

TAMIL AND TAMIL LANGUAGE

Paper 9689/02
Reading and Writing

Overall performance

Overall the performance of the candidates was good, however there were numerous spelling mistakes with poor grammar and weak sentence structure to be seen in most of the answer papers.

Very few candidates had sufficient vocabulary to write responses to the questions in their own words. Most responses contained much material that was copied straight from the text.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 and 2 are designed to test the candidates' understanding of the two passages. Those who found the passage difficult to read and understand were unable to answer the questions well and tended to copy out large chunks of the passages, not all of which was relevant. Very few candidates answered this part well with most repeating what was given in the text.

In the same way, **Questions 5a and 5b** test the candidates' ability to present appropriate detailed points from the two passages. Few candidates' could offer a relevant opinion which is asked for and for which marks are available. Again many candidates simply copied their answers directly from the question paper.

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Paper 9689/03

Essay

The overall performance of candidates was good, with only a small number of entrants at both extremes of the mark range. Weaker candidates' responses were characterised by a combination of misunderstanding of the question, especially **Questions 1, 2 and 3**, leading to a loss of marks for content, and poorer language skills such as spelling mistakes and poor construction of sentences. There were no particular issues around the use of time or misinterpretation of the rubric by candidates.

Question 1

In general this question was fairly popular and candidates achieved reasonable marks. There were a few excellent essays.

Question 2

A very wide range of marks was attained by candidates who chose this question, from very weak to excellent. The performance of the weaker candidates was characterized by poor spelling and lack of focussed content. Strong candidates' responses' were characterised by well structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 3

This was the most popular question and produced the widest range of marks. Spelling errors and poor focus of content as well as repetition were seen in weaker responses. Again strong candidates' responses were characterised by well structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 4

Only a few candidates chose this question and the responses were varied.

Question 5

The candidates who answered this question achieved a good range of marks. Strong candidates' responses were characterised by well structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors. Spelling errors and poor focus on content as well as repetition were seen in the weaker responses.

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Paper 9689/04

Texts

Overall performance

In general the performance of candidates this year has improved with some candidates performing extremely well. A wider variety of questions were answered this year compared with previous years showing that some candidates had read all the books in the syllabus giving them more choice in the examination. This is a very good development.

There are no marks given for language in this paper, all marks are given in relation to the assessment objectives outlined in the syllabus, which are to:

- acquire first-hand knowledge of the content of literary texts;
- understand the literal meanings of texts and the contexts of those meanings;
- understand literary texts beyond their literal meanings in terms of the issues and attitudes they raise;
- recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language to create their effects of narration, description, characterisation and literary structure;
- explain and discuss evaluations of the texts;
- communicate a sensitive and informed response to what is read.

Some candidates were unable to express their ideas and understanding clearly because of their weak language skills with some tending to copy words and phrases that appeared on the question paper rather than using their own words. Most candidates would benefit from practice in spelling and sentence construction.

TAMIL

Paper 9689/05

Prose

The overall performance was generally good. The marks ranged between 2 and 39. The majority of candidates gained more than half the marks available while the weaker candidates lost marks through spelling errors, incorrect meaning and sentence construction. There were no apparent problems for candidates in the use of time or interpretation of the rubric.

The sentences that caused particular problems for some candidates were: "A dream is the experience of images, sounds or other sensations as we sleep.", "It has been said that dreams help our minds make sense of all the various thoughts and ideas that come to us during the day." and "According to most scientists, this information then appears randomly in our dreams."

Whilst the weaker candidates made more errors in their translation than the stronger candidates, even some of the stronger candidates found parts of the translation challenging. For example, in the fourth sentence, some candidates broke the sentence into two separate ones and thereby produced a largely correct translation, but they seemed unable to manage to translate it as one whole sentence. Weaker candidates however failed to produce a correct translation here at all.