

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/21 Reading and Writing</p>
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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 volunteering in teaching and travelling. **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 a limit of no more than 200 characters.

In order to perform well for this paper, candidates should:

- consolidate knowledge of synonyms, conjunctions and linking words, question words
- read the questions carefully and provide answers based on the passages in the paper rather than using their own general knowledge or personal experience
- use their own words to answer every question rather than copying from the passages
- plan their time to ensure there is sufficient time to fully answer **Question 5**
- attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about

General comments

The quality of work produced by candidates in this year's examination was good. The performance on **Question 1 and 2** was also improved and many good and clearly expressed responses to **Question 3** and **Question 4** were seen. Most candidates showed they had understood the two reading passages and could offer accurate answers. A large number of candidates answered the questions in full sentences, and it was rare for candidates to lift language unchanged from the passages. Stronger candidates produced some excellent answers, using their own words and using a wide range of structures and connectