CHINESE

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| **Paper 9715/21** |
| **Reading and Writing** |
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Key messages

● **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning to those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

● **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases without changing the meaning.

● **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions, requiring straightforward and specific answers. Candidates need to read the passages carefully and should answer using their own words based on the information given in the passages. No credit can be given for responses if candidates have lifted an entire unit of language unchanged from the original texts, or if they are based on candidates' general knowledge, or personal experience.

● **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year were concerned with approaches in term of parenting and children respecting their parents. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience and opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5(b)** should be personal and not a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. The whole response for **Question 5** is to be kept to no more than 200 character limit.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked. Some managed to respond to the questions fully, using clear expressions and giving focused answers with very good vocabulary.

In most cases, all questions were attempted by the candidates. Furthermore, most candidates used their own words to answer the questions rather than 'lifting' the original words from the texts.

Many good and clearly expressed responses to **Question 3** and **Question 4** were seen this year. Many candidates demonstrated their ability to rephrase information through using appropriate connectives, using synonyms, rearranging the word order and skimming out the key information. It is important that candidates cover all the points required by the questions, and give full answers to gain all available marks. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation; if a question has 3 marks, 3 distinct pieces of information will be needed. In some cases candidates had clearly understood the questions, but did not provide full enough answers to be credited with the full mark available.

It should be noted that marks are also available in **Question 3** and **Question 4** for Quality of Language. Whilst many candidates provided well-written responses, others gave answers in note-form or bullet points, which were fully credited for content, but may not have provided sufficient language to be placed in the higher bands in the Quality of Language category.

The majority of answers for **Question 5** kept within the word limit this year. This is an important point, as material written beyond the upper character limit will not be marked by examiners.
In general, it is noticeable that **Question 5(a)** is still less well-answered compared to other questions. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise with clear but informative sentences. In some cases valuable character-space was taken up on items that were not relevant to the question.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

The overall response was very good and the vast majority of candidates were able to find the right synonyms from the passage and write them accurately. Most candidates secured the marks for all the questions and **(a)** was the best answered overall. Questions **(b)** and **(e)** were sometimes answered incorrectly with '难忘' for **(b)** and '永远' for **(e)** being the most common errors. Candidates must remember that the aim of this question is to find the word/phrase that has the closest meaning to the word/phrase given in the question.

Question 2

A strong performance was seen on this question, with many candidates achieving full marks. Candidates showed that they are able to manipulate connective words competently. **Question 2(b)** proved a little challenging to some less able candidates, as it required candidates to re-order the sentence. Furthermore, there were a small number of candidates who missed out 会 in their answers, resulting in a slight change in the meaning, which could not be credited. For **Question 2(c)** candidates needed to remember to remove 即使 from their answer in order to demonstrate the correct use of 连……都……

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. Some interesting language was used in the answers provided including a good selection of linking words. This contributed to some good scores for Quality of Language in this question, provided the content was accurate.

A high percentage of candidates were able to use the information from the passage to answer questions. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. As mentioned in the general comments above, it is essential that candidates take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

The opening **Question 3(a)** was well answered. Only a small number of candidates provided incorrect answers such as, 存在代沟；孩子与父母之间有误解. Those answers were not rooted in the text and no marks can be awarded for general knowledge, as the skill being tested is reading comprehension. In 3**(b)** candidates needed to include the answer 小传统可以给孩子创造难忘的回忆 to score full marks. In order to improve, candidates should make sure they read the whole paragraph where the answers are located and to check the mark allocation to ensure they have provided enough separate points. For 3**(c)** it was good to see a variety of good answers, 可以让孩子了解大自然； 能学会更好的与人相处从而锻炼人际交往能力； 可以从而激发想象力. All those answers demonstrated skills in writing Chinese, which contributed towards the Quality of Language mark. Similarly, for 3**(d)**, some able candidates used a wide range of linking words when answering the question, i.e. 首先； 不仅……而且……； 最后/此外. Excellent key points were made, like, 要以身作则； 要了解孩子们的想法； 批评孩子时 不要翻旧帐； 人无完人、金无足赤， 不要要求孩子完美. Most candidates answered 3**(e)** well. However, a few candidates gave answers like 给孩子一些信心, which was not sufficient to warrant a mark because the key verb 培养 was missing.

Question 4

Candidates scored very well in this question. The overall performance for this question was slightly better than for **Question 3**. Most candidates were able to show they had understood the information provided, some by selecting the correct parts from the text. More able candidates were able to show that they had understood the messages given in the passage and could then digest the information to produce answers using their own words.

Candidates performed very well in 4**(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)**. Candidates secured marks by giving all the details required. For instance, 每个星期 for 4**(b)**. Furthermore, a variety of expressions was used in 4**(c)**, e.g. 多花时间陪伴父母； 增加孙辈和祖父母相处的时间；要关注父母的身体健康，生病时及时探访父母. Answers for 4**(d)** were mixed. The question explicitly asked candidates to use their own word to 概括 the key concept.

However, most candidates ended up giving answers like 父母为子女读书花费了很多钱, which is not mentioned in the text. The text is focused on the effort/care parents put in for their children's education rather than the financial side; furthermore, 帮助子女买房 is not adequate to warrant a mark as financial support must be included. Again, not all candidates remembered to look for 4 different points for the 4 mark question, as a result, 4**(d)** was the least well answered compared to other parts of the question. For 4**(e)**, the vast majority of candidates managed to secure full marks.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary, but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions. Although the mark scheme is presented in bullet point format, this is to show the key concepts required for each mark-bearing content point only. It is expected that candidates try to use full sentences when answering questions, as they need to show they can use more complex structures accurately to reach the highest marking band for Quality of Language.

Question 5

Over half of the candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise many relevant points from both passages. Almost all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. Candidates who paid careful attention to the question which had been asked, and focused their attention on specific details of how parents and children feel the love of their family had little difficulty in scoring good marks. Furthermore, they managed to illustrate their own ideas in between the summary task, which was excellent to see and this resulted in high marks for 5**(b)**.

Only a few candidates secured full marks for **Question 5(a)**. Quite a large number of candidates did not seem to have fully understood the question, as they tended to drift off topic or talk about their personal experience without making any reference to the texts. In some cases candidates picked parts of the texts which were irreverent to the question asked. In order to achieve high marks for **Question 5(a)**, candidates needed to discuss the details given in passage 1, such as spending time with their children; not putting too much pressure on their child; to listen to their child etc. Weaker responses tended to be unbalanced, sometimes drawing all points from Passage 1 and not including information from Passage 2 at all. In some cases, candidates concentrated on the idea of how children feel rather than how the parents feel. In order to write within the specified character limit, candidates should refer closely to the two passages, using concise language to cover the key points coherently, rather than using longer sentences to illustrate those points.

