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FIRST LANGUAGE ARABIC

Paper 0508/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

Almost every candidate attempted all questions on the Paper, with some candidates demonstrating a degree of creativity in their answers. In general, candidates require more practice in exam technique and should be advised to pay attention to the following:

- Developing their own ideas.
- Answering all elements of the question as demanded by the rubric, and particularly learning to use their own words and style of writing.
- Analysis and use of numbers
- Types of verbs and substitutes
- Sticking to word limits.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Marks were awarded for answers which drew out the main ideas from the two texts and for clarity, language, presentation and style of writing. Answers which scored good marks included the following elements:

- Discussion of the role and importance of libraries
- Answer in the form of a paper presented at a seminar on libraries, not exceeding 250 words.

Some candidates wrote 500 or 600 words in answer to this question, or copied out large sections of the texts. Other candidates wrote their answer in the form of a conversation. In both cases, marks were lost for failing to comply with the question rubric.

One candidate who scored good marks for this question wrote:

" أشكر لكم حضوركم لهذه الندوة الثقافية التي نقدمها عن المكتبات ودورها وأهميتها في يومنا هذا . وسوف تتناول ندوتنا الحديث عن المكتبات العامة ومكتبات النوادي والمكتبات المدرسية".

Question 2

Marks were awarded for answers which mentioned the importance of keeping the public library open to readers and its important role in many facets of life. The answer should have been in the form of a letter addressed to the official in charge of libraries, with reference to the candidates' own personal experience.

Some candidates did not make reference to their own personal experiences, while others copied out sections of the text. Other answers were written in an inappropriate register, or tended to repeat what had been written in answer to **Question 1**.

An example of an answer which scored well follows:

" إن من يعملون في المكتبة مثقفون وليسوا موظفين عاديين، وهم يقدمون بسخاء المساعدات بتزويدنا بمعلومات ثمينة تفيدنا، ويرشدوننا إلى سبل القراءة الصحيحة والمفيدة ، وكيفية التعامل مع الكتب . كما تعمل هذه المكتبة على اقتناء الكتب المطبوعة في جميع المجالات على نحو مستمر".

The following is an example of an answer which made good use of personal experience:

أخي الصغير إلى المكتبة التي في حيننا ، وبعد أسابيع أفاجأ بحجم المعلومات التي استطاع أن يحصل
بها من قراءاته المتنوعة . لقد تعلم أشياء لا تعلم في المدارس

Question 3

This question was answered correctly by a large number of candidates. The most common errors were in part (a), where many candidates wrote “*Al-Uxora*” instead of “*Al-Uxuru*”; and part (e), where candidates wrote “*targhab*” instead of “*targhabu*”.

Question 4

This question was correctly answered by the majority of candidates, although some did not know the effect of “*la*” on the following phrase in part (c). Some candidates also encountered difficulty with part (d) because they did not choose the correct form of the written number to fill the blank.

Question 5

Candidates were required to supply an example of four grammatical structures by including each in a meaningful sentence. Part (d) proved the most problematic, as many candidates wrote:

قال، باع، سعى، بكى

instead of verbs such as:

وعد، وصل، وجد

Question 6

This question was not well answered. Many candidates analysed “*al-lat*” incorrectly, and also “*hawa’iha*”.

Paper 0508/03

Continuous Writing

General comments

Candidates were required to answer one question from a choice of nine. All questions were answered by at least some candidates, although some questions proved much more popular than others, particularly **Questions 3, 6 and 7**. Some candidates produced excellent answers which reflected their ability to analyse the questions in depth and respond to them in a detailed and imaginative way. Candidates seem to require more practice in responding to questions based on poetry (**Question 5**) and proverbs (**Question 1**) as these form a significant element of Arabic literature.

In general, candidates require more practice in using punctuation correctly and consistently. Grammatical structures which were commonly used incorrectly included: the five verbs and the five nouns; the dual case; and the deputy agent supplying the place of the khabar. The use of colloquialisms was also prevalent.

Comments on specific questions

The same number of marks was allocated in each question for correct spelling, punctuation, paragraphing and effective use of language and handwriting.

Question 1

Candidates were required to write a story based on the meaning of an Arabic proverb. This question was attempted by only a small number of candidates. One candidate who achieved good marks made the main character of their story an ambitious salesman who treated his family and his staff badly and who, in the end, lost everything. Another good answer made the main character a football player, who became paralysed and went overseas for medical treatment but to no avail. Marks were allocated for clarity of expression, presentation of ideas, setting and characterisation and for the relevance of answers to the meaning of the proverb.

Question 2

This was not a popular question but most candidates who chose to answer it scored good marks. One candidate wrote:

" الذين يعملون بأيديهم اليوم قليلون ، إن أناملهم تعمل بلهفة لتبدع أنيئةً مزخرفة رائعة الجمال . إن الحرف اليدوية تقوم بنقل الثقافات والحضارات إلى الجوانب الأخرى من الأمم والبلدان عبر التاريخ ، كما أنها تزيد من الدخل الوطني للبلد بما يشتريه السائحون ليحملوا معهم ذكريات جميلة أو هدايا ثمينة....".

Another candidate recommended the creation of schools to teach handicrafts to schoolchildren, the screening of special television programmes, and the holding of competitions with prizes for the best participants.

Question 3

There were some very good answers to this question, with good reference to feelings aroused. However, some candidates did not make any reference to treasures found in the wreck of the ship and so lost marks for this aspect of the question.

Question 4

Most candidates who chose this question managed to describe the two invitations well and also their reasons for preferring one over the other, and their feelings before and after making their choice. Good examples of invitations chosen by candidates included: an invitation to a business meeting in Sharm El Sheikh; an invitation to a relative's wedding in Germany; and an invitation to a graduation ceremony.

Question 5

Candidates were required to write about the meaning of some lines of poetry. Only a few candidates attempted this question, which might indicate that candidates would benefit from more practice in analysing and responding to extracts of poetry.

Question 6

This question was popular and was well answered on the whole, with candidates producing exciting and imaginative stories. One candidate portrayed his main character as a graduate of the College of Arts who worked in a library. His friends were jealous of him and tried to create problems for him. Another candidate made his main character a struggling author whose works were always returned to him by prospective publishers without any indication of why the work had been rejected.

One of the best responses completing the sentence supplied read:

" رجع إلى الخلف، واستقرَّ على الكرسي ، ووضع رأسه بين يديه كأنه يحاول إخراج ما فيه من الأفكار ليلقي بها هي الأخرى في النار ، ثم شرع يبكي ويبكي " .

Question 7

This was the most popular question on this Paper. Many candidates were obviously writing from personal experience and this added depth and authenticity to what they wrote. Some candidates, however, did not pay sufficient attention to the part of the question which asked them about their feelings towards their country of residence.

Question 8

This question produced some good answers and again, the best were by those candidates who drew on their personal experiences. Among the mistakes mentioned by candidates were: neglect of schoolwork; taking medicine not prescribed by a doctor; hasty pre-judgement of other people; over-spending; deceit; and failing to take notice of parents' advice.

Question 9

This question required candidates to write about the photograph printed on the Question Paper. Most candidates managed to write creatively about the man in the photograph, describing his character and what he did for a living, and speculating on his feelings and thoughts. One candidate wrote:

” إنه شاحب الوجه ، شارد الفكر ، مبحر في الأفكار والهموم التي تحاصره ، يحاول النظر نحو اليمين معتقداً أنه سيرى مستقبلاً مشرقاً أو حلاً لما هو عليه ... ” .