Food and drink

غذا اور مشروبات
روایتی کھانے متروک ہوتے جا رہے ہیں۔

Traditional dishes are becoming obsolete.

The wide range of topics allows candidates to choose the one best suited to their knowledge and interests as well as to demonstrate their linguistic skills in Urdu. At this Advanced Level, it is important not just for candidates to achieve a high standard of written Urdu but for them to be able to organise and structure their work as well, to present an argument where appropriate and to do so in an interesting way.

This component is marked out of 40: 24 marks are awarded for quality of language and 16 for content, structure and organisation.

Comments on specific questions

The two most popular titles with candidates were those dealing with the topics of pollution and the generation gap.

Question 1 *Young people are not responsible for the mistakes of their elders*

Many candidates opted for this title that is highly pertinent to their lives and there were some very good compositions on it. It is easier to produce a good essay if the content is heartfelt and some essays were written with considerable feeling. However, there was a distinct lack of balance in a number of essays: some appeared to blame young people for everything while others presented the older generation as being completely wrong and out of touch with the modern world. At this level, a balanced discussion of the topic and a considered and justified view is required to achieve the higher grades.

Another problem arose with some candidates who clearly saw the title as an opportunity for a general, rather rambling discussion on the generation gap. Such scripts cannot be credited as highly as those that focus on the precise terms of the question. At the same time, there were some outstanding essays on this topic, the best of which, in addition to being well structured and balanced, were also a pleasure to read.

Question 2 *Tourists are ambassadors for their country*

This was one of the less popular titles on the paper. However, it was well answered by most of those that attempted it. Candidates wrote about what foreign tourists wanted and expected. They then went on to highlight the problems created for the tourist industry by the political and security situation nowadays and produced relevant suggestions to make improvements.

Question 3 *The role of education in preventing pollution*

This was the second most popular title with candidates. However, although many candidates were clearly well informed about the subject, their essays tended to give too much weight to detail about the causes and effects of pollution. In some cases three-quarters of the essay was taken up with this, with limited reference being made to the title set. While it was relevant to spend some time discussing pollution and its effects, the essay title required candidates to focus on the part that education could play in tackling it. It was not sufficient simply to write that: *with education everyone will be made aware of pollution and will not create any or Educated people will not cause pollution*. Candidates needed here, as in their responses to any of the essay titles, to engage in detail with the question set to gain higher marks for content.

Question 4 *Some medical discoveries go against the natural order*

This was the least popular topic with candidates. A small number really managed to get to grips with it, discussing contraception, abortion, artificial organs and other such controversial topics. Other responses did not range widely enough to give a full answer. Some candidates discussed scientific rather than medical inventions, such as nuclear weapons or computers and televisions, which missed the point of the question.

Question 5 *Traditional dishes are becoming obsolete*

This topic was relatively popular with candidates who handled it well on the whole, producing some good responses. This was mainly because their essays included some discussion of the social, economic and cultural implications of the trend away from traditional foods, which mirrored broader social changes, rather than merely talking about the limited (in the context of this argument) factors of diet and health.

Conclusion

The best essays in any topic area were those which produced a structured and considered response to the title, with an introduction followed by several relevant and well-made points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph.

Linguistically, the best essays were effectively error free, with a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures, including dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and, where appropriate, relevant quotations.

Cambridge International Advanced Level
9686 Urdu November 2009
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

While overall performance was impressive, with most candidates demonstrating very good writing skills, many essays would have been much improved by stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the word limits. Candidates are required to write concisely and cannot be credited highly for planning and organisation if they write significantly more than the number of words specified, i.e. 250 - 400 words. Candidates who do write too much may not reach a concluding paragraph within the limit set. That being said, very many candidates wrote well-planned and interesting essays in excellent Urdu.

URDU

Paper 9686/04
Texts – Paper 4

General comments

Candidate performance overall was good with a small improvement at this session at the top end of the grade range. There is a choice of questions on this paper depending on which texts candidates have studied and candidates generally showed understanding of the main ideas relating to their texts and of the kind of questions set. Questions were of a similar level of difficulty to each other and posed appropriate challenges for weak and able candidates alike. More able candidates tended to attempt the questions as expected and were able to score good marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) (i) Candidates gave a detailed explanation of the verses as required with good references to the poet's past.
- (ii) A significant number of candidates answered this question briefly relative to the number of marks available for it. This has happened at previous sessions too and attention has been drawn to it.
- (b) Many candidates produced a well-written essay on the work of the poet in general. However, few were able to demonstrate an understanding of the specific focus of the question.

Question 2

- (a) Very detailed explanation of the verses was given. In some cases, sub-questions (i) and (ii) were presented as a single answer. Candidates are advised to deal with the separate parts making up these kinds of question separately, giving equal weight to each sub-question. A small number of candidates attempted part (i) only and ignored part (ii) of this question.
- (b) Whilst the question invited candidates to focus on a common thread across all the poems of Nazir, a number of candidates tended in their answer to explain the poems in a more general sense. However, there were some notable exceptions for which candidates could be credited.

Question 3

- (a) This was one of the most popular questions with candidates. In contrast to Questions 1 and 2, both parts of this question were answered in detail in the case of Question 3(a) and candidates were able to score high marks.
- (b) Of the few who attempted this question, just a small number were able to provide comprehensive answers that satisfied the requirements of the question.

Question 4

- (a) This question was generally well answered. The comparison drawn with the present day varied according to candidates knowledge and understanding.
- (b) Some candidates were unclear about the meaning of '*ghair mamooli*', an understanding of which is critical if one is to attempt to answer this question.

Question 5

- (a) This question was popular with candidates, with many of them scoring highly.
- (b) The Examiner was most impressed with the quality of some of the answers. Candidates were asked to present their arguments for or against in a structured, well reasoned manner.

Question 6

- (a) As always, there were a significant number of candidates for this question, which gave rise to some very good answers.
- (b) This question too was well done. Candidates proved to have mixed opinions regarding the character of Akbar in the novel.