For 5**(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

Candidates are reminded not to copy entire sentences from the texts to answer this question, as this does not show their ability to write in Chinese. In order to score highly for Language, candidates need to demonstrate more complex sentence structures and a good range of vocabulary. Some excellent examples from this years' marking: 百善孝为先；养儿方知父母恩；慈母手中线，游子身上衣；父母恩重如山。 These are all evidence showing good language used.

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware of the need to keep to the limit of 200 characters for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of 200 characters is disregarded by Examiners, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for part **(b)**.

Where candidates did not do as well, it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- Not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- giving a response to **(a)** that was too detailed, not leaving enough space to express personal views or experiences in the answer to **(b)**
- not giving any key points relating to **Question 5(a)**, but writing the entire piece as a personal response, as expected in **Question 5(b)**.

CHINESE

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Paper 9715/22
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- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year were concerned with the benefits and enjoyment of reading and world book day. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience and opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5(b)** should be personal and not a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. The whole response for **Question 5** is to be kept to no more than 200 character limit.

General comments

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The majority of answers for **Question 5** kept within the word limit this year. This is an important point, as material written beyond the upper character limit will not be marked by examiners.
In general, it is noticeable that **Question 5(a)** is still less well-answered compared to other questions. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise with clear but informative sentences. In some cases valuable character-space was taken up on items that were not relevant to the question.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The majority of candidates performed very well in this section, showing they have a good vocabulary and understanding of synonyms. Candidates need to remember that they must locate an appropriate synonym from the text, rather than trying to generate a word themselves. Most incorrect answers resulted from this, with the most common given as for 扶持 1**(a)**, 汇聚 for 1**(b)** and 激励 for 1**(e)**, which are not in the passage. In addition to this, some less able candidates gave answers to 1**(c)** like 体会、塑造、有如; and for 1**(d)** 嘈音、孤寂、灵魂. Each word in **Question 1** also gives the paragraph in which the synonym can be found. It is important that candidates take note of this and read the assigned paragraph for each question in order to work out which word has the closest meaning.

Question 2

In general, candidates did well in this question. The vast majority of candidates re-wrote the sentences correctly using the structures given. **Question 2(b)** was the least well-answered. The conjunctions tested in 2**(a)** are very commonly used, however, a few candidates included 甚至 which caused an error; some candidates omitted 人生 or 之一 from their answers, which changed the meaning of the original sentence, thus, no marks could be credited. Furthermore, a small proportion of candidates showed interference from English, giving answers like, "不仅阅读是人生最舒心，而且是最幸福的 行为之一". For 2**(b)**, some candidates did not seem to be aware that they should not include 有如 in their answers together with 像. A few candidates left out the character 细 from their answers, and even though they managed to use the structure "像……. 一样" correctly, this changed meaning of the original sentence. 2**(c)** was the best answered question, and most candidates scored marks. Only a handful of candidates did not score, by either using the structure incorrectly or missing out 我 or 觉得, which changed the meaning. For this question, candidates must bear in mind that they need to use the structures given in the questions to re-write the sentence and to maintain the same meaning.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in the **Question 3** and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. In addition to the correct content, it was good to see a variety of vocabulary used in answers, and a good range of linking words. Answers were linked together using cohesive devices such as 不仅……而且……; 第一，第二……; 除了…… 还…. All of this contributed to some high scores for Quality of Language as well as Content.

Overall, a high percentage of candidates were able to use the information from the texts to answer questions. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. It is essential that candidates take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

In 3**(a)**, some candidates struggled to give two different answers to gain full marks. For this question, candidates needed to give two different points, and answers like 书本是良师也是益友 could only be credited with one mark; similarly, 书本一辈子对你不离不弃， 扶助你走完人生之旅 would gain only one mark. Other common wrong answers were 读书是一件幸福的事； 书本帮助你在人生路上更顺利.
3**(b)** was very well answered; most candidates gave straightforward answers selecting appropriate wording from the text. Some candidates managed to use their own language even for short answers like this, and more able candidates wrote "传递信息， 抒发感情".
A mixed performance was seen in response to 3**(c)**, with a number of candidates giving incomplete answers such as, 积极向上 or 体会心情. It is essential that candidates include the verb meaning that the poems "enable" people to 积极向上, and to 体会 the poet's or the author's 心情. Candidates must be reminded that they need to provide full answers rather than a general gist.
In 3**(d)**, candidates needed to pay close attention to the question, which asked for 什么书籍 not 哪本书. Candidates needed, therefore, to give the *types* of book rather than the names of the books listed in the text, e.g. 童话(故事). Those candidates who did not manage to secure the marks frequently gave answers such as, 白雪公主， 美人鱼，红楼梦.
3**(e)** and 3**(f)** were the best answered overall and a good range of vocabulary and structures were used. Good examples of responses given to 3**(e)** were 让人不再感到孤独， 让压力烟消云散， 可以释放压力.

For 3**(f)**, those candidates who did not gain full marks could have done so by giving the four clear points required, or by including the key verbs in their answers. Answers in the form of 完整的故事 or 记忆力 could not be credited marks. A few weaker candidates needed to better understand the difference between 提高记忆力 and 提高注意力. Those who thought they were the same thing and only wrote one of them did not score full marks.

Question 4

The overall performance for this question was slightly better than for **Question 3**. Most candidates were able to comprehend the information provided, as they demonstrated that they were able to locate the paragraph/section in the text where the answers were found. Some candidates carefully selected the correct parts from the text to show their understanding of the questions, whilst more able candidates could show that they had fully understood larger units of meaning by producing answers using their own words;.

