

SINHALA

Paper 3205/01
Composition

Key messages

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

- ensure that they answer one question from **Section A** and one question from **Section B**
- adhere to the word limits specified
- ensure that their work is legible, accurate and logically presented
- ensure that they present their response in the form stipulated in the question (e.g. letter, dialogue etc)
- plan their use of time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work.

General comments

In general, candidates performed well on this paper, and most seemed to have been well prepared for the examination. On the whole, this year's compositions were of a higher standard than last year's.

Some candidates did not seem familiar with the basic grammar rules of Sinhala, or with Sinhalese idiom, and would benefit from further practice in these areas. Some candidates wrote their essays in spoken idiom, which was not appropriate; candidates need to become more familiar with literary Sinhala traditions. Candidates should be encouraged to read more widely (e.g. books, newspapers) to help consolidate spelling and grammar.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report or Speech, Dialogue

Candidates were asked to write a response of approximately 120 words on one of the three given topics.

Question 1(a), which asked candidates to write a letter to the local authorities asking them to fix the road outside their school, was the most popular question in **Section A**. It was clear that many candidates had used their personal experiences when answering this question and the answers were often realistic and interesting. Some candidates produced very good responses and demonstrated that they were familiar with the rules of letter writing.

Question 1(b), which asked candidates to write a report on the main tourist attractions in their nearest town, was the least popular question in this section.

Question 1(c), which asked candidates to produce a dialogue between two people who meet at a school reunion after not seeing each other for many years, was also popular. Those who selected this topic often produced interesting dialogues based on observation of real-life situations. Many candidates were successful in imagining the kinds of memories that they would have after leaving school.

Section B – Essay

Candidates were asked to write one essay of approximately 200 words in Sinhala from a choice of four topics.

A number of candidates selected **Question 2(a)**, which asked them to describe a recent celebration that they had attended. Many wrote creatively here.

Only a few candidates chose **Question 2(b)**, which asked them to write an essay about their favourite author and why they liked his/her work.

Those who selected **Question 2(c)** (“Write about a recent school trip that you went on with your classmates”) generally produced interesting essays, although in terms of language there was a mixed response to this question: some essays were accurate but others demonstrated lack of control of the basic grammatical rules of Sinhala and of the norms of essay writing. Some essays contained many grammatical and spelling errors; candidates need to pay more attention to Sinhala orthography.

Answers to **Question 2(d)**, which asked candidates to write an essay based on the proverb “Make hay while the sun shines”, tended to be satisfactory.

SINHALA

Paper 3205/02

Translation and Reading Comprehension

Key messages

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

- ensure that they plan their time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work
- ensure that their work is legible and logically presented
- read the translation passages carefully before beginning to translate.

General comments

Overall, candidates' performance on this paper was of a high standard. This year, performance on **Question 1** was similar to performance on **Question 2**.

Candidates should be encouraged to read a variety of books and newspapers in Sinhala as this will increase exposure to a wide range of Sinhalese vocabulary, grammar and idiom, and will help candidates to improve their writing skills and reading comprehension skills. In some cases, candidates' grasp of grammar and/or spelling was so poor that it rendered the answers unintelligible.

In a few cases, handwriting was so poor as to render answers illegible. Candidates need to make sure that their work is tidy and legible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation

Question 1: Translation into English

On the whole, the translation into English was tackled very well. Many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the passage and provided accurate translations.

Question 2: Translation into Sinhala

Generally, candidates engaged with this translation well and most made a very good attempt at it. Some candidates struggled to provide an appropriate Sinhala translation of the word 'uneven'.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

On the whole, candidates made an excellent attempt at this section and most scored good marks here. Candidates generally demonstrated very good understanding of the reading passage and gave suitable answers to the questions.