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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

General comments

In general the performance of candidates was more than satisfactory, with the majority producing very good performances.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question took the form of an essay-writing competition, asking candidates to give their opinion, in about 150 words, on:

“ہوائی سفر کیوں جدید زمانے کی ضرورت بن گیا ہے؟”

“What makes air travel the most necessary feature of the modern age?”

Candidates were given the following three bullet points indicating what should be included in their responses:

- why the airplane is so amazing (one candidate wrote ‘a metal tube that can fly like a bird’)
- its importance in the modern age (examples given by candidates were ‘speedy travel’, ‘helping business’)
- a personal response to the nice things about flying (examples given by candidates were ‘comfort’, ‘food’, ‘in-flight entertainment’).

The most able candidates produced excellent, well-planned and constructed compositions and used good examples of their own when making their points. Candidates who did not cover all the bullet points adequately lost marks for content. Some candidates lost marks in their response to the first bullet point because they only re-iterated that the aeroplane was amazing, rather than giving reasons *why* they thought that it was.

The majority of candidates wrote relevant, interesting and linguistically accurate responses to the question. There were only a few candidates whose written Urdu was not up to the task, and a small number of scripts which were poorly presented with messy handwriting, crossings out and scribbled insertions which made their work very difficult to read. Some candidates lost marks because they were unable to write and spell everyday words correctly; some of the words that candidates spelt incorrectly were included in the question.

Many candidates had difficulty keeping to the prescribed length as stated in the rubric. Some candidates wrote well over 200 words because they wrote unnecessarily lengthy introductions about why they had decided to enter the competition and therefore lost marks. It cannot be stressed too much how important it is to follow the rubrics for each question if high marks are to be achieved.

Question 2

This question provided candidates with a choice of writing either:

(a) *a report for a newspaper on the state of their school's facilities along with suggestions for improvement*

or

(b) *a letter to a friend making arrangements for the holidays.*

The report was, on the whole, satisfactorily attempted by most candidates. They were expected to state what their school's facilities were, what condition those facilities were in and what suggestions they had for improving them. Many candidates concentrated on the first part of the question, leaving themselves too few words to write about the last part adequately.

Most candidates chose the letter writing option and there were some extremely amusing, delightful and well written letters, some of which included imaginative and extravagant plans for holidaying with a friend. There were some letters, however, in which about half the prescribed word limit was taken up with elaborate letter-writing formalities at the beginning, for example, a few candidates wrote an extremely long list of relatives to send salaams to! Candidates must stick to the word limit and be careful not to waste words on material that does not directly answer the question.

Question 3

This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu and on the whole it was well attempted by most candidates. Marks were awarded for transferring the meaning of the passage and candidates were not penalised for grammatical or spelling errors where they did not interfere with the meaning.

Paper 3248/02

Language Usage, Summary and Comprehension

General comments

On the whole most candidates performed well in this component and were aware of good exam technique. Candidates who answered questions concisely, using their own words and language skills rather than lifting answers from the texts, secured better marks. Some candidates seemed to have problems managing their time appropriately: by producing rough drafts for the summary and comprehension questions, they ran out of time to complete the last task.

Comments on specific questions***Part 1: Language Usage***

Vocabulary

Question 1

This question was generally well done by most candidates. Some candidates however used '*baat khulna*' as '*baat khowlna*', and '*baat barhaana*' (create trouble) was used in a constructive way e.g. '*owski saas mungni ke baad abb shaadi ki baat nahin barhaa rahi.*'

Question 2

Again most candidates did well except for a few who used '*paani pher daina*' in the wrong sense e.g. '*owsne fuslown meyn paani pher diya*' (watered the crops).

*Sentence Transformation***Questions 3 – 7**

These questions were generally attempted well. Some candidates, however, changed the tense in **Questions 6 and 7** and failed to secure marks by doing so. A small number of candidates misunderstood the rubric and changed the whole meaning of the sentence which is not what is required in this exercise.

*Cloze Passage***Questions 8 – 12**

The cloze passage did not pose any problems and most candidates performed well.

Part 2: Summary

This question was generally answered well. Some of the most common errors made by candidates were:

- Writing lengthy passages exceeding 200 and sometimes 250 words.
- Lifting the whole text directly from the passage and therefore not answering in their own words.
- Repeating points already made.
- Misunderstanding 'safar vaseela zafar' and therefore giving a wrong interpretation.
- Not writing about the national benefits gained by travel.

Part 3: Comprehension*Passage A***Questions 14 – 17**

Most candidates secured full marks in these questions. In **Question 14** a few candidates who did not understand the meaning of 'khwanda' (literate) or 'nakhawanda' (illiterate) lifted their answer straight from the text.

Question 18

Some candidates misunderstood the word 'tashveesh' (concern, worry) and interpreted it as 'benefits'.

Question 19

Most candidates gained full marks for this question but a small number of candidates wrote about the advantages of radio or newspaper rather than preferences for watching T.V over listening to the radio or reading newspapers.

*Passage B***Question 20**

Though generally answered well, some candidates answered only part of the question. The complete answer was, 'Time is valuable (is a treasure), and once lost, never comes back'.

Question 21

Most candidates failed to include one or other of the two points: 'All the wealth in the world could not buy time for anyone' or 'If he (Alexander) were to turn the clock back, he could have done something better'.

Questions 22 – 24

Candidates who supported the points they made with examples from the texts were able to achieve the full marks available.