For 4**(a)**, a high percentage of candidates scored 2 out of 3 marks. In order to get full marks candidates needed to include 感谢文学大师 as part of their answer. Candidates must read the whole section carefully and understand everything in the sentence in order to score full marks.
Performance for 4**(b)** was mixed. Some very able candidates demonstrated excellent comprehension skills by giving answers like 读书没有国籍之分，没有年龄差异，不分贫富. Others managed to identify where the information could be found in the text and showed their understanding by giving answers like, 全球近100多个国家的人，不管年龄或贫富， 都参与到这项活动中, which were perfectly acceptable. Quite a few candidates identified the information in the text, but were not credited marks as they presented a list of bullet points or note-form answers like, 1. 全球近100多个国家的人; 2. 不管年龄; 3. 不管贫富 without including the key information, 都参与到这项活动中, thus, the meaning was not clear. It is important that candidates write in continuous prose, rather than lists, particularly as marks are awarded for Quality of Language in this section.
Most candidates provided good answers for 4**(c)**. In a few cases, candidates included an incorrect answer 做模型, which invalidated the correct answer 和作家见面. Candidates must be careful to read the question carefully and to only write the correct answers to the question. In some cases, part of what is being assessed is that candidates can select and sort through information in order to identify what is relevant and answers the question asked. If candidates copy larger chunks of language from the passage, they risk including incorrect information which may result in lost marks.
Almost every candidate managed to score marks for 4**(d)**, giving detailed answers indicting David's feelings before the event and the changes of his mind.
The vast majority of candidates performed well on **Question 4(e)**. A few candidates needed to include the key words 贫穷地区 or 图书馆 in their answer to gain full marks, as they were the key points of information for the question.
Performance on 4**(f)** was more varied. More able candidates found the question straightforward and scored full marks. However, some candidates found it challenging to differentiate between the key words（开展的）活动 and 目的, and therefore, gave answers like 举办诗歌朗诵比赛， 设立流动报刊亭， 举办亲子阅读活动, which is the list of the activities that took place rather than the purpose of those activities, which was required for this question.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary, but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions. Although the mark scheme is presented in bullet point format, this is to show the key concepts required for each mark-bearing content point only. It is expected that candidates try to use full sentences when answering questions, as they need to show they can use more complex structures accurately to reach the highest marking band for Quality of Language.

Question 5

Many candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise the relevant points from both passages. Almost all candidates managed to keep their answers within the required character limit. Those candidates who scored high marks for 5**(a)** demonstrated their ability in understanding the question and the texts as they were able to simplify the texts and combine them, using their own words to score marks. Furthermore, they managed to illustrate their own ideas in between the summary task, which was excellent to see and this resulted in high marks for 5**(b)**.

Only few candidates secured the full mark for **Question 5(a)**. Quite a large number of candidates did not seem to have fully understood the question, as they tended to drift off topic or talk about their personal experience without making any reference to the texts. In some cases candidates picked parts of the texts which were irreverent to the question asked. For 5**(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

Candidates are reminded not to copy entire sentences from the texts to answer this question, as this does not show their ability to write in Chinese. In order to score highly for Language, candidates need to demonstrate more complex sentence structures and a good range of vocabulary. Some excellent examples from this years' marking include: 秀才不出门，能知天下事；高尔基说过，书籍是人类进步的阶梯；读书可以陶冶情操，使人的学识更渊博；读书让大家受益匪浅。 These are all show examples of good language use.

To score high marks for **Question 5**, candidates must read the question carefully, identify and select the key information from the texts rather than producing a piece of totally free style creative writing. It is important to keep a good balance between the texts as the key points are mostly evenly distributed. Furthermore, there is no need to repeat similar points covered in 5**(a)** when handing 5**(b)**.

CHINESE

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- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year were concerned with public square dancing and silent disco in China. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience and opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5(b)** should be personal and not a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. The whole response for **Question 5** is to be kept to no more than 200 character limit.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked. Some managed to respond to the questions fully, using clear expressions and giving focused answers with very good vocabulary.

In most cases, all questions were attempted by the candidates. Furthermore, most candidates used their own words to answer the questions rather than 'lifting' the original words from the texts.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The overall response was very good and the vast majority of candidates were able to find the right synonyms from the passage and write them accurately. A large number of candidates secured the marks for all the questions. **Question 1(a)** was the least answered; it seems that quite a few candidates were not familiar with the vocabulary item, which resulted in a variety of wrong answers, including 大多是；多是； 更有； 却因此.

Question 2

Some candidates found this question challenging. Candidates in general were better at handling 把 structure and connective like 连……也…… as 2(b) and 2(c) were better answered than 2(a). For 2(a), although a very common conjunction is tested, quite a few candidates did not remember to include 却因此 in the answer, which resulted in a change of meaning, and therefore could not be credited.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. A variety of language was used and answers were linked together using a range of cohesive devices. All of this contributed to some high scores for Quality of Language, provided the content was accurate.

A good number of candidates were able to use the information from the reading passage to answer questions. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. It is essential that candidates take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

The majority of candidates scored full marks for 3(a). A few candidates missed one mark by giving answers like 十分热情, which is the key concept needed to specify the comparison 热情比年轻人还高.
For 3(b), more able candidates secured full marks with good answers like, 享受跳舞的乐趣；
觉得和大家一起跳舞让生活更有意思 and 结交了许多新朋友； 有机会结识更多朋友. A common wrong answer given was 坚持锻炼.
Most candidates managed to secure two or three marks for 3(c) as not everyone was able to provide all four points required. Some candidates understood 感到年轻了很多 and 觉得生活有了新开始 to be the same things, thus, only wrote one point when both were needed. The last point relating to granny Zhang was 张奶奶的子女为此感到安心 because "their mum is more relaxed after having picked up this new hobby", however, quite a few candidates made the mistake in thinking "张奶奶的子女更放松了". It is worth noting that a very small number of candidates seem to have been confused between "granny Li" in 3(b) and "granny Zhang" in 3(c), as answers for those two questions were sometimes mixed up. It is important that candidates read the questions carefully.
A high percentage of candidates managed to secure full marks for 3(d), and realised that both 居民被吵醒了 and 使得居民无法入睡 were needed.
For 3(e), most candidates score two marks out of three. In order to get all three marks they needed to fully understand the information in the text. In the text it says that "随着中国人口的老年化，
跳广场舞的大军在有增无减", which indicates that aging is one of the issues.

Question 4

Candidates scored well in the question, but the overall performance for **Question 4** was slightly lower when compared to **Question 3**.

A number of good answers were given to 4(a), although a small number of candidates needed to include 不同的人跳着不同的舞 to be awarded all available marks. It is essential that candidates are reminded to look at the allocation of the marks for each question to ensure they give a full response.
Though 4(b) required quite straightforward answers, not everyone managed to secure the full marks. A few candidates included wrong answers, like 舞场；俱乐部； 酒吧. Others simply listed all the places mentioned in the paragraph, resulting in the inclusion of incorrect answers which invalidate the correct answers. Candidates must be careful to read the question carefully and to only write the correct answers to the question. In some cases, part of what is being assessed is that candidates can select and sort through information in order to identify what is relevant and answers the question asked. If candidates copy larger

chunks of language from the passage, they risk including incorrect information which may result in lost marks.

4(c) was very well answered.

The majority of candidates scored three out of four marks in 4(d). One of the key points could be found at the start of the sentence in the text. The point 给广场舞大妈们上了一堂环境意识课 was sometimes omitted as it required candidates to understand the whole paragraph, and was therefore identified by only the stronger candidates.

Question 4(e) required candidates to manipulate the text to transform the negative facts stated in the text into positives, such as 为对付大妈们而叫警察的现象 etc. A number of able candidates delivered this successfully. Quite a few candidates formulated their answer using similar language to the text, but included a clear explanation that those phenomena had disappeared; therefore, the marks were awarded.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary, but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions. Although the mark scheme is presented in bullet point format, this is to show the key concepts required for each mark-bearing content point only. It is expected that candidates try to use full sentences when answering questions, as they need to show they can use more complex structures accurately to reach the highest marking band for Quality of Language.

Question 5

Candidates continue to find this part of the paper challenging, and it the area where there is most room for improvement. Those candidates who scored high marks were able to successfully and skilfully summarise many relevant points from both passages.

The majority of candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. Candidates who paid careful attention to the question which had been asked, and focused their attention on specific details of the impact that square dancing and silent disco has on people's lives, had little difficulty in scoring good marks. Furthermore, they managed to illustrate their own ideas in between the summary task, which was excellent to see and this resulted in high marks for 5(b).

In **Question 5(a)**, quite a large number of candidates did not seem to have fully understood the question, as they tended to drift off topic or talk about their personal experience without making any reference to the texts. In some cases candidates picked parts of the texts which were irreverent to the question asked. In order to achieve high marks for **Question 5(a)**, candidates needed to discuss the details given in passage 1, such as the positive and negative impacts that square dancing has had. Weaker responses tended to include quite a lot of irrelevant, copied information from both texts. In order to write within the specified character limit, candidates should refer closely to the two passages, using concise language to cover the key points coherently, rather than using longer sentences to illustrate those points.

For 5(b), candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions in a concise style in order to allow them to express different views and aspects relating to the valid points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that candidates demonstrate their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts and give relevant responses to the question.

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware of the need to keep to the limit of 200 characters for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of 200 characters is disregarded by Examiners, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for part **(b)**.

Where candidates did not do as well, it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- Not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- giving a response to **(a)** that was too detailed, not leaving enough space to express personal views or experiences in the answer to **(b)**
- not giving any key points relating to **Question 5(a)**, but writing the entire piece as a personal response, as expected in **Question 5(b)**.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/31 |
| Essay |

Key messages

The students who achieve the highest available marks consistently demonstrate maturity in approach by:

- adhering to a logical format when setting out their arguments
- providing specific answers to specific questions
- avoiding basic grammatical errors, and
- displaying a healthy degree of technical competence when dealing with the written language.

General comments

Candidates generally responded well to this paper. Most showed their ability to understand the questions and to use complex sentence patterns and a good range of vocabulary to develop arguments and draw conclusions. Strong candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the question and knowledge of the topic and great skill in providing detailed explanation of argument and clearly relevant examples as well as in applying language with great confidence.

Despite this strong performance, examiners did note an apparent increase in the volume of blank scripts. These tend to suggest some candidates did not feel adequately prepared enough to attempt even a partial answer. Weaker responses were characterised by the use of colloquial language, as well as combining Chinese and pinyin. However, such instances appeared more isolated than previous years. Finally, a rare trend noted this year included instances where candidates appeared to neglect using punctuation, or used the wrong type.

It is crucial that candidates are reminded of the need to read questions with great care and fully analyse what is being asked of them. Candidates must also be encouraged to construct their answers on the specific question rather than default into a general topic area.

The best essays were well-structured, involving an introduction, main body and conclusion. Stronger answers displayed candidate's own views on the question they had selected, rather than writing what they thought may be an acceptable opinion. Successful essays also used logical structures to link the points in a valid argument using relevant examples.

For the language component, students need to be confident in the use of a wide range of vocabulary and be able to write complex sentences. In some cases, candidates needed greater confidence in using basic grammar like 的 地 得, or they mixed two sentences together without checking the grammar.

Improvements could be made by noting the below points:

- read the questions with great care to ensure a full understanding of the question
- clearly indicate their point of view with a detailed explanation
- provide relevant examples to support the point
- organise the essay with a clearer structure (introduction, main body and conclusion)
- make sure there is a logical linkage between the points of argument and sentences
- be aware that personal experience used in the argument may not be a good strategy to explain an idea or form a convincing argument
- use more extensive vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 家庭

你怎样理解 "家和万事兴"？

A large number of candidates opted for this question. Most of them convincingly argued the importance of family as a harbour.

Strong candidates were able to explain how a more harmonious family life provided people with confidence and a safety net when faced with challenges in life. Further, that happiness at home makes all affairs in life very prosperous. These candidates also provided various examples of obstacles that may arise in life and how, with the family as their cornerstone, they may be addressed. Such fulsome responses, with well-argued pertinent examples, were worthy of high marks.

In contrast, some candidates considered the importance of family in a very general manner. This lack of specificity, as well as use of apt examples, meant they did not achieve the highest band in content.

Question 2 乡村生活

如果让你设计一座理想的城市，它会是什么样子的？

Candidates who attempted this question handled the task with a great deal of confidence and conviction.

The ideal of being 'eco-friendly' seemed to be candidates' top criteria for a model city, and their reasons for this were well set out. Some candidates focussed on the humanity side by convincing their readers on the importance of free education and free healthcare, which was truly insightful and heart-warming.

Overall, this resulted in many highly-commendable performances.

Question 3 信仰

请谈谈希望在我们生活中的重要性。

This question was a popular choice. Stronger performances were where candidates convincingly argued that hope is one of the most important mental traits in life. They effectively provided examples of well-known historical figures who accomplished their goals by conquering difficulties and set-backs. Weaker performances showed inanition: some candidates merely chose a religion and spent the entire essay talking about its particular features, which was insufficient to address the task.

Question 4 旅游

在网络上就可以领略到各地的风光和风土人情，旅游已经没有必要了。你同意吗？请讨论。

The vast majority of candidates who opted for this question were able to show good knowledge of the topic of tourism. Stronger candidates handled the task competently with a focused argument, such as the importance of personal physical experience of travel and highlighting the need for personal interaction and appreciation for local customs. Some other responses focussed too heavily on how the internet can assist people with their travel planning, or concentrated overly on the convenience of the internet.

Question 5 文化遗产

只有当一个地方被指定为世界文化遗产时，人们才会珍惜保护它。你怎么看？

Too few candidates responded to this question to make any meaningful comments.

CHINESE

> **Paper 9715/32**
> **Essay**

Key messages

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General comments

Candidates generally responded well to this paper. Most showed their ability to understand the questions and to use complex sentence patterns and a good range of vocabulary to develop arguments and draw conclusions. Strong candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the question and knowledge of the topic and great skill in providing detailed explanation of argument and clearly relevant examples as well as in applying language with great confidence.

