

RUSSIAN

<p>Paper 9782/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- In **Part One**, candidates need to choose a card that features a topic of interest to them and be able to express their opinions in accurate Russian.
- In **Part Two**, candidates need to prepare a topic related to a country where Russian is spoken. In order to do well, candidates should choose a subject which is of interest to them and about which they can offer evidence of in-depth research and opinion.

Comments on specific tasks

Part One: Discussion of an article and related themes

This year the candidates chose a full range of cards and were able to offer interesting and insightful ideas on all themes raised in the articles. The popularity of themes varied from school to school, but **Cards 2** (Human Relationship), **3** (Work and Leisure) and **5** (War and Peace) proved to be the most popular.

The candidates were very well prepared for this section of the exam. Most used their preparation time effectively and were able to give a confident précis of the article. A pleasing range of opening formulas was used, including phrases like «*в статье речь идет о том, что*» and «*в статье говорится, что*». The best summaries of the article lasted close to one minute, included the key details from its beginning, middle and end and included the candidate's own take on the issue. Such summary allowed the candidates to take ownership of the topic and show initiative in the discussion, allowing them to achieve top marks in the 'Comprehension and discussion' section. The strongest candidates used preparation time to think about wider issues of the theme rather than going through the list of facts («*В первом параграфе автор говорит... Во втором параграфе автор говорит...*») or mentioning the maximum amount of detail during the minute allowed for the summary, rather than presenting the main idea. However, on the whole, the level of understanding and the depth of the ideas demonstrated during the discussion was impressive.

Card 1 (Environment) led to discussion of human impact on the environment, ways to promote the use of public transport and influence people's choices of transportation, main environmental issues and their impact of the planet, choice between technological progress and possible damage to the environment and necessary political and behavioural changes in order to protect various habitats.

Card 2 (Human Relationships) led to discussion of the role of friendship in people's lives, the role of the family, relations between men and women, the impact of loneliness on human life, the role of technology in human relations and how modern pressures affect human relations.

Card 3 (Work and leisure) led to discussion of the problems in finding work/life balance, the understanding of the concepts of 'success in life' and 'successful person', and what makes an ideal job.

Card 4 (the Developing World) led to discussion of demographic problems in the Developing World and how they affect the world in general, possible ways of resolving these issues, the role of the developed countries in the Third World, and the impact of foreign aid and the 'fair trade' approach to the relations with the Third World.

Card 5 (War and Peace) led to discussion of the threat of terrorism, the impact of terrorism on personal freedom and human rights, the relationship between liberal values and security, the nature of modern threats and the role of the nuclear weapons and military blocs like NATO in the modern world.

Card 6 (Scientific and technological innovation) led to discussion of the role of new technologies in the modern world and whether they present dangers as well as benefits, what issues need to be resolved as a priority and what new problems that may cause, whether new technologies are taking over people's lives and deprive them of basic skills and self-reliance, whether new technologies contribute to making life happier and whether artificial intelligence will be of benefit to the human race.

The best candidates steered the discussion, rather than leaving this solely to the examiner. Candidates are encouraged to introduce new ideas into conversation and give their opinions readily. This allows them to achieve the highest marks in the section 'Comprehension and Discussion', as it satisfies the requirement of 'showing initiative in developing discussion'.

Part Two: Prepared topic

Candidates selected a wide range of interesting topics for this part of the exam. Biographical topics were particularly popular, with figures from the fields of literature (including Bulgakov, Ilyf and Petrov), music (Rakhmaninov, Chaikovsky, Shostakovich, Tsoi) and politics (Putin's policy, Litvinenko's murder and Sino-Soviet split) especially favoured. This year there were some very interesting topics about Russian Art (Tarkovsky, Malevich, Chagal and Cubism, Constructivism of the 1920s, the works of Repin and Perov). Other unusual and very well researched topics included the history and impact of vodka on Russia, the Red Army in the Second World War, Peter the Great's Northern War, Mikhail Lomonosov, Russian football and the fate of Jews in the Soviet Union. These broad topics require substantial research and ability to organise the extensive material, but they could be very rewarding, and most of these topics were very successful.

