

TAMIL

Paper 9689/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

To perform well in this examination, candidates are advised to:

- Ensure they answer all questions in both **Section 1** and **Section 2**.
- Follow the specified word limits, particularly for **Question 5** in **Section 2**.
- Present their work clearly, accurately, and in a logical sequence.
- Demonstrate proper paragraph and sentence structure.
- Maintain good control over vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Use a diverse and appropriate range of vocabulary.
- Present facts, ideas, and opinions in a clear, logical order.
- Avoid repeating the same words unnecessarily.
- Format responses in the manner required by **Question 5(b)**.
- Manage their time effectively across questions, leaving enough time to review and refine their answers.

General comments

Spelling Accuracy

Candidates who showed fewer spelling mistakes generally performed better, highlighting the need for everyone to improve their spelling skills.

Many spelling errors are caused by incorrect letter formation. Candidates should review their alphabet and practice writing words to reduce these mistakes.

Specific Question Guidance

For **Questions 1** and **2**, straightforward, simple sentences are sufficient for full marks. However, the ability to craft more complex sentences can provide an advantage.

In **Question 5(a)**, the summary should be brief but comprehensive, distilling key points from both parts of the passage. A good summary should:

- Be written in the candidate's own words.
- Include about ten relevant points from both passages.
- Directly address the question's requirements.

Common Spelling Challenges

While no exhaustive list is provided, frequent difficulties include:

Homophones and words with similar sounds.

Words that differ by a single letter, for example:

- 1 'விடை' vs. 'வடை'
- 2 'புளி' vs. 'புலி'

Summary

Areas for Improvement: Greater attention is needed on spelling accuracy and constructing correct, clear sentences across all responses.

Sentence Structure: While simple sentences can secure full marks in some questions, employing complex sentences will help express ideas more fully and demonstrate greater language proficiency.

Summarisation Skills: Effective summaries should reflect a good understanding of the content while being concise. Candidates should aim to encapsulate main ideas in their own words.

Spelling Practice: Regular review and practice of common problematic words will help reduce errors. Focusing on understanding how words are formed and used will improve spelling accuracy.

Typical Spelling Errors: Frequent mistakes involve incorrect letter formation, especially with certain consonants and vowels. Attention to these details is recommended to enhance overall performance.

Common problematic spelling errors include:

ன – னை – நை

ல – ள – லை

ர – ற (examples: கருத்து – கர்க்து)

உ – ய (examples: கொண்டு – கொண்டு)

Differences between short and long forms, such as மூனை – முனை, பாடி – பாடி

Candidates are encouraged to focus on these specific areas to improve their overall examination results.

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Paper 9689/32
Essay

Key messages

This is an essay paper in which candidates are required to compose one essay from a choice of five topics. The essay is marked out of 40, with 16 marks available for Content and 24 marks available for Quality of Language.

General comments

Candidates answered the question clearly and most candidates demonstrated a commendable understanding of the subject matter and attempted the questions with clarity and structure. A number of candidates showcased a strong language proficiency, with well-organised answers. However, there were also several common mistakes and areas of concern. The most common spelling errors were:

1. வ - வு - வா
2. நு - னா - னோ
3. ர - ற
4. த் - த்

Most candidates often confused the letters 'ன', 'னா', and 'நு', which have distinct sounds but are frequently miswritten. Example, ஆன்டு = ஆண்டு.

Mixing Singular and Plural: Using the singular form when the plural is required. It can lead to grammatical errors. In Tamil, this often involves incorrectly applying the plural suffix '–கள்' (–kaL) or misunderstanding sandhi rules. One of the sandhi word: using 'ச டொல்' (sol – word) instead of 'ச டொற்கள்' (sorkal – words) when pluralizing 'ச டொல்' (sol – word).

Omitting the plural suffix '–கள்' (–kaL) where it is required for nouns.

ந்திப் பிழை (sandhip Pizhai).