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- use more extensive vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 家庭

家庭是人格培养的"摇篮"。你同意吗？请讨论。

A large number of candidates opted for this question. Most of them agreed that the family is the cradle of development, when it comes to cultivating and forming one's personality, and explained how parents' behaviours affect children in a subtle way and affect their personality. Strong candidates were not only able to show a clear opinion with detailed explanations and coherent argument, but also provide clearly relevant examples to support the argument. Some candidates talked about the importance of family education in a very general manner, which meant they did not achieve the highest band.

Question 2 城乡生活

有人说，宁静的乡村生活离我们越来越远了。你怎么看？

This was another popular question this year. The majority of candidates have shown good knowledge of the key differences between life in the city and the countryside. Strong candidates were able to analyse and explain the reasons why the quiet country life ideal is diminishing, e.g. through urbanisation, the development of tourism, and the continual lure of a better life in the city, with good examples. Some interesting answers involved more subjective explanations, e.g. the quiet and peaceful country life still exists but 'we' are farther away from it because 'we' choose the convenient city life. Weaker responses tended to merely focus on the broad differences between life in the city and the country.

Question 3 信仰

信念是人们的精神支柱。你怎样理解？

Fewer candidate chose to answer this question. However, for those that did they were able to provide a strong argument that faith is the spiritual and emotional support of people, and include relevant examples to bolster the point. Weaker responses tended to show a lack of supporting examples.

Question 4 旅游

旅游业可以为最贫困的地区提供发展机会。请讨论。

This proved to be a very popular question. Most candidates were able to show good knowledge on the topic of tourism. Some candidates handled the task competently with a focused argument, such as that tourism can offer opportunities for development in the poorest areas. Other responses only pointed out that tourism can provide general development opportunities, which lacked sufficient detail or complexity to reach the highest marking bands.

Question 5 文化遗产

古董的真正价值不能用金钱来衡量。你怎么看？

This was another very well-answered question, in spite of the fact it was chosen by a small number of candidates. The majority of those who did, agreed that the true value of antiques cannot be measured by money. The best responses showed careful analysis of the topic and strong arguments on why antiques are priceless treasures. A small number of responses were not supported by good examples, or did not contain detailed explanation or coherent argument.

CHINESE

<table>
<tr><td>Paper 9715/33
Essay</td></tr>
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Key messages

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Despite this strong performance, examiners did note an apparent increase in the volume of blank scripts. These tend to suggest some candidates did not feel adequately prepared enough to attempt even a partial answer. Weaker responses were characterised by the use of colloquial language, as well as combining Chinese and pinyin. However, such instances appeared more isolated than previous years. Finally, a rare trend noted this year included instances where candidates appeared to neglect using punctuation, or used the wrong type.

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Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 家庭

家庭成员多，矛盾就多。你同意吗？请讨论。

A good number of candidates opted for this question. Some candidates agreed that there would be more contradictions if there were more family members, while many other candidates argued that more family members could solve the problems quickly and easily, therefore, there would not be more contradictions. Strong candidates always clearly indicated their opinions, provided detailed explanation and coherent argument supported by relevant examples. However, repetitive explanation, without good examples to support the argument, did not help some candidates achieve the top band in content. A misunderstanding of the key word 'contradiction' by a very small number of candidates also affected perofrmance.

Question 2 城乡生活

在城市生活久了，人们自然会向往乡村的生活。你同意吗？请讨论。

This was the most popular question, and also a very well-answered question this year. The majority of candidates showed good knowledge about the difference between life in the city and countryside. Some candidates analysed and explained the reasons why living in the city for a long time made people naturally long for the rural life (e.g. down to their busy life, the pressure, the pollution, the noise in city) with good examples. Some other candidates argued that not everyone is looking forward to living in the countryside and explained the reasons with strong points (e.g. different expectations, different interests, different lifestyles) and, again, provided examples. Overall, it was a very well-answered question. Some answers could have been improved by including more sophistication when it comes to written analysis and making in-depth arguments.

Question 3 信仰

为什么说有思想的人总会找准人生坐标？

This was another very well-answered question, in spite of this question being chosen by a very small number of candidates. Most candidates were able to provide a considered and in-depth argument on 'thoughtful people always find the coordinates of life'. They were also able to support the argument with well-chosen examples. Some weaker candidates need to be encouraged to sharpen their analysis skills by providing a more detailed development of the argument.

Question 4 旅游

请谈谈一个优秀的导游应该具备什么样的素质。

This was another very popular, question. Most candidates showed a good knowledge of the question and explained 'what kind of qualities a good tour guide should have' very well. The strong answers were also supported by robust evidence. These candidates forcefully argued that the characteristics of a competent tour guide would include being knowledgeable, displaying integrity, having a good sense of humour, being organised and adaptable to changing situations. While, the slightly weaker candidates need to ensure to relate every point back to the question and provide relevant examples.

Question 5 文化遗产

人们对书的钟爱应该代代相传。你同意吗？请讨论。

A comparatively smaller number of candidates chose this question. Many candidates were able to show general knowledge on the importance of books; but could not provide the responses geared specifically to the demands of question. Only stronger candidates not only demonstrated a clear opinion on 'people's love for books should be passed down from generation to generation' with a detailed analysis, but also always argued the point with convincing examples.

CHINESE

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Paper 9715/41
Texts
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Key messages

- Centres must read the syllabus carefully to ensure that candidates are prepared for the correct texts, as detailed in the published syllabus.

- Candidates need to read and answer the questions carefully. Analysis of the text is always required. Simply re-telling the story of the text does not give candidates access to the full range of the mark scheme.

- Candidates must abide by the rubric and only answer three questions. In **Section 1** option **(a)**, all subsections must be answered. The question numbers should be written clearly on the left of the paper.

- Part **(a)** of each question in **Section 1** includes a passage from one of the set texts. This is a stimulus passage, and to answer questions fully, candidates need to go further than simply relating their answers to the given passage. They should consider how the issues raised in the selected passage reflect the book as a whole. Part **(b)** of each question in **Section 1** should also include reference to the whole text.

- The questions in **Section 2** and part **(b)** questions in **Section 1** are best answered using a clear essay structure with different paragraphs containing an introduction and a conclusion. The use of carefully selected quotations from the texts helps candidates to illustrate the points they wish to make or to develop their argument. Candidates should be encouraged to show analysis of the texts in their answers, commenting on the author's use of descriptive and expressive techniques.

- Candidates need to answer three questions in this examination, and so time management is important.