Candidates can expect the examiner to have some knowledge of the topic they have chosen. Candidates should have a sound factual knowledge of each of their sub-headings; stronger candidates were able to go beyond the general broad statements. Candidates would be best advised to choose five sub-headings and know them thoroughly, rather than eight and know them only superficially. It is important to make sure that the chosen topic is firmly rooted in the culture or society of the Russian speaking countries, and although it is possible to discuss issues that are present in other countries as well, the discussion must concentrate on those aspects of such issues that are present in the Russian-speaking societies.

Most candidates were very well prepared and stronger candidates demonstrated sufficiently detailed knowledge of their sub-headings, with very few being reluctant to deviate from a pre-learned script. Being able to participate in a discussion, listening carefully to the question and avoiding simply reverting to a script upon hearing a key word will boost the candidates' marks in the 'factual knowledge and opinions' section.

Language

Overall the standard of language was high. The vast majority of candidates demonstrated a wide vocabulary and good grasp of grammar. However, there were still some persistent issues even for strong candidates. Among such issues are numerals, agreements in noun and adjective endings and structures like Complex Object («Россия хочет, чтобы Крым был русским») and the use of «не можно» instead of «нельзя». Even some stronger candidates used anglicised structures like «будут счастливыми нашим успехам» instead of «радоваться нашим успехам» («счастливый» has a different meaning in Russian and is a literal translation of the English 'will be happy with our success'), «трудно работать» instead of «много работать» («трудно работать» is another literal translation of the English expression 'work hard', but means 'it is hard to work' in Russian). The most persistent problem continued to be using the correct endings in declining nouns and conjugating verbs. However, generally the candidates demonstrated impressive command of Russian grammar and broad and idiomatic vocabulary.

Stress continues to prove problematic, although candidates' pronunciation and intonation was nonetheless usually good or very good. There were some impressive examples of excellent pronunciation and intonation among the strongest candidates.

RUSSIAN (PRINCIPAL)

Paper 9782/02
Reading and Listening

Key messages

- In preparation for this component, candidates should have experience of reading and listening to a wide range of authentic materials related to the topics in the syllabus.
- During the examination, candidates need to focus on conveying the required information in clear language, but there is no need for full sentences.

General comments

Part I: Reading

Text 1: Candidates need to produce answers to questions in Russian, which to some degree manipulate the language of the original text. Full sentences are not required.

Text 2: Candidates need to respond in English. Full sentences are not required.

Text 3: Candidates need to translate, into Russian, a short passage which is thematically connected to the preceding two texts. Useful vocabulary can be found in Text 2, although it may have to be adapted for the translation passage; for example, verb and case forms may need to be changed.

Part II: Listening

It is advisable to spend about 1 hour on this section. Candidates should be familiar with the individual listening equipment before the examination so that they feel confident.

Text 1: Candidates need to respond in Russian. They should focus on giving only the information required for the answer, rather than full sentences or lengthy sections transcribed from the audio. The information has to be conveyed successfully, so candidates should aim for as high a degree of linguistic accuracy as possible.

Text 2: Candidates need to respond in English. Complete sentences are not required; candidates need only write the information required to answer the questions.

Text 3: Candidates must address all four bullet points in the summary and answer in concise English in order not to exceed the word limit. Complete sentences are not required.

Comments on specific questions

Reading – Exercise 1

This text was about the impact of The Beatles on Soviet life and the fall of the Soviet Union.

The majority of candidates scored well on this exercise and how to manipulate the language of the text to answer the questions. Candidates were generally good at responding to questions requiring factual answers, and the strongest candidates dealt comprehensively with inference.

Question 5 required candidates to supply an appropriate word to describe how Tat'yana viewed Soviet culture. Some candidates found the gist of the paragraph as a whole confusing, but stronger candidates were able to sum up her feelings into one word or a short phrase.

Similarly, in **Question 8** many candidates found it challenging to respond to the phrase *какое мнение*, and although they had at least partly understood the contents of the last paragraph, they were not able to address exactly what Irina's opinion of the film had been.

Students should read the question carefully in order to avoid only partially answering a question. A number of candidates lost a mark on **Question 3** by neglecting to mention that Igor may have experienced difficulties at work.

Surprisingly, some candidates were unfamiliar with the concept of a 'black market', with many thinking it was as actual market or shop. This impeded their ability to answer **Question 6** successfully.

Exercise 2

This text was about the effect and benefits of 'green spaces' in towns and cities.