Example of correct sandhi:

நல்ல (nalla) + மனிதர் (manidhar) → நல்ல மனிதர் (nalla manidhar) No changes needed here; correct form.

Example of misapplied sandhi:

- அவன் (avan) + ஊர் (oor) → அவனூர் (Wrong).

Correct: அவனுடைய ஊர் (avanudaiya oor) or அவன் இருக்கும் ஊர் (Directly joining 'avan + oor' without correct linking is a sandhi mistake.)

Using singular pronouns instead of the appropriate plural forms.

Confusing inherently plural nouns with singular forms.

The candidate must pay more attention on this. They can improve by doing more practice.

Next, is the 'குறில்' and 'சந்தில்' letters. It refers to short vowel and long vowel sound.

Example: திடைகள் (incorrect) – தீடைகள் (correct)

Some candidates tended to use colloquial language commonly found in daily conversation. Such informal expressions are not appropriate in a formal writing context and should be replaced with a more suitable academic or literary language.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Some candidates answered this question well. However, others misinterpreted it by writing only about what makes a relationship good or providing a general definition of 'healthy relationships' without addressing the challenges. The question specifically required discussion on problems or barriers (such as miscommunication, stress, and lack of time) that can negatively affect healthy relationships.

Question 2

Very few candidates attempted this question, likely due to its challenging nature. Many who did either fully agreed or disagreed with the statement without presenting a balanced discussion. The question requires candidates to explore both the positive and negative impacts of superstition before taking a stance. The examples used were often weak or irrelevant. Stronger responses should include relatable and impactful examples, such as people not walking under ladders or having bad luck for breaking a mirror. Weaker answers lacked depth and cohesion, with some merely listing effects without real analysis or explanation.

Question 3

This question was attempted by most candidates, and many gave strong responses. Candidates generally evaluated the points well, supported by appropriate examples and analysis. However, a common issue was overly lengthy introductions—some candidates wrote nearly half a page of introduction before addressing the main points. The core idea, that employees need adequate rest during the workday, was well-explained with relevant examples.

Question 4

This was the most popular question in the paper, with the majority of candidates attempting it. Most candidates argued that face-to-face classes are better than online classes. Some responses provided a comparison of both formats by discussing their advantages and disadvantages. However, a few responses lacked structural balance—spending significantly more time on one side than the other (e.g., three paragraphs on online classes and only one short paragraph on physical classes). For a fair comparison, both sides should be given equal attention.

Question 5

Fewer candidates attempted this question, but those who did generally performed well. The question asked why existing animals should be protected and how efforts by individuals, schools, governments, and society can contribute to their survival. Some candidates simply listed points—such as 'animals should be saved' or 'animals need their natural habitats'—without providing adequate explanation or elaboration.

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Paper 9689/42

Texts

Key messages

This is a literature paper in which candidates are required to write the response in an essay form covering three essays from a choice of six different form of work such as poetry – Sangam Literature, Thirukkural, drama, short stories, novel, etc.

The essay is marked out of 75 in total and 25 for each response checking on the content, word count and quality of language.

General comments

Paper 4 Texts is designed to assess the candidates' ability to understand and respond to a range of literary topics. It is structured into two main sections.

Candidates are required to answer specific questions while adhering strictly to the guidelines regarding the number of questions chosen from each section.

A few recurring issues were observed that should be addressed moving forward. Some candidates selected all their answers from the same section — for example, answering three questions from **Section A** or all from **Section B** — rather than distributing their choices as required (e.g., two from **Section A** and one from **Section B**, or vice versa). Or choosing both parts in the same question, which clearly stated that they should avoid. It is important to note that the system automatically disqualifies one of the three questions if all are taken from the same section, which can result in a significant reduction in the final mark. This highlights the need to better communicate the instructions and ensure candidates understand how their selections impact their scores.

