FIRST LANGUAGE MALAY

> **Paper 0696/01**
> **Reading and Directed Writing**

Key messages

Candidates should:

* look for explicit and implicit meanings and messages that the writer is trying to convey in Text A
* read the story more than once to understand the theme and the messages that the writer is trying to convey
* make targeted use of the information provided in Texts B and C for **Question 2**.

General comments

Many candidates answered well.

In **Section 1**, candidates must be able to read between the lines and understand the phrases and language used. The language of the story contains implicit meanings. Candidates must not just copy and paste chunks from the text for their answers. This is especially important in questions when candidates are asked to explain what the writer meant when using certain phrases.

In **Section 2**, candidates were asked to write a speech about online fraud and ways to combat this problem. Stronger candidates managed to avoid copying chunks from the texts and were able to express their ideas using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Many candidates could answer this question asking why Nora Farlina (NF) found it difficult to let go of her job as a graphic designer. Those who got the answer right gave either *'tempat kerja yang selesa dan aman'* or *'kerjaya itu sangat serasi dengan jiwanya'*. Those who did not answer correctly said that Nora Farlina was still at the old post in her career.

(b) This question required two answers; the reasons that NF's husband gave to her to stop working. Most answered this question correctly.

(c) This question asks for two <u>conflicting</u> feelings that NF felt when she heard her husband's words. Many identified appropriate feelings. Weaker candidates gave two answers that did not show conflicting feelings, such as *'NF rasa sebagai seorang wanita dia perlu pekerjaannya sendiri'*, *'NF berpendapat berhenti kerja bukan penyelesaiannya'*, *'NF tidak telan bulat-bulat kata-kata suaminya'*, *'NF rasa suaminya tempat penggantungan sementara'*.

(d) Most candidates answered this question correctly, identifying the main factor that made NF accept being a teacher as her new career.

It was not enough to answer *'Cuti yang banyak'* as that does not show what she wanted to do with lots of holidays. Her main consideration is always her children and family.

(e) This question was challenging for many candidates. It asked for the contrasting atmosphere between NF's old office and the school in which she is teaching.

Some candidates did not see that the question asks for the <u>atmosphere</u> and proceeded to say that working in a school means a teacher would have to mark papers at home whereas when working at an office, there *is* no more work after office hours.

(f) This question asks for Nora Farlina's <u>real</u> feelings when she faced the candidates of Form Five Lekir for the first time. Candidates who answered correctly simply answered: *'gugup'* or *'gementar'*. Incorrect answers were generally *'rasa senang hati'*. But this was the initial feeling when the candidates greeted her. Her <u>real</u> feeling was *'gugup'* as the students were much bigger and taller than her.

(g) Many candidates answered correctly, quoting the way the students spoke to the teacher.

(h) Stronger candidates were able to answer well, but weaker candidates simply copied part of the text, which did not demonstrate their understanding of the question.

(i) Candidates were asked to summarise how the incidents in Azhar's class helped to influence Nora Farlina to make her decision about her career.

Strong candidates answered with a combination of the candidates being rude, the apologies by Azhar and his friends, Nora Farlina speaking about her disappointment and later accepting their apologies, and her confidence in starting a new chapter in her life.

Weaker candidates only repeated the point about apologies and rudeness.

(j) These questions require candidates to explain the message the writer wanted to convey to the readers when using certain phrases. To answer these questions successfully, candidates should refer to the story and explain why the writer used the phrases in the context of the story. In this section candidates must read in between the lines, understand nuance and not take the words at face value.

    (i) *Meliatkan hatinya*
The key word here is *'liat'*; chewy, not easy to break. It describes Nora Farlina's heart when the condition in her office made it difficult for her to leave.

    (ii) *Angan-angan kosong*
Although this is a common metaphor, candidates found it hard to explain. Looking at the story about Nora Farlina's frustration, one can see that she was ambitious, but for a long time she had remained in the same post. Thus angan-angan kosong is an empty dream. *'Hajat yang tak tercapai'*.

    (iii) *Memancingkan minatnya*
Candidates needed to know what *'memancing'* (*pancing*) is to get the answer - to hook her interest. Answers accepted included: *'menarik perhatiannya'*, *'menarik minatnya'*.

    (iv) *Mahal dengan senyuman*
Many candidates answered correctly. If a smile is expensive, it would imply that that person rarely smiles. Going back to the story, one can guess the character of the principal who was stern and serious. Thus it was expensive to get his smile. *'Susah untuk senyum'*.

    (v) *Kerusi yang telah uzur itu*
Many candidates who knew the meaning of *'uzir'* got this question right. It is the condition of the chair. From the text we could see how Nora Farlina struggled with the chair, which she then compared to the chair in her old office. The writer wanted to convey the message that the chair in the school is old and likely to be damaged *'lama dan rosak'*. If the candidate gave the word 'rosak', this was not enough, as a new chair could be damaged as well. The answer had to have the element of age of the chair.

(vi) *Menghenyak fikirannya*
This implies a thought that intrudes. Only a small number of candidates got the answer correct, by saying *'mengganggu fikirannya'*.

