

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/01

Reading

Key Messages

- Candidates should not copy the texts directly into the answers but answer in their own words.
- Candidates should pay attention to the marks available to be sure whether answers required are simple ones or complex/detailed ones with multiple points to cover.
- **Question 2** answers require comparison and contrast between text 1 and text 2, using arguments linked with appropriate connectives.

General comments

Overall performance in the examination was good and most candidates demonstrated their comprehension of the texts and tasks well. Many candidates produced high standard work, showing their ability to identify, analyse and evaluate relevant information from the texts and demonstrating an excellent use of vocabulary and complex sentence structures with accuracy in punctuation and spelling. Many candidates also used a clear and an appropriate style of language for their answers, and wrote in full and syntactically complex sentences.

However, some candidates did not fully address the questions and answered only partially. Candidates should pay attention to the marks available for each question in order to know how much information is required to answer fully. Some questions required a simple answer indicated by 1 mark available, but some required more complex answers with multiple points to be made.

There is also another area which can be improved upon: some candidates didn't paraphrase or use their own words in their answers, though they identified relevant information correctly. Candidates are asked to write answers in their own words, but many candidates copied the texts directly into their answers which had a negative impact on marks available for language.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, all of the sub-questions were answered well. Many candidates answered all the questions accurately. Questions requiring simple and straightforward answers, such as **1(b)**, **1(e)**, **1(f)**, **1(g)** and **1(h)** were answered well by most candidates. Many candidates also answered **1(a)** well, providing two aspects of the result of the earth's axis being tilted by 23.5 degrees.

In **1(d)**, some candidates did not score full marks, due to incomplete answers. To score three full marks for this question, there should be three clear points made on the features of the 'wind path (바람길)'. The majority of candidates identified and wrote two features of the wind path correctly: the wind path is in a straight line, and it is not just one but many diagonal lines that are being crossed. One of the features which some candidates didn't include in their answers was that the wind path has a south eastern direction. Candidates are reminded that they should pay attention to the marks available, as indicated in brackets () at the end of each question or part question.

Some candidates didn't score full marks on the more complex questions, such as **1(i)** and **1(j)**. **Question 1(j)** asked candidates to write what the advantages and disadvantages of sedentary (sitting on the floor) living are. It has three advantages: first, it goes well with the culture of relaxation (여유); second, it will bring people closer to nature; third, it makes people exercise. The disadvantage of sedentary living makes people lazy because once you sit down on the floor, you do not want to get up. These answers should be presented in an organised and structured way in candidates' own words. Some candidates wrote the advantages of Ondol

(온돌) or Korean House (한옥) in their answers. Some candidates even found answers from Passage 2. All the part questions in **Question 1** are based on the comprehension of Passage 1, and **Question 2** is based on both passages, comparing and contrasting the two passages.

Question 1(j) asked candidates what the author's intention had been by saying that 'Korean houses are complicated and inconvenient.' Some candidates misunderstood the author's intention and believed that he really thought Korean houses were inconvenient. In fact, the author's intention is quite the opposite. He explains that movement in a Korean house is scientific and gives many benefits: various different experiences through different paths in the house, different experiences in different seasons and the time of the day, existence of shortcuts and so on.

Question 2

Many candidates answered the question well, with good use of their own words and complex syntax. Candidates successfully selected, linked and explored the common themes of the two passages. However, a number of candidates did not use a good linkage and orderly grouping of ideas; others seemed not to understand the question fully and did not address its different parts. Candidates should select and analyse what is relevant for the question and address the sub-questions fully.

In **Question 2(a)**, many candidates collated arguments from the passages and organised their thoughts logically, in well-structured sentences and paragraphs. However, some candidates have not included sufficient information about the advantages and disadvantages of Ondol. The points which some candidates missed include the following:

- You could feel affection (정) towards house through physical contact/touch with it.
- You can feel nature more closely by looking at it through low windows.

Many candidates successfully wrote other advantages of Ondol, which included the following:

- The design is very scientific especially in heat radiance and conductivity.
- They help the air circulation due to the difference in temperature between cold and warm spots on the floor.
- They purify the air by letting the outside air in through paper doors and windows: it is good for the health and very hygienic.

Question 2(b) asked candidates to discuss how the sunlight and the wind was controlled and managed in Korean houses. There are many ways to control the sunlight and the wind: to control the sunlight, people used protruding eaves, shallow depth of rooms and positioning of windows, etc. Also to prevent the house being dark due to protruding eaves, people used natural lighting through reflective light from a courtyard, which is made very plain to maximise the light reflection into a house. To control the wind, people made the wind path south eastern to maximise the south eastern wind coming into a house in summer and there are many windows arranged in a certain way to let the wind cross and pass. The location of a house is very important as well. Having a mountain behind a house blocks cold wind in winter and creates cool wind in summer.

Many candidates answered successfully including all the advantage and disadvantages of Ondol, using their own words, arranging the answers in an organised fashion with appropriate connectives.

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/02

Writing

Key Messages

In order to do well on this paper, candidates should:

- construct an argument that relates to the question
- have a clear structure for the writing
- present evidence to support their arguments
- use appropriate language for the subject
- check and proofread their work

General Comments

As in previous years, candidates were given a choice of 4 titles for the discussion and argumentative essay in Part 1, and another choice of 4 titles for the narrative or descriptive essay in Part 2. For Part 1 successful candidates have read the titles carefully before choosing one and planned their ideas for the introduction, main part and conclusion. It is important to spend time planning the essay to build a logical argument.