Strong candidates were able to deduce the meaning of a number of words from their roots, namely **Question 10 – сближают** and **Question 11 – неиспользованного**. Others found this too challenging.

In **Question 13**, success hinged on understanding *конкурс*.

In **Question 14**, students needed to understand *экономию* to mean 'saving' rather than 'the economy', to conclude that schools were saving money by eating the produce themselves, rather than selling it.

Many candidates were able to achieve a high score on this text but again, attention to detail in addressing all parts of the question is paramount.

Exercise 3

This question was based on Text 2 ('Green' cities/towns).

Question 16

This proved to be a demanding task which elicited a wide range of marks. Candidates should be encouraged to attempt a response for each phrase and not leave blanks. There were a number of pleasing attempts and several instances of full marks. Candidates should be aware that Text 3 will contain some words and phrases that can be found (albeit in different grammatical forms) in Text 2.

The most challenging sections of the translation proved to be:

- understanding the difference between *все* and *всё*
- the spelling of *учёные* (appears in Text 2)
- the verb *улучшить* (appears in Text 2)
- the fact that *является* is followed by the instrumental case, hence *одной* (из главных проблем)

A surprising number of candidates seemed not to know *окружающая среда*. The best candidates were able to use different verbs for 'to go' on foot and by bicycle.

A number of candidates did not translate *было бы* for 'would be', or gave an incorrect translation.

There were a number of pleasing efforts to convey the correct meaning of various parts of the text through alternative structures or vocabulary, for which candidates were given credit.

Listening – Exercise 1

This was about the Russian language in Alaska.

There were some very pleasing responses and the text proved accessible to the majority of candidates.

As in earlier activities on this paper, candidates are reminded of the need to read questions very carefully and be thorough yet precise with their answers. In **Question 19**, nothing could be awarded for *географическое положение* without including *изолированное*.

In **Question 21**, the answer needed to be “at least 75 years old”. Several answered with only *им 75 лет* and could not receive the mark (perhaps when checking their answers, candidates could have realised that this would seem an unlikely answer).

Question 20 separated out those who could identify the individual words in the recording from those who tried to answer by writing down what they thought they had heard, for example *мытрот смылом*.

In **Question 23**, candidates needed to focus on the implications of the new law for the Russian language, rather than writing about implications for minority languages in general.

Part 2 – Exercise 2

This was a text about home schooling.

Many candidates performed very well. Others performed well but could have done better with a little more attention to detail.

Question 29 – a small number of candidates supposed Marina’s son was **very** quiet as opposed to **too** quiet.

In **Question 30(b)**, a small number of candidates answered ‘How had life improved?’ with, ‘It became better’. This did not answer the question as the idea of an improvement had been given to candidates in the question.

Part 3

This was a text about the origins and uses of augmented reality technology.

Although the text was challenging in parts, the majority of candidates gained at least six marks. Candidates should remember that full sentences are not required and that credit cannot be given for any response beyond the first natural break after 100 words. This year a number of candidates wrote almost double the word allowance, inevitably penalising themselves as many valid points were contained in the surplus work.

The first bullet point, concerning the key facts about augmented reality technology, was generally well answered. Most candidates could address at least two of the bullet points needed to gain the marks.

For the second bullet point, many candidates understood generally how the technology could be used but some did not express themselves with the clarity needed to gain the marks. (Example: ‘It can be used in surgery’ is a little too vague to warrant a mark. Better: ‘Surgeons can see exactly where in the organ they need to operate.’)

Bullet point three was sometimes covered by such phrases as ‘It was developed in the 20th century’ rather than the precise ‘in the middle of the 20th century’. Only the strongest candidates successfully covered the final part of this point, that the reason pilots’ glasses had been developed was to view information at eye level.

Bullet point four proved the most challenging. Some information was rather vague or muddled. The best candidates were able to mention with clarity that visitors to shopping centres might be offered glasses to watch a film. Candidates who exceeded the word limit tended to lose marks from the fourth bullet point, which could not be marked in its entirety.

RUSSIAN (PRINCIPAL)

Paper 9782/03
Writing and Usage

Key messages

Part I Writing

When choosing a title in the examination, candidates should:

- spend some time reading all the titles
- think carefully about what each topic is and what is being asked in the title
- think about whether they have something to say in response
- consider whether they possess vocabulary in the topic area
- make a very rough plan before choosing a title
- decide what they think and write an essay plan.

