

ARABIC

Paper 3180/01
Composition

General comments

This year, the overall performance of the candidates was good. Candidates would benefit from reading widely to help broaden their vocabulary and to consolidate some points of grammar: whilst a number of candidates showed good mastery of grammar points, other candidates had difficulty in using the correct forms of the present and past tenses. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of writing clearly and legibly and of using correct spelling, paragraphing and punctuation.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report, Dialogue or Speech

- (a) “You are discussing your plans for further education with your father. Write the dialogue which takes place.”

This question proved popular with candidates, who generally produced satisfactory responses. Some answers were written in a narrative style rather than in the format of a dialogue.

- (b) “You are studying abroad. Your name is Imran/Fatima and your address is Kashmir Road, Lahore, Pakistan. Write a letter to your brother asking him for money to buy books.”

This question was also popular and most responses to this question were good or very good. Some responses contained repetitive greetings; candidates should be encouraged to learn and use alternative expressions.

- (c) “Write a report about the visit of the Prime Minister to your school.”

There was a mixed response to this question. Some candidates did well, but others did not answer the question in the style required. Many candidates chose to write about the school’s activities and daily routine; others wrote about the Prime Minister and his impressions of the school.

Section B – Essay

- (a) “You and your friends have been to visit a classmate in hospital. Describe what you saw there.”

Some candidates had trouble recalling medical vocabulary such as ‘doctor’, ‘nurse’, ‘treatment’ and ‘ward’. On the whole the answers were clear, although some were too short and others too long. Candidates should be reminded to pay attention to the rubric concerning word limits.

- (b) “You were out for a walk with your family in the forest. Suddenly it started to rain heavily. Narrate what happened.”

The majority of candidates who attempted this question wrote good, clear, logical essays.

- (c) “Describe a ceremony you attended recently.”

There were some delightful responses to this question, with a large number of candidates opting to write about wedding customs in their country. They described the traditions regarding the ceremony, the giving of gifts and the exchanging of wedding vows.

(d) “Why do you like the place where you live?”

This question was also very popular. Some candidates interpreted the word ‘place’ as ‘abode’ and described their house or flat. Some, on the other hand, described the village, town or country in which they live and depicted their favourite locations and places of interest.

ARABIC

Paper 3180/02

Translation and Reading Comprehension

General comments

This year, the overall performance of the candidates was good. Candidates would benefit from reading widely to help broaden their vocabulary and to consolidate some points of grammar: whilst a number of candidates showed good mastery of grammar points, others had difficulty in using the correct forms of verb tenses. It would be beneficial for candidates to receive more practice in translating texts both into and from Arabic. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of writing clearly and legibly and of using correct paragraphing and punctuation.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation

Question 1: Translation into English

Most candidates tackled this question well and offered an acceptable translation. However, some candidates struggled to find a suitable translation for some vocabulary items. Some common errors included the translation of 'last night' as 'yesterday' or 'the previous night'; translation of 'fire' as 'heater', 'lamp' or 'light'; translation of 'novel' as 'history', 'verses', 'biography', 'magazine' or 'newspaper'; translation of 'son' as 'daughter'.

Question 2: Translation into Arabic

This question proved more challenging for many candidates, and again some struggled to find adequate translations of some vocabulary items. Common errors included the translation of 'mathematics' as 'arithmetic'; translation of 'subject' as 'art'; translation of 'interesting' as 'important'; translation of 'very good' as 'excellent' or 'clever'.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

Questions 3–10

Most candidates answered these questions quite successfully. Some candidates did not use their own words, simply lifting chunks of text from the passage for use as their answers, which were not always relevant or appropriate. In answering the questions in this section, candidates should be reminded to use their own words as far as possible.