

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.
- In **Question 1**, the best answers should contain clear, precise and well-constructed sentences.
- Candidates should pay attention to the marks available as this gives a clue to whether the answers required are simple ones or complex/detailed ones with multiple points to cover.
- **Question 2** answers require comparison and contrast between Text A and Text B, using arguments written in a cohesive fashion using appropriate connectives.

General comments

Overall, candidates performed well on this paper and there were many positive features in their responses. Many candidates showed their ability to scan, analyse and evaluate relevant information from the texts for each question with a clear and an appropriate style of language for their answers and wrote in full and complex sentences.

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 one mark available, but some required more complex answers with many points to be made. Also, some candidates copied their answers from the text directly rather than paraphrasing them in their own words or presenting them in a more developed and organised fashion.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, all of the sub-questions were answered well. Many candidates understood the questions well and answered accordingly to each question. Questions requiring simple and straightforward answers, such as 1(b), 1(g) and 1(h) were answered well. Most candidates also answered **Question 1(a)** well, identifying who you () in line 2 and you () in line 57 are, the first you () being the eldest daughter in the story, or an author (,) and the second you () being the father.

A number of candidates found questions 1(c), 1(d), 1(e) and 1(f) more challenging.

Question 1(c) asked what the reasons were for the mother to say not to bother celebrating her birthday separately. Many candidates identified the surface level reasons, such as 'It was in the middle of summer and the weather was too hot', 'There are two ancestral ceremonies close to mother's birthday and it would be too inconvenient.' and 'The father's birthday was only a month ago, and it would be easier to celebrate mother's birthday together with father's birthday'. However, some candidates missed out the underlying reasons/meaning for this question in their answers. One of the reasons the mother said not to celebrate her birthday was for her children's sake. She cared about her children so much that she did not want to bother her children to come to see her in the hot summer and did not want to put a burden on them. If she celebrated her birthday together with her husband, then it would be one less trip for her children to make and would be easier for them. It was not for the mother herself but for her children. In Text A, it is evident that mother loved her children visiting her, which was shown through her attitude towards other people when it was close to her children visiting and her actions.

Most candidates answered well for **Question 1(d)**, which asked how mother's liking of noisy atmosphere when the family was all gathered was expressed to other people. The mother was very upbeat and energetic when she was talking to her neighbours and to people who she met in the market. The mother's pride was

shown through her speech and gesture. Some candidates gave answers as to what the mother made, which symbolises her love, such as fruit juice/concentrate and all sorts of Korean sauces, which are part of answers to **Question 1(e)**.

Question 1(e) asked to write at least three expressions which showed mother's love symbolically or metaphorically. Three expressions are 'glass bottles which contain fruit juice/concentrate such as plum or raspberries', 'pots which contain all sorts of pickled fish/clams, and 'factory which manufactures something all year around.' The three words, 'glass bottles', 'pots' and 'factory' symbolises mother's love, as they contain lots of things which were made through careful and hard work.

In **1(f)**, some candidates did not identify all three expressions which showed the relationship between the mother and children was changing. Those expressions can be grouped in to three: Mother and father went to the city more to see their children rather than the children come to J City where parents were living, and even for father and mother's birthday, they had a meal in the city instead. They started buying mother's birthday present together with father's or they celebrated mother and father's birthdays together. Socks, which the mother had been buying to give to her children when they visited, started piling up in her wardrobe.

Most candidates answered well for **1(i)** and **1(j)**; writing expressions which indicate that the mother was not well or normal, and the efforts children made to find their lost mother, respectively.

Question 2

The majority of candidates successfully linked and explored the common themes of the two texts, compared the texts and answered the question as instructed. Many candidates answered the questions correctly with good use of their own words, expression and focus, and also complex syntax. However, some candidates used limited expression and missed good linkage between groups of ideas. Some arguments were repetitive and were lifted directly from the text.

Question 2 had two sub-questions, **2(a)** and **2(b)**. Some candidates answered the two questions all together rather than answering them separately. Even though candidates did not get marked down by doing so, this showed that some candidates did not pay attention to the instructions fully. At the end of each sub-questions, marks available were given to indicate what types of and how much discussions to be made.

Candidates answered well to **Question 2(a)**, discussing the main events in Text A and Text B, and the cause/reasons for those events to take place.

In **Question 2(b)**, the best candidates compared and explored the various aspects of the two texts – themes, the development of the stories, characters and method of expression which the authors used. Some common factors among many between the two texts are that both parents are ill but did not want to show their illnesses to their children. Both texts presented parents' sacrificial love to their children and that the children only realised their parents' love through a parent going missing or through separation.

These and other ideas should be identified, grouped with clear comparison/contrast, and linked effectively with a sense of purpose, rather than merely list-like notes.

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/02
Writing

Key messages

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

- construct a well-developed 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 one choice from four titles for the discussion and argumentative essay in **Section 1**, and another choice from 4 titles for the narrative or descriptive essay in **Section 2**. Many candidates read the titles carefully before choosing one and planned their ideas for the introduction, main part and conclusion in detail. It is important to spend proper time in planning one's essay to build a logical structure.

Each paragraph should have one point that expresses their position and candidates should develop these points into coherence. Explaining a point without direct relevance to the title for over one paragraph distracts the reader's attention. Good candidates wrote essays that developed points concisely and poignantly and using persuasive language which engaged the reader's attention.

Many candidates kept the length of essay between 350–500 words for each composition as per the rubric. Many successful essays focused on the main points and achieved an excellent answer without excessive length, however too short an essay will naturally lack depth and logic. It is important for candidates to think about both the structure and length of their essay when they plan their writing to avoid unnecessary repetition and information. They need also to balance their time properly when they deal with two sections. Some candidates spent too much time on **Section 1** and ran out of time writing the essay from **Section 2**.

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

- write spellings correctly: the difference between 의 and 에; 받아들이다(O)/받아드리다(X), 안되다(O)/안되다(X), 드러나다(O)/들어나다(X), 사라지다(O)/살아지다(X), 올바르다(O)/옳바르다(X)
- keep to a consistent style; either –입니다 style or –다 style but avoid mixing them in an essay.
- overly informal expressions in a formal essay such as 디게, 그치만, 근데 or 허나.
- using slang such as 실드를 친다, 얼짱 or 짱난다.
- avoid overusing plurals such as –들: 그들, 이들, 세상들, 시간들 ...
- avoid ambiguous expressions such as 이러한, 그러한, 이렇게.
- anglicisms

Comments on Specific Questions

Section 1 Discussion and Argument

Question (a)

This was the second most popular question in this section. This question expected candidates to discuss if competitive sport should be adopted as a mandatory academic subject or not. Many candidates discussed it from the affirmative point of view arguing that they can learn a sense of cooperation, eagerness to win or stubbornness by playing the competitive sport at school. There were also logical essays from the opposite position as well. Some of the best answers pointed out that the obvious merits of the policy could be overshadowed by the worsening of the capitalist system already seriously dominated by the spirit of relentless competition when we adopt the competitive sport.

Question (b)

The question expected candidates to discuss if adolescent rebellion is necessary for the growth and maturity of teens or not. A number of essays expressed clear thinking about this matter. Outstanding essays first defined clearly what a rebellion is and the degree to which one can call it a rebellion. Some of the successful candidates developed their thinking by pointing out that a rebellion is not necessarily violent and that it could be defined as 'breaking away from the frame of the older generation and proclaiming one's own life'. However, an argument, for instance, that a rebellion in adolescence is necessary for overcoming the harsh and relentless world they would face later on as an adult was vague and less persuasive. The candidates need to think about an issue deeply before they develop their thinking into writing.

Question (c)

The smallest number of candidates chose this question. The question that entertainers should not expect privacy in life seems to give a chance for adolescents to think more deeply about several subjects themselves. Some of the best compositions analysed the human rights of entertainers from social perspectives, addressed the problem of the media that expose the privacy of entertainers for commercial purposes, and pointed out the intention behind the sensationalism to divert people's attention away from politics.

Question (d)

This question was chosen by the largest number of candidates. Candidates were expected to discuss the argument that 'it is unfair for the disadvantaged to get different treatments from normal'. Some candidates developed their thought logically and coherently and understood the difference between 'different' and 'wrong', and defined the meaning of 'different treatment' first before developing their argument. Some of the best compositions analysed 'the selfish attitude' of the current capitalist society and criticised it effectively.

Section 2 Description and Narration

Question (a)

'My favourite time in a day' was not necessarily a specific time but an expression of what situation makes this time your favourite and the feelings you have at that time. Some of most effective compositions described an activity e.g. how you rode a bicycle and how you felt that moment in detail with vivid descriptions. The overuse of metaphors in description made some essays less moving because too many metaphors and mundane metaphors lack originality. The essence of the description is expressing vividly what 'I' really felt.

Question (b)

The question asked candidates to grasp the dramatic moment of a reunion and the feeling two people have when they meet again. Some candidates created a dramatic situation by adding revealing circumstances. Dialogues were not a prerequisite for this question. Some of the successful essays drew a picture of the scenes surrounding two people in the reunion with sophistication and expressed the thrilling emotions of the moment successfully. On the other hand, there were some cases where 'the moment of long awaited reunion' ended in vain without allowing any emotional involvement as the candidates concentrated on the development of the story.

Question (c)

This question was chosen by the largest number of candidates. Most of the stories dealt with the disappointment felt by parents at the low academic achievements of their child or a disappointment felt between friends. One outstanding story jumped across time and space and touched upon the experience of a child of a disappointing Christmas gift. In a narration question, a heavy reliance on 'dialogues' is unlikely to be effective. The development of a story needs to be supported by logical plausibility. However, a long and winding story in a short essay is not effective. The key is to keep the climax of a story interesting and elicit in the reader's mind 'a desire for continuous reading'.

Question (d)

Many candidates focused on creating a frightful situation by choosing a shortcut late at night. However, if 'the reason for going home quickly' is not persuasive enough, there is no reason why one chose 'the shortcut many people are reluctant to take'. The main reason presented for taking the shortcut was 'mum said come home not too late', but candidates needed to create an inevitable situation that forces one to take a risky option. Many candidates stuck to the plot construction but at the sacrifice of the literary description. Most of the candidates liked the terror itself with typical stories and situations, and there were relatively few creative stories.