- Handwriting must be legible.

General comments

Overall, the quality of answers seen this year was high.

Most candidates had read the correct books and showed a good understanding of Chinese literature. Candidates for the most part did not just rely on discussing the plot of the story, but also showed evidence of having researched the author and/or the background and time period in which the text was set, showing an awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Most candidates understood the underlying themes well by being familiar with the social backgrounds of the play or poem. The focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and how such contextual knowledge helps to understand the text more deeply; talking generally about the author personal life is not necessary.

A lot of candidates are now writing their answers in an academic essay style, with a clear essay structure, including a short introduction, the main body of the argument and a conclusion, using clear paragraphs. Although candidates are not assessed on their linguistic accuracy in this paper, candidates need to communicate clearly and effectively.

The essays of most candidates would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. The examination questions frequently ask the candidates to 'give examples to explain'. The purpose of a quotation is to illustrate and support the arguments in the essay, the candidates should avoid summarising the story but choose a short quote to illustrate the point, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay.

Cambridge Assessment
International Education

This year, a number of candidates still misread the question paper rubrics, answering both **(a)** and **(b)** from the same question number for one literary work. Centres must ensure that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front of the question paper, and remain unchanged. In addition, the information about which questions to answer is repeated on page 2 of the paper, above the questions. Candidates should answer three questions in total (choosing *either* **(a)** *or* **(b)** in each case). They should answer one question from *Section 1*, one from *Section 2* and the third question from either *Section 1* or *2*. Each answer should be on a different text. Candidates must choose either **(a)** or **(b)** from the same question but not both of them. If question **(a)** was chosen, it will include sub question **(i)** and **(ii)**. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

Candidates need to be aware of time management during this examination, and plan how long they have to answer each question. This year it was evident that several candidates ran out of time, and left unfinished answers.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

(a)   This question required candidates to understand the emotion showed by the poem content. Most candidates had a solid understanding of this and could describe it clearly with quotations from the poem. Some answers also discussed the deeper meaning of key words like 丁香, 悠长 in the poem relating to the theme and the situation of the poet at the time.

(b)   Candidates needed to refer to two poems when answering this question. Some candidates chose the poems 《寻梦者》 or 《乐园鸟》 to analyse the patriotic thoughts and the poet's social ideals embodied in the works. Others chose from more typical poems like 《我用我残损的手掌》 and 《狱中题壁》. Many good answers analysed the social reality at the time and the poet's creative intentions, discussing and discovering how two poems expressed the common theme of patriotism through examining the content of specific poems.

Question 2

舒婷：《舒婷诗选》 (Selected poems by Shu Ting)

(a)   Most candidates showed familiarity with the poem.

(i)   Candidates had a range of different interpretations of '少女的梦' (the girl's dreams). Many candidates analysed the beauty of Hui'an women, but the better answers focused on discussing details of the happiness pursued by the Hui'an women, and then linking this to the suffering of their life.

(ii)   In **(ii)**, there were some high-scoring answers which not only analysed the language in the poems, but also considered the pain of the Hui'an womans' life and their pursuit of a better life. Such answers showed a thorough understanding of the theme.

(b)   When answering this question, candidates selected a variety of different poems. A few candidates chose poems such as 《墙》 and 《神女峰》, attempting to link the poems to the social background at the time of writing, suggesting that the poet opposed the Cultural Revolution, which was not accurate. The better answers addressed the most representative poetry, like 《祖国，我亲爱的祖国》, which fully and directly reveals the destiny of the nation, and the poet's love of the country.

Question 3

阿城：《棋王》 ("Qi wang" by Ah Cheng)

(a) This question required candidates to discuss the characteristics of Wang Yisheng. The best answers argued that Wang Yisheng's persistent pursuit of playing chess was not for the sake of winning but for his own spiritual journey. Some also discussed that Wang Yisheng did not seek fame and fortune, which is why he disagreed with Ni Bin who registered for the competition by bribing the Secretary.

(b) Most candidates choose 'I' or Ni Bin or Wang Yisheng as the basis of a discussion around the situation in Zhiqing's life, which included poor eating and little entertainment. Many candidates showed they were very familiar with the plot and details, and so could summarise Zhiqing's life using the scattered descriptions in the text, for example, not enough food, few living materials, little recreational activity, and hard work.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍：《骆驼祥子》("Luotuo xiangzi" by Lao She)

(a) This question required candidates to understand the experience of Xiangzi and analyse the change of character from a diligent and hardworking person. Candidates needed to discuss the process of buying rickshaws and his marriage, and also use the storyline to analyse specific reasons for Xiangzi's personality changes. Many strong candidates also discussed the social reasons for these changes.

(b) Candidates showed familiarity with the plot and were able to answer the question with detailed examples from the story. Several candidates managed to not only analyse the love and marriage between the two people, but to also examine the deception and possession of Hu Niu to Xiangzi and how Xiangzi succumbs to Hu Niu for money. Some students also discussed the social background behind the relationship between the two characters.

Question 5

曹禺：《日出》 ("Sunrise" by Cao Yu)

(a) There were relatively fewer candidates who responded to this question. Candidates needed to understand the character of Fang Dasheng and the changes in his thoughts and character. The strongest answers contained analysis of how Fang Dasheng got to know more about the darkness of society from a naïve young man, and intended to resist the forces of darkness through these experiences.

(b) This is an important part in the play. All candidates clearly understood the story well and were able to analyse it according to the content of the work. This question required candidates to analyse both the role of Jin Ba in the play, as well as Chen Bailu's character and the changes in her thoughts. Candidates needed to specifically discuss what kind of hope Xiaodongxi brought to Chen Bailu.

Question 6

余华：《十八岁出门远行》 ("Shiba sui chumen yuanxing" by Yu Hua)

(a) Most candidates had no problem comparing the attitudes and performance between 'I' and the driver. Many answers were able to analyse the reasons for the different attitudes from the two people. Very strong candidates also analysed the absurdity and violence of the adult world as seen through the eyes of the main character, and showed a good understanding of the theme and the author's writing intentions.

(b) Few candidates answered this question. Some candidates summarised the plot of the whole text. To get a higher score, candidates needed to discuss the reasons for the trip: the main character is getting a feel and understand of the adult world, but there is no certain purpose or destination for this trip. Many good answers also analysed the symbolic meanings of highways and hotels.

CHINESE

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Paper 9715/42
Texts
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Key messages

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Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

(a) Most candidates explained that both 'he'(他) and 'I' (我) in the poem referred to the poet himself and discussed the emotion showed by the poet could be sadness or hatred towards the Japanese invasion. Stronger candidates showed thorough knowledge of the historical background and a good understanding of literary techniques in their essays. In part **(ii)**, most candidates could identify the symbolic meaning of the sentences associated with the dream. Many candidates were able to see the poet's yearning for peace and victory as well as the wish for freedom and a bright future.