The candidates must answer 3 questions, and must be as follows:

1. a question from **Section 1** (either a or b, not both)
2. a question from **Section 2** (either a or b, not both)
3. Third answer must be from either **Section 1 OR Section 2** (but not from the same question they chose before, e.g.: if they chose **1a**, they cannot choose **1b**, they need to choose from other questions in that section that they did not attempt before). The final mark will be awarded to two answers only.

Sample choice: **(1a, 2b, 5a)**, or **(3a, 4a, 5a)**, and so on.

Candidates are not penalised for their grammar and spelling mistakes unless obstructing the readability/understanding of the answer. Therefore, candidates should always be encouraged to use good grammatical readable sentences that make sense.

The overall performance on this paper was good despite there being a few infringements of the rubric. Weaker responses were characterised by a combination of not answering the question directly, leading to a loss of marks for content and some poor language skills. The most common spelling errors occurred in the use of the following letters, which were written in an incorrect form:

- வு - வூ - வா
- பு - பூ - பா
- டு - டூ - டா

- த் - ட்

Students would benefit from more practice in using these letters.

- Other major mistakes are the 'குறில்' and 'நெடில்' letters. It refers to short vowel and long vowel sound.
Example: நெர்மை (incorrect) – நேர்மை (correct)
- The use of the colloquial language or the spoken language which is used in normal conversation should be discouraged; some words which are in daily conversation are not suitable in formal writing.
Example: பட்டி should be written as பற்றி, பேந்து will be பிறகு, ஆக்கள் should be ஆட்கள், எங்கட எங்களுடைய and more like this.
- Candidates should not reproduce the Thirukkural in their responses. They are expected to explain and write the answer accordingly.
- In the case of answering **Question 4** from **Section 2**, some candidates only wrote about the biography of the author or the poet rather answering the question for the poetry or story, which is irrelevant.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Very few candidates attempted this question.

(b) This question was very often answered with an irrelevant introduction about the author and his life history. There were some unnecessary candidate opinions, such as "this is very common in India". Candidates should avoid putting comments such as this in their responses and instead focus on answering the question concisely.

In addition, many notable character names were mixed up. Candidates should be mindful that marks will be lost if the examiner struggles to read their response due to them writing the wrong names in their response.

Question 2

(a) (b) The responses for this question were mostly repetitive, containing an unnecessary and in-depth explanation about the author, his life history, etc. Out of the ten couplets, the candidates tended to explain just three or four which lost them marks.

Question 3

This question was mostly answered very well.

Question 4

This question was responded in the same way, explaining more about the author and his life history, rather answering the question directly.

Question 5

Very few candidates chose this question.

Question 6

This question was challenging for candidates and was rarely answered in a satisfactory manner. In addition, candidates did not cover the word limit and often wrote very short responses.

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Paper 9689/52

Prose

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper candidates should:

- use appropriate vocabulary and avoid English words
- practise their time management skills which are essential for this paper
- think carefully without missing the blocks of the passages along with the key words
- refer to each and every sentence and follow the same order of the sentences in the given passage
- remember that the passage is worth 40 marks. Each sentence is likely to be split into multiple marks with a very fixed scoring system
- be mindful of grammar and spelling. The students are expected to follow good grammar and spelling throughout the translation.

General comments

Performance on this paper was generally good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

More successful responses were characterised by answers which broke up longer sentences into two separate sentences. They produced largely correct and meaningful translations.

A few sentences were very complex and long. In a few cases at least eight or seven blocks were categorised to one sentence. Candidates are allowed to break up longer sentences into shorter ones as long as they convey the same meaning.

Answers from weaker candidates were often characterised by serious spelling errors, errors in sentence construction and incorrect translations of key vocabulary items.

The most common spelling errors occurred in the use of the following letters, which were written in an incorrect form:

- 1 வு – வு – வு
- 2 மு – மு – மு
- 3 டு – டு
- 4 து – து

Candidates would benefit from more practice in using these letters.

Another common mistake is the ‘குறில்’ and ‘நெடில்’ letters. It refers to short vowel and long vowel sound.