An essay needs to present ideas in a logical, coherent manner, and the argument should be well organized and developed systematically. Some excellent essays had stable structures, were fluently argued and presented a balanced viewpoint with a range of ideas in support of both sides of the argument. Meanwhile, some less successful essays, despite having addressed a few relevant points, showed repetitions and the conclusion sometimes finished less strongly than the beginning paragraph implied.

Therefore, to write a successful composition, candidates should address the specific demands of the question and substantiate and justify their ideas with relevant examples. Many essays started the introduction with a grand philosophical or historical background without clear connection to the subject. In a short essay it is important to open the argument in direct connection with the topic.

There were some excellent descriptions and narratives. Candidates created very imaginative, impressive stories with beautiful narrative structures including vivid characters, a climax and a touching ending. In order to create images in the reader's mind, candidates need to use a wide range of vocabulary and focus on expressions that reflect the emotions of the narrator pertinently.

Most of the candidates kept the length of essay between 350-500 words for each composition. A long essay is not necessarily always good. Some successful essays focused on the main points and achieved an excellent answer without excessive length. A few candidates did not answer one of the questions at all and therefore lost half of the available marks. Some less successful essays tended to rely on a limited number of simple words and the use of the same expressions repeatedly.

To enhance the quality of the Korean writing the candidates need to be careful when using the following expressions:

- use of particle '에' instead of '의'
- confusion of '안' and '않'
- the subject-verb disagreement
- overly informal expressions like '너 따위가 감히, 말도 안 된다'
- overuse of the plural '-들'
- ambiguous words '이런, 그런 것들, 그런 경우'
- use of slang in the argumentative essay like '후지다, 착한 가격, 디게'

Comments on Specific Questions

Section 1: Discussion and Argument

- (a) This was the least popular question. It asked candidates to analyse the eating habits of teenagers based on the statement: 'you are what you are eating'. Most candidates concluded that eating fast food is not good for young people's health as they need to get essential nutrients. The successful essays analysed critically the eating habits of teenagers, focusing on how fast food puts both their physical and mental health in danger. Analysing the social and environmental factors that force teenagers to eat more fast food produced a number of persuasive essays. Some essays claimed that meals dominated by Western food like pizza or hamburgers are not good for health. This may be true but the leap in logic that usually followed this argument was seen as faulty: apart from the fact that pizza or hamburgers is only a small part of Western food, the argument along the lines that Korean food is good for your health under any circumstances whereas Western food is bad for health is wide off the mark. If one wants to pursue an argument that eating Korean food makes one healthy, one needs to substantiate this claim logically, with evidence. Finishing the conclusion with suggestions of some good eating habits for teenagers should make a fitting ending.
- (b) This question was chosen by the largest number of candidates. Candidates had to discuss the pros and cons of hosting international events in their local area. Some of the best compositions clarified different aspects of the place where the writer lived and developed a comprehensive, persuasive argument, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the place as a venue for an international event. They identified the likely effects of such an event, such as the financial burden, the effect on local economy, the enhanced publicity, the diverse cultural experiences and so on. Some essays just enlisted pros and cons without supportive argument and did not reach any sort of conclusion.
- (c) This was the second most popular question. If one wants to claim that any decision-making should follow the principle of majority, one needs to substantiate their position with solid arguments. This in turn means that it is essential to have a grasp on the pros and cons of majority rule. Most of the essays concluded that despite having some limitations, the efficiency of the majority rule justifies its application. Some of the best essays opposed the majority rule and pointed to its limitations employing sophisticated argumentation about how the opinions of the minority can be neglected or how the views of the majority can be extorted or produced by the media owned by the rich.
- (d) The question was 'Do you think a human being should get special treatment even when a machine shows the same ability to that of the human?' This question requires candidates to decide on a position first and then support it with persuasive reasons. A number of good essays were written in answer to this question with many sophisticated and convincing arguments brought forth in favour of the humans, such as an ability to reproduce, a capability to reflect on their own faults and correct them, and so on.

Section 2: Description and Narration

- (a) Candidates who just listed the contents of their treasure box merely giving the size, shape or colour of the objects in it could not be credited for a good description. However, candidates who added the memory that made the object special and enriched their description with the emotions inspired by the memory, fared much better.
- (b) Despite its simplicity, this topic produced some of the most impressive essays. Some candidates created a dramatic situation by revealing circumstances where the song was heard. Others described their memories and emotions evoked by the lyrics and melody of a specific song. Those candidates who managed to make and explain the connection between a special song and themselves produced very good essays indeed.
- (c) Most candidates who chose this question presumed that the 'an invaluable item' they supposedly broke was some kind of vase or pottery item, which then restricted the line of the story in many cases. Candidates who invented 'an invaluable item' somewhat more unconventional, could in most cases make up a more exciting story.

- (d) This was the most popular question from this section. The tension caused by the old photo produced many good stories. A lot of candidates made a story based on the assumption that they had been adopted. Others imagined the picture to be that of a sibling who had disappeared. Many thrilling scenes were described and some stories took on an almost horror-story-like quality. Many stories showed good story-telling skills and had all the necessary elements: tension, climax, and a strong finish.