When writing the essay, candidates are advised to:

- use the plan to construct a real argument
- write an introduction, discussion and a conclusion
- keep the essay title in mind throughout
- check whether the points made are relevant
- avoid repetition
- write in paragraphs, making a clear, relevant point in each one
- try to use a variety of language and demonstrate linguistic ability
- write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- remember to try to interest and/or persuade the reader.

Part II Usage

In this Part, the three tests of verbal knowledge, structural manipulation and other aspects of usage cover a wide range of structures, but should not present major difficulty to candidates who have broad experience of the language and an awareness of the need for accuracy in writing. It is useful to be familiar with the format of the tests: this will help candidates to be aware of the type of knowledge required. Intelligent, careful reading of texts in the target language, attention to personal linguistic development in terms of structures, and experience of working through similar tasks can all help in preparation for this section.

In this part of the examination candidates are recommended to:

- read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence
- avoid leaving any questions unanswered
- use their experience of and 'feel for' the language as well as their knowledge when deciding the correct answer (e.g. ask themselves 'Have I heard or seen a similar sentence?')
- proofread carefully their answers to **Exercises 1 and 2**.

General comments

As in previous years, the majority of candidates had clearly been well-prepared for the examination. The paper is in two parts and lasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes in total. Candidates are advised to spend about 1 hour 30 minutes on Part I (Discursive Essay) and about 45 minutes on Part II (Usage). 40 marks are available for Part I, in which candidates write one essay of 250–350 words in Russian, and 20 marks for Part II in which candidates complete exercises which test their knowledge of Russian vocabulary and structure. All the candidates completed all sections of the paper, and all followed the instruction to write in dark blue or black ink.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive essay

Candidates write one essay from a choice of five titles. It is suggested that candidates write 250–350 words in Russian, but where candidates exceeded the upper limit the entire essay was assessed. It is unlikely that an essay shorter than 250 words will include sufficient content and range of vocabulary and structure to access the entire range of marks available. A maximum of 24 marks out of 40 are awarded for the accuracy and linguistic range of the essay, and a maximum of 16 marks out of 40 for the development and organisation of ideas.

The majority of candidates wrote a plan for the essay and this is definitely to be encouraged. An essay plan is of great help, if not essential, in writing a well-organised and coherently argued essay. In addition, a plan allows the candidate to note down examples, vocabulary and structures which s/he may wish to include in the essay. The essay plan is not assessed. Many candidates wrote the essay on alternate lines of the page, allowing corrections or additions to the essay to be made neatly. Candidates should use paragraphs carefully in order to structure their work. In a small number of cases the presentation of the work was rather messy and consequently it was difficult to read the work. All candidates should make sure that their work is completely legible.

‘Accuracy and linguistic range’ is assessed out of 24 marks and the essay does not have to be without fault to be awarded full marks in this category. In order to access the highest marks here, candidates should aim to include a very wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the title they have chosen in addition to demonstrating the ability to use a range of complex sentence patterns and structures appropriately and accurately.

Up to 16 marks are awarded for ‘Development and organisation of ideas’. Here, in order to access the highest marks, candidates must present an answer to the title which demonstrates that they have understood the question, considered its implications and prepared a well-planned and thoughtful response. Access to the higher boxes of the mark scheme requires the work to be illustrated with relevant examples, and candidates should bear this in mind when planning the essay. Relevant examples can come from many sources including, for example, the candidate’s own experience, from wider reading or from topics and texts studied in class.

In order to be able to access the full range of marks available for this essay, candidates should choose a title about which they have clear ideas and views. They need to show that they have considered the question from different angles and to draw a clear conclusion. Relevant examples should be incorporated into the essay and used to support strands of the argument. It is very possible that the candidate will have, at the initial planning stage, more material than can be used in an essay of this length. The skill, naturally, comes in selecting the arguments and examples to be used to address the question and the most successful answers reflected the ability to do just this. Less successful were those essays in which candidates appeared to write everything they knew about the topic, thus losing sight of the question.

Question 1

- (a) This question was the least popular, but those who chose it wrote well-argued responses. Reference was usually made to the threat to the theatre from other forms of entertainment such as television, cinema and the internet. Opinion was divided as to whether the statement was true or not, but in an essay such as this it is important to draw a clear conclusion, supported by evidence, and the candidates who chose this title did so.