(b) Most candidates were able to compare two poems and understood the poet's perseverance and steadfast attitude towards his ideal pursuit. Well-prepared candidates could precisely analyse the symbolic meaning of the imagery in the poem, and were able to point out that the poet also felt depressed about reality and his ideal pursuit.

Question 2

舒婷：《舒婷诗选》 (Selected poems by Shu Ting)

(a) Most candidates were able to find sentences in the poem which included metaphor, and provided ideas about the connections between 'I' and the 'wall', for example, 'I' was weak and the 'wall' was the oppressor and a great power. Strong candidates discussed the symbolic meaning of both of the 'wall' and the relationship between the 'wall' and 'I', and provided detailed analysis on the context of the associated historical background.

(b) Candidates had a good understanding of the poet's literary techniques and writing style. They were able to analyse the poet's technique of using nature and scenery as symbols to express her innermost feelings and her views on love with multiple meanings. Most people chose to write about 《致橡树》，《双桅船》，《始祖鸟》，《神女蜂》 or 《惠安女子》. Many good answers had a very clear focus on how the poet used objects to express her emotions/intentions by using the symbolic meaning of those objects.

Question 3

阿城：《棋王》 ("Qi wang" by Ah Cheng)

(a) The vast majority of the candidates performed well with a good focus on the key aspects and giving detailed illustrations. Most candidates were able to provide relevant and logical reasons and understand that the symbolic meaning of the chess set without inscription to Wang Yisheng was his mother's encouragement and endorsement. Stronger candidates could see more in the context and discussed that the chess set given by his mother brought him spiritual strength to become a chess king.

(b)   Candidates needed to use a clear structure to discuss the differences between Ni Bin and Wang Yisheng in terms of both their lifestyle and in playing chess. Strong candidates were able to include more elements relating to aspects of their living and playing chess by analysing details in the text. Examples include their family backgrounds, differences in their manner and body language, how Ni Bin interacted and shared his 'resources' with others, how they dressed, and especially their differing attitudes to playing chess. For this question, candidates did not need to analyse Daoism and Confucianism in relation to Wang's underlying 'philosophy' although those with a very deep understanding of the philosophy managed to do this.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍：《骆驼祥子》 ("Luotuo xiangzi" by Lao She)

(a)   The Huniu's tragedy in the question did not just mean death, and it would be inadequate if only stating that the cause of her tragedy related to the difficult birth of her baby and her death. Well-prepared candidates were able to explore more reasons behind Huniu's tragedy, such as the dark society, patriarchal ideology, Huniu's personality and Xiangzi's attitude to Huniu. Many good essays showed good organisation of the material with clear conclusions.

(b)   Most candidates could describe Xiangzi's three experiences of buying a rickshaw. Candidates pointed out the changes of Xiangzi's personality at the end of story, and explained that the dark society caused the tragedy in his life. Many strong candidates analysed the changes following each purchase and conducted focused analyses of Xiangzi's characteristics.

Question 5

曹禺：《日出》 ("Sunrise" by Cao Yu)

(a)   Candidates needed to have a clear understanding of the question and its requirements, and appropriately choose the characters for the discussion, e.g., Li Shiqing, who does not belong to the upper class, or Jin Ba, who belongs to the upper class but does not attend the event in Chen Bailu's lodging. Most candidates focused on Pan Yueting, Zhang George and Gu Ba Nainai (潘月廷, 张乔治和顾八奶奶). Strong candidates were able to deepen their discussions to the social background, and provided well-structured analysis by evaluating characters' behaviours in different situations and providing a clear conclusion.

(b)   Overall, this question was well answered. Some candidates confused Li Shiqing and other characters in the play. The majority of candidates analysed and explored the social issues causing his tragedy with aptly chosen examples, and provided a comprehensive analysis on Li Shiqing's complicated personality. Strong candidates were able to produce a thoroughly solid and relevant work with deep and detailed analysis, using examples to support their opinions, and making a comparison between Huang Shengsan and him.

Question 6

余华：《十八岁出门远行》 ("Shiba sui chumen yuanxing" by Yu Hua)

(a)   To respond to this question well, the main theme of the work must be discussed. In this story, the ridiculous and unreasonable plot actually reflects the reality, showing the ugly rules and logic of the adult world. The majority of candidates could correctly point out the main theme of the work. Strong candidates were able to analyse the question from various angles, including the author's intention, the social situation under which this story was created, and the literary techniques used in it. Candidates were advised to go beyond their personal experience and show more understanding of the underlying theme, which is to reveal the cruelty of an adults' world.

(b)   Most candidates who answered this question showed an understanding of the whole story. All candidates were able to describe how the main character's emotion and feelings changed within that day. Strong candidates explained the reasons for each change and provided a summary at the end, combined with an evaluation of the underlying theme. Many essays showed a good understanding of the author's intentions and discussed the link between the changes and 'my' growth.

CHINESE

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Paper 9715/43
Texts
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Key messages

- Centres must read the syllabus carefully to ensure that candidates are prepared for the correct texts, as detailed in the published syllabus.

- Candidates need to read and answer the questions carefully. Analysis of the text is always required. Simply re-telling the story of the text does not give candidates access to the full range of the mark scheme.

- Candidates must abide by the rubric and only answer three questions. In **Section 1** option **(a)**, all subsections must be answered. The question numbers should be written clearly on the left of the paper.

- Part **(a)** of each question in **Section 1** includes a passage from one of the set texts. This is a stimulus passage, and to answer questions fully, candidates need to go further than simply relating their answers to the given passage. They should consider how the issues raised in the selected passage reflect the book as a whole. Part **(b)** of each question in **Section 1** should also include reference to the whole text.

- The questions in **Section 2** and part **(b)** questions in **Section 1** are best answered using a clear essay structure with different paragraphs containing an introduction and a conclusion. The use of carefully selected quotations from the texts helps candidates to illustrate the points they wish to make or to develop their argument. Candidates should be encouraged to show analysis of the texts in their answers, commenting on the author's use of descriptive and expressive techniques.

- Candidates need to answer three questions in this examination, and so time management is important.

- Handwriting must be legible.

General comments

Overall, the quality of answers seen this year was high.

Most candidates had read the correct books and showed a good understanding of Chinese literature. Candidates for the most part did not just rely on discussing the plot of the story, but also showed evidence of having researched the author and/or the background and time period in which the text was set, showing an awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Most candidates understood the underlying themes well by being familiar with the social backgrounds of the play or poem. The focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and how such contextual knowledge helps to understand the text more deeply; talking generally about the author personal life is not necessary.

