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# FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

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Paper 0503/02  
Reading and Directed Writing

## General comments

In **Question 1**, candidates were asked to analyse and compare two texts. The task in **Question 2** was to write an essay on one of the issues discussed in Remco Meijer's article (first text). In **Question 3**, candidates were required to respond to issues raised in the second text in the form of a letter to the editor of the newspaper from which this text was taken. All candidates appeared to have understood the three assignments, and most managed to respond using the required number of words. A small number of candidates struggled to gain good marks, as their written Dutch was very limited.

## Comments on specific questions

### *Deel 1*

#### **Question 1**

A maximum of 20 marks was available for this question. A comprehensive discussion of the differences and similarities between the first and the second text was awarded a maximum of 12 marks. The remaining 8 marks were given for linguistic skill, including organisation (overall structure, paragraphing, and cohesion), style (vocabulary and syntax) and accuracy (spelling and punctuation).

The main similarities between the two texts are as follows:

- Both texts deal with *normen en waarden* (societal norms and values);
- Both text deal with issues of safety and respect for others;
- Both texts are critical of the role the police plays in society.

The main differences between the two texts are as follows:

- The first text is a newspaper article in which the author expresses his opinion; the second text is an interview in which the interviewee expresses his ideas and experiences;
- The style and vocabulary in the first text are more formal than in the second text;
- The first text contains guidelines on how to achieve a respectful and well-mannered society; the second text describes how a drug addict tries to survive, while often resorting to crime to achieve this goal;
- In the first text, the author tries to set out guidelines for the benefit of other people; in the second text, the interviewee is merely interested in himself;
- In the second text, the rules of behaviour put forward in the first text are transgressed.

Although the majority wrote well-structured essays, candidates are reminded that producing a simple list of differences and similarities is not sufficient to gain good marks for this type of task. Candidates are also reminded that summarising important information from texts in one's own words is better than quoting from the texts for two reasons: firstly, a successful summary in one's own words shows more clearly that a text has been understood, rather than if chunks of texts were lifted without further comment. Secondly, lifting too much material from the texts often results in candidates going over the word limit. Candidates are also advised to be wary of repeating information in their answers.

**Question 2**

Candidates were asked to write an essay on one of the issues raised in the first text. Most candidates wrote about issue number 7: *Gezin, leerschool van het leven*. High marks were given for well-structured, imaginative essays with convincing arguments (maximum of 8 marks awarded), which were written in accurate Dutch (maximum of 12 marks awarded).

**Deel 2****Question 3**

Candidates were asked to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper in response to the second text. Most candidates were aware of the purpose of such a letter. The reactions to the interview were very diverse: some candidates felt great sympathy for the homeless drug addict and argued that more should be done to help people in a similar situation as the one the interviewee found himself in, while others felt that it was the drug addict's predicament, it was his own fault and that measures should be taken to prevent drug addicts from roaming the streets.

A maximum of 8 marks was on offer for the relevant selection and appropriate use of material from the source text, as well as for shown understanding of the purpose and context of writing a letter to a newspaper. The remaining 12 marks were awarded for style, structure and linguistic accuracy.

**Paper 0503/03**  
**Continuous Writing**

**General comments**

Most candidates wrote good essays, but a small number of candidates had a rather basic command of written Dutch, and found it difficult to score good marks, as their vocabulary, in particular, was too limited.

**Comments on specific questions****Question 1**

*Als je in Nederland een inbreker betrapt en hem vervolgens verwondt, riskeer je zelf gevangenisstraf. Vind je dat terecht?*

Most candidates showed good argumentative skills in tackling this topic, and most essays led to interesting conclusions. A majority argued for a change in the law, but others maintained that violence begets violence, leading them to conclude that the present law was just.

**Question 2**

*Je favoriete oom (38 jaar) wil gaan trouwen met een 20 jaar jongere vrouw. Schrijf hem een brief, waarin je ingaat op het leeftijdsverschil.*

Almost all candidates wrote sympathetic letters to their favourite uncle. Many expressed genuine concern about the age difference, and explained their reasons for their worries. Others were more optimistic.

**Question 3**

*Geef aan wat voor jou de belangrijkste volgorde is voor je toekomstige werk: plezier, status, geld.*

A large number of candidates chose this topic. Most of them saw pleasure as the highest necessity, but for others money came first. Status was mostly not considered important. Deciding on a good structure for this essay, as well as avoiding repetition were major challenges, which a small number of candidates were unable to meet.

**Question 4**

*Als je thuiskomt, staat je hele kamer vol met prachtige bloemen. Gebruik dit gegeven als begin van een verhaal.*

There were some excellent stories, with candidates making good use of tenses. Nevertheless, some found it hard to avoid clichés.

**Question 5**

*De plaatselijke krant heeft een prijsvraag uitgeschreven voor het ontwerp van een nieuw park aan de rand van de stad. Geef je ideeën.*

A small number of candidates opted for this title. Some made it clear that their park would be a park for everybody and that, for instance, skaters, cyclists and young and old people should all have access. Some candidates discussed the design of the park, suggesting benches along a lake and arguing for a variety in plants, flowers and trees.

**Question 6**

*Fruitvliegjes leven ongeveer een dag. Beschrijf het korte, maar heftige leven van een fruitvlieg.*

Some candidates wrote excellent imaginative essays which described in interesting detail what a day in the life of a mayfly would be like. Some showed great awareness by showing that mayflies would be unable to see certain objects in human terms. Other candidates successfully described a mayfly's life from an outside perspective, but nearly all candidates understood that the hectic life of this creature would, almost inevitably, end with a big bang.

**Question 7**

*Je wilt een politieke partij voor jongeren oprichten. Schrijf een uitnodigingsbrief aan nieuwe leden voor de eerste bijeenkomst.*

Most candidates chose to avoid making political statements, but, instead, invited young people to come forward to share and express their political ideas about the future.

**Question 8**

*Reageer zoals je wilt op de volgende uitspraak van de schrijver Italo Svevo: "Er zijn drie zaken die ik altijd vergeet: namen, gezichten en ... de derde ben ik vergeten."*

The candidates who chose this topic understood that it was about forgetting/forgetfulness. Most of them chose to write a story.

**Question 9**

Not many candidates chose this topic, which was based on a poem by K. Michel. As a format for their answer, they either chose a letter (to a friend) or a story, written in the first person.