- (b) This question about private education was the most popular question, chosen by almost one third of the candidates. Perhaps understandably, many responses included examples and evidence from personal experience. Almost all responses agreed with the statement. Particularly notable in responses to this question was the range of vocabulary appropriate to the topic that was used. Almost without exception, candidates were able to use specific knowledge of the topic and personal experience to help them construct a clear and effective response to the question.
- (c) The question as to whether a computer can replace a teacher was relatively popular and provoked a range of well-argued answers. Generally, candidates agreed that a computer could not replace a teacher, but in drawing a conclusion they considered a range of different advantages and disadvantages of the involvement of computers in education. As for **Question 1(b)**, candidates were able to use both knowledge of the topic and personal experience to help them construct their response.
- (d) This was also a relatively popular question. The candidates who chose this question about the relationship between humans and nature were able to use a very pleasing range of topic-specific vocabulary; clearly the environment is a topic about which candidates are well-informed. Answers were generally well-balanced, considering different points of view and using a range of examples and illustrations. Candidates were able to use pertinent examples in order to back up opinions and the best answers came to a clear and considered conclusion.
- (e) This was the second least popular question, but the candidates who chose it wrote intelligent and balanced answers, often making reference to current events. Opinion was divided as to whether we can trust the media or not, but without exception candidates who chose this question had a good deal to say and were able to come to a considered opinion, supported and illustrated by relevant examples.

Part II: Usage

Exercise 1 – Questions 2–6

The five questions in this section test knowledge of verb conjugations. Any acceptable correct version of the infinitive given in brackets in the context of the sentence is allowed. In preparing for this question, candidates need to learn regular and irregular verb conjugations thoroughly, then read the question very carefully so as to pick up the clues which indicate which tense of the verb is required. Candidates should know that imperatives can be tested (**Question 5**). The majority of candidates answered **Questions 2, 3 and 6** correctly. **Questions 4 and 5** proved to be discriminators between candidates who knew the conjugations of verbs well and those whose knowledge was less secure.

Exercise 2 – Questions 7–11

As in previous years, in this exercise candidates were generally able to manipulate *который* successfully, and to use *до того, как* and *после того, как* accurately. It is important when combining the two sentences that candidates use an appropriate conjunction and that, where there is a sequence of events, this sequence is maintained in the resulting sentence. On occasion, candidates seemed to over-complicate their answer and consequently failed to write a correct version; candidates should be aware that it is not always necessary to complete complex language manipulation in order to combine the two sentences.

Exercise 3 – Questions 12–31

As has been the case in previous examinations, many candidates scored full marks or almost full marks for Exercise 3. The most challenging questions proved to be numbers **21, 26 and 30**. In preparing for this type of test, candidates should revise thoroughly both the declensions of nouns and adjectives, and the cases which follow different prepositions in Russian. The majority of candidates were able to choose the appropriate forms of adjectives, nouns, pronouns and verbs to complete the sentences.

RUSSIAN

<p>Paper 9782/04 Topics and Texts</p>

Key messages

In both Parts, candidates should:

- read the question with care, and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close relation to the question
- define the terms of the question in the introduction
- keep the question in mind throughout
- support any assertions with close references to the text and/or film
- make sure quotations, if used, support the argument
- make sure all quotations are accurate
- use paraphrasing and allusion as an alternative to overlong quotations
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid narrative
- demonstrate knowledge by using it as supporting evidence for the argument
- exclude information that is irrelevant to the question

Part I: Cultural Topics

Candidates should:

- make sure that they learn the necessary vocabulary to write about their topic when preparing for this Part
- remember that the rubric requires reference to only two of the works. Writing about all three may lead to a lack of depth
- try to demonstrate their knowledge of underlying themes, and mention comparisons and links between the two works
- proofread carefully after writing, paying special attention to verb forms and agreements.

Part II: Literary Texts

In context questions candidates should:

- make sure they analyse the extract showing how its content is related to the rest of the work
- avoid using the passage as a springboard for a general essay
- be careful to analyse, rather than re-tell the story of the extract.