(vii) *Hatinya tidak henti-henti berbicara*
Most candidates answered this correctly. The heart was continuously in conversation. It implies that the person is not at ease, something is troubling her, she is in doubt. The phrase alludes to the fact that Nora Farlina was beginning to doubt her choice of becoming a teacher.

(viii) *Tidak boleh curi tulang*
This is an old phrase that means one cannot cheat or cut corners when doing something. Those who answered correctly referred to the story, comparing Nora Farlina's old job and her current one, where she cannot work leisurely, cannot just take a break and have tea or coffee and must stand in for teachers who were absent.

(ix) *Air yang membanjirinya*
This is an obvious reference to the tears in Nora Farlina's eyes. The word *'membanjiri'* is the clue that shows the eyes were flooded with tears. She was going to cry, she was crying. Many answered this question correctly.

Section 2

In **Section 2**, candidates were required to read both texts on the issue of online fraud and write about the different types of online fraud and how they are carried out. Additionally, candidates were expected to discuss the steps that can be taken to overcome this problem.

Candidates were asked to structure their response as a speech. Some spent wasted time addressing those present as well as thanking the teachers who made it possible for them to deliver the speech. A lengthy introduction is not necessary. Most candidates remembered to begin with *'Penipuan dalam talian tidak kenal usia, kaum atau jantina…'*

Overall, most candidates handled this section better than **Section One**. Those who excelled went beyond merely repeating the information provided in the texts. They expanded on it and offered more detailed responses.

Weaker candidates copied out large portions of text without attempting to paraphrase or use their own words. While this approach demonstrates the ability to locate relevant points, it does not demonstrate understanding of the material and so cannot be rewarded highly. Candidates should paraphrase and use synonyms, rewriting the points in their own words to show comprehension.

Occasionally, candidates over-relied on similes. In some cases, there were three similes within a single paragraph, which detracted from the overall clarity and coherence of the writing. Judicious use of an appropriate number of similes is encouraged, but only when they add something useful to the writing.

Strong candidates effectively connected their paragraphs and ensured the text flowed smoothly by using appropriate linking words. Phrases such as *'Pertama sekali'* (firstly), *'seterusnya'* (next), *'akhir sekali'* (finally), and *'sebagai kesimpulan'* (in conclusion) are essential for creating a cohesive response and to help the reader to follow the candidate's argument. However, when used indiscriminately and without proper context, these phrases lose their effectiveness.

This year, there were fewer errors in the use of prefixes, suffixes, and spelling. Additionally, there was a noticeable reduction in the use of English words within the writing. However, candidates still need to pay attention to punctuation and the use of capital letters. Improper punctuation can alter the meaning of a sentence, and incorrect capitalization disrupts the flow of the text.

FIRST LANGUAGE MALAY

Paper 0696/02 **Composition**

Key messages

Candidates should:

- read all the questions before selecting which to answer
- study the syllabus and mark scheme before the examination to ensure that they understand the requirements of the tasks
- keep in mind to write between 300 and 400 words
- be aware of the target audience of each task and ensure the use of appropriate register and tone throughout
- respond well to the question asked, demonstrating fluency, well-developed ideas and adequate control of grammar, idiom, vocabulary, spelling, discourse marker (*penanda wacana*) and sentence completion.

General comments

In *Section 1*, the most popular question among the candidates was **Question 1(c)**. The question was to write on the subject, *'For young people, friends are more important than family. Do you agree?'*. Most responses demonstrated good understanding, sound knowledge and clarity. The least popular choice among the candidates was **Question 1(d)**. The question read *'A university degree is no longer important in today's times. Do you agree?'* Among the small number of candidates who opted to answer this question, some were able to write well, using clear expression with a good amount of detail and understanding.

Strong candidates were able to demonstrate their understanding of the language well, using carefully defined, logical and well-constructed sentences. They clearly expressed their view towards the given statement with convincing explanations including facts, opinions, and some complex ideas. The writing demonstrated persuasive techniques, such as emotive language and information, successfully. However, a number of candidates did not understand the word *pembalakan* in **Question 1(a)** *'Anda menonton berita tentang pembalakan haram di televisyen. Anda ingin berkongsi pendapat tentang isu itu dalam ruangan pendapat sebuah surat khabar.'* They wrote about general activities that they considered to be *haram* instead of focussing on *pembalakan*.

If candidates choose to write a discursive essay, they should present a balanced discussion of the issue by treating both sides with equally relevant explanations and examples and making sure there is a cohesive progression of each point by using transitional wording.

In the argumentative essays, strong candidates were able to write persuasively, providing evidence and support for their view. Some included statistics and personal anecdotes to support their arguments. Weaker candidates were inconsistent, presenting scattered ideas from both side of the argument. Some had lost their way by the end of their response, as they had begun by agreeing with the topic and ended their response by disagreeing.

In *Section 2*, candidates who achieved very good or good marks for content wrote essays featuring an outstanding description or narration which engaged the reader throughout. They used complex vocabulary and sophisticated linguistic devices such as metaphors, personification and similes.