A lot of candidates are now writing their answers in an academic essay style, with a clear essay structure, including a short introduction, the main body of the argument and a conclusion, using clear paragraphs. Although candidates are not assessed on their linguistic accuracy in this paper, candidates need to communicate clearly and effectively.

The essays of most candidates would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. The examination questions frequently ask the candidates to 'give examples to explain'. The purpose of a quotation is to illustrate and support the arguments in the essay, the candidates should avoid summarising the story but choose a short quote to illustrate the point, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay.

This year, a number of candidates still misread the question paper rubrics, answering both **(a)** and **(b)** from the same question number for one literary work. Centres must ensure that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front of the question paper, and remain unchanged. In addition, the information about which questions to answer is repeated on page 2 of the paper, above the questions. Candidates should answer three questions in total (choosing *either* **(a)** *or* **(b)** in each case). They should answer one question from *Section 1*, one from *Section 2* and the third question from either *Section 1* or *2*. Each answer should be on a different text. Candidates must choose either **(a)** or **(b)** from the same question but not both of them. If question **(a)** was chosen, it will include sub question **(i)** and **(ii)**. It is important that all candidates are aware of this.

Candidates need to be aware of time management during this examination, and plan how long they have to answer each question. This year it was evident that several candidates ran out of time, and left unfinished answers.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

(a)   To answer this question, candidates needed to understand the era and background of the poem. Most candidates pointed out the differences and changes between country views, and discussed the poet's emotional changes, reflecting to the views. A number of answers showed the candidates' accurate and in-depth understanding of the theme of poem. Many good answers also had detailed development about where this corner was and what kind of hope and encouragement this place brought to the poet.

(b)   Candidates could choose to analyse this poem only, or they might also refer to other poems to analyse alongside it. Many answers showed that candidates had a deep understanding of Dai Wangshu's poetry. Several essays explained every sentence in the poem, and also discussed the symbolic meaning and themes of the poems. In many answers, candidates not only wrote in a clear essay structure, but also used this poem to give a brief conclusion of the poet's writing style and characteristics, including his thoughts and frequently used literary techniques.

Question 2

舒婷：《舒婷诗选》 (Selected poems by Shu Ting)

(a)   Most candidates showed a very good understanding of the poem. Some discussed that people did not know the real life of Hui'an women, but Hui'an women became the object of people's appreciation only because of their beautiful clothing and appearance. There were intelligent answers that discussed details of the suffering in Hui'an women's' lives, and analysed the poet's reflections and concerns about the fate of Hui'an women.

(b)   In the answers to this question, different candidates chose very different poems, such as 《墙》《神女峰》or《祖国我亲爱的祖国》. Candidates analysed the characteristics of the new era of poetry with different points of view. These included reflections on society, the use of new images, and the use of literary techniques like symbolism. Most candidates focused on the ideological and spiritual aspects of the new era, the new concept of love, the thinking of women's destiny and the love of the motherland.

Question 3

阿城：《棋王》 ("Qi wang" by Ah Cheng)

(a)   This question required candidates to discuss the characteristics of Wang Yisheng. Answering this question required candidates to compare Wang Yisheng's attitude towards the two people, and then to analyse his personality according to those attitudes. Some very competent answers also used the attitudes of the famous expert (名手) and the old man (老头儿) on Wang Yisheng to discuss Wang Yisheng's personality. Some well-structured essays analysed two aspects of Wang

Yisheng: the pursuit of playing chess as a spiritual pursuit and his characteristic of not seeking fame and fortune.

(b) Some candidates seemed to be confused between 'I' (我) and Ni Bin. Most essays discussed one or several aspects of the role of 'I' (我). The best answers regarded the role of 'I' (我) as a clue in the story, connecting characters and plots; they also pointed out that 'I' (我) can be used to compare or contrast with Wang Yisheng, which can make Wang Yisheng's personality more prominent. Some candidates analysed the thought changes of 'I' (我) to highlight Wang Yisheng's spiritual pursuit.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍：《骆驼祥子》("Luotuo xiangzi" by Lao She)

(a) This question examines the candidate's understanding of the plot and the image of Xiangzi. Many answers compared the differences between Xiangzi and other drivers in several ways, such as the attitude to Hu Niu, the attitude towards work and living habits. Some then analysed the character of Xiangzi as well as the relationship between his character and the development of the plot. Stronger candidates also pointed out the social problems that Xiangzi was facing and the inevitability of his personality changes, which all reflected the theme of this novella.

(b) Mr. Cao is not a main character, but candidates were very familiar with him and able to discuss him using detailed quotations. Many answers discussed Mr. Cao's equal attitude to Xiangzi, comparing this with other characters in the play. Some candidates wrote a detailed analysis of Mr. Cao, based on the social background at the time, discussing that as a positive character he was a hope in the dark society, but he also had weakness and could not change the society.

Question 5

曹禺：《日出》('Sunrise' by Cao Yu)

(a) Ramming sound and singing are written several times in the text. Many candidates were able to analyse and compare the details when the sounds appeared each time and explained their role in the play. Many candidates pointed out that in Ramming sound and singing as a new positive force bringing hope to this dark society. The well-prepared candidates discussed that several characters' reactions to Ramming sound and singing implied the new hope of society and expressed the theme of the sunrise, which was also the author's writing intentions.

(b) Chen Bailu committed suicide for different reasons. All candidates answered the most basic reasons, like she was insolvent and unable to pay back her money. Although she hated the darkness of the society, she enjoyed and pursued the luxury and pleasure of her current life. Many strong candidates analysed that Chen Bailu could not leave this life but also could not continue this life, therefore she lost hope on herself and the dark society, which was the key reason why she committed suicide.

Question 6

余华：《十八岁出门远行》("Shiba sui chumen yuanxing" by Yu Hua)

(a) Only a small number of candidates chose this question. The key to answering this question and understanding the theme of the text is to find out the reason why 'I' went on the trip. Candidates needed to understand the structure of the story and the real purpose of the trip. Many good answers discussed that the character 'I' (我) went out to try to understand the adult world. Some also talked about the father as a positive character, analysing his educational methods and educational concepts as shown in the text.

(b) To answer this question, candidates did not need to repeat the plot. Most candidates were able to talk about the occasions in the story where the hotel appeared. Good answers analysed the possible symbolic meaning of the hotel, discussing the plot development and attitude changes where the world of the hotel appeared in each part of the text. Some also then analysed the ambiguity of the hotel and its role as a spiritual destination in the growth of young people.