General comments

Though there were natural differences in the level to which candidates had prepared for this paper, generally speaking, the standard of content knowledge in the answers was impressively high. Many candidates appeared to have studied their chosen works in great detail, and a number of answers showed evidence of extensive background reading. The degree to which candidates were able to select appropriate material from their stock of knowledge and adapt this to the question they had chosen to answer varied. On the whole, this year, most candidates were able to do this with at least a reasonable amount of success. The best answers showed a clear ability to exclude irrelevant information which, though interesting and accurate, did not add weight to the argument. Some answers would have benefitted from more basic information about the characters being discussed, the locations of scenes within the time-frame of the films, the location of the commentary passages within the works and the historical and temporal contexts of the works in general. Many essays in both sections of the paper contained pertinent quotations which supported the points being

made. Some candidates would have gained higher marks had they been able to quote accurately in Russian and integrate the quotations selected into their own discourse. If possible, candidates should refer to where in the work their quotations come from as even a vague reference gives more force to their argument. The language of the answers in both English and Russian varied from outstanding to satisfactory. The use of appropriate literary critical language was more evident this year, though a small minority of candidates used basic concepts such as *роман* and *повесть* in a haphazard way. Those unsure as to the nature of the genre they are discussing could obviate the problem by simply using the word 'work' in English or Russian. Essays were generally reasonably long, thus allowing many candidates to access the higher range of marks. Not all candidates appeared to have written a plan, but organisation of material was generally sound. A minority of candidates simply repeated in their conclusion what they had written in their introduction. Abbreviated English forms such as 'shouldn't' or 'can't' should be avoided.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

Question 1

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 2

- A** This question attracted a small number of answers. Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the dynamics of the relationships between the male and female characters in the film, though the understanding of the relationships in both texts was generally less secure. Some answers would have benefitted from referring to the main events of the works and a discussion of how these are motivated by the nature of male/female relationships. How the main events subsequently affect the nature of the relationships of lovers and family members could also have been a subject for discussion. In particular, more could have been said about the portrayal of strong women in historical contexts where women were generally repressed.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 3

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** This question attracted a small number of answers ranging from satisfactory to excellent. While the better answers provided lots of specific detail about when and how characters are or are not idealised in the works, quite a few provided only sketchy detail. There was some confusion as to what is meant by Socialist Realism. Few candidates linked the idealisation of certain characters and their behaviour to the overall message of individual works.

Question 4

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 5

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B This was the most popular question and it produced a variety of levels of achievement in the answers. Many made for excellent reading with candidates producing a range of opinion about whether Bodrov and Kravchuk take an optimistic or pessimistic view of post-Soviet society in their films. Candidates discussed in detail the depiction of army service and conflict, conditions in orphanages, poverty, alcoholism, corruption, trust and mistrust, differences in value-systems and morality between generations and social groups, the importance of money in society to different types of people and its destructive effect on some individuals as well as the need for social cohesion. They then showed how individual characters respond to the challenging situations and problems they encounter. The prevailing view was that while the films show much that is negative about post-Soviet society in general, there is considerable goodness in individuals which transcends negativity and provides hope for the future.

Part II: Literary Texts

Question 6

- A This question attracted a fair number of answers. While most candidates set the passage in context, some only provided sketchy detail about the character of Akaky Akakievich and the main events of the plot to follow. Some attempted to discuss the *skaz* narrator, but were unable to identify many specific features of *skaz* style from the extract. The best answers linked the references to the central character to later events in the story and how the narrator describes them.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C This question was a popular choice. Most answers displayed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the story. Few candidates were able to link the effect of the unreliable *skaz* narrator and his manipulation of the reader to the degree the reader can sympathise with Akaky Akakievich, however. A good approach to this question would have been to follow the character's progress through the text, discussing whether or to what extent we can sympathise with him and why. The concept of the grotesque was rarely mentioned.

Question 7

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 8

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 9

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** Most of the answers to this question were detailed and showed impressive knowledge and understanding of the text as well as of the author's dramatic techniques. Less successful answers lacked detail, particularly about the main events of the drama and their portrayal.
- C** This was a popular choice of question. All candidates were able to find some relevance in the play for the modern audience, though few discussed whether they considered it still vibrant. The main aspects mentioned were the love interest, the love triangles, ecological issues and the conflict between rural and urban values. Some answers did not refer to the crucial main events, or spent too long discussing present-day issues rather than focussing on the play's content.

Question 10

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 11

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 12

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 13

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.