In descriptive writing, candidates should focus on portraying a situation by describing the atmosphere and emotions experienced, using appropriate sensory details. They should address the scene in vivid detail and avoid any storytelling in their writing. In addition, for the description to be effective, candidates must remember to write in a style which means that the reader can also see in their mind the scenario being

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described. When describing something that appeals to our five senses, candidates can use imagery such as similes or metaphors.

In narrative writing, candidates need to demonstrate their ability to use literary devices to make their stories appealing. They should explore the characters' background and build tension into their story to make it more interesting. Most candidates were capable of narrating events with ease. Some weaker candidates wrote their story with a simple narrative, but they did not explore the characters or setting or include any element of tension. Others were able to create a story that incorporated elements of tension and a reasonable climax. Some candidates made effective use of direct speech/dialogue. Other candidates focussed solely on the plot and forgot to include elements that enhance a story, such as background and atmosphere.

Regarding quality of language, the best responses combined high levels of accuracy, fluency and complexity. Most responses were characterised by a fair level of accuracy, despite some clumsiness and occasional lapses in clarity. Weaker essays tended to be simple and laboured. These included mistakes such as:

- difficulty in differentiating between the words, *'kami'* and *'kita'*. For example: if a candidate is enjoying the meal with his/her family and/or friends, they should write *'Kita memerlukan keluarga …'*, instead of *'Kami memerlukan keluarga…'*
- errors in applying affixes. Many candidates attached an incorrect affix to a base word like: *'Aku menjalan ke kawasan air terjuni'*. *'Setelah beberapa minit aku tertiba di pantai'*. *'Ibu bapa akan bermarah'*, *'Zaman sekarang, ijazah universiti tidak mementing'*
- awareness of the correct use of *'di'* as a preposition or as an affix; *'di mana'* is correct whereas *'dimana'* is not. Moreover, candidates should be aware of the correct use of *'ke'* as a preposition or as an affix; *'ke sana'* is correct whereas *'kesana'* is not
- spelling mistakes such as: *'berasah'* (should be *'berasa'*), *'mudah'* (should be *'muda'*), *'tibah'* (*'tiba'*), *'penggallaman'* (*'pengalaman'*)
- mistakes in words derived from another language such as *'edukasi'* (should be *'pendidikan'*), *'subject'* (should be *'subjek'*), *'tradition'* (should be *'tradisi'*). Candidates should know the Malay words used in Malaysia instead of relying on direct translation from English, such as *'atas talian'* for online and *'media sosial'* for *'social media'*
- use of spoken slang language that is not appropriate when writing, for example: *'dikit'* (should be *'sedikit'*), *'takdan'* (should be *'tidak sempat'*)
- writing plural sentences incorrectly such as *'ramai kawan-kawan … '* and *'para remaja-remaja...'*
- writing long sentences without commas, and a lack of full stops. There were some instances where questions were without question marks and quotations without quotation marks. There were also errors in not using capital letters for proper nouns and conjunctions either missing or wrongly used.

Section 1

Question 1

(a) Candidates should consider how to appropriately express their opinions on the causes and impacts of illegal logging, along with providing constructive suggestions to control this activity. Strong candidates articulated their thoughts well, offering realistic information about the issue of illegal logging and its impact on the environment and living organisms. Some candidates were able to provide creative suggestions on how to address this issue. However, a number of candidates misunderstood the prompt and wrote about social behaviour, gadget misuse and teenagers' lifestyles because they were unfamiliar with the term *'pembalakan'* but were familiar with *'haram.'*

(b) Successful candidates presented a range of interesting points to convince the reader about the advantages and disadvantages of this topic and how to promote healthy competition. They used appropriate points and presented their ideas in the format of a blog, not merely a list of points, bullet points or numbers. Weaker candidates tended to repeat the main ideas and not present both sides with equally relevant explanations and examples. Some candidates neglected to address the competitive culture among teenagers and instead wrote about various cultures and the importance of treating all cultures equally.

(c) This was a popular question and there were many excellent essays. Many candidates were persuasive in presenting their point of view. They provided convincing explanations and evidence to support their opinions. The arguments were well-developed and linked logically. Some weaker

students simply mentioned the importance of friends or family without providing evidence or drawing relevant conclusions related to the given topic.

(d)   This was the least popular question. Sufficient and convincing rationale and examples were given to justify ideas. This question was chosen mainly by strong candidates who had a good understanding of the topic and high language proficiency.

Section 2

Question 2

(a) and **(b)**

Strong candidates were able to give well-developed and well-sequenced descriptions including a variety of interesting details and images. The reader was able to feel the atmosphere because of the use of appropriate and well-chosen vocabulary. The structure of the response was clear and consistent. Appropriate use of literary devices helped to create a clear image and maintain the reader's attention.

(c) and **(d)**

Strong candidates devised an interesting plot and maintained the reader's engagement by using a build-up of tension and a well-managed climax. Some essays made effective use of a 'twist' ending. Character development was reasonable and believable. Many candidates were able to write fluently with only some minor errors which were considered negligible because the flow of the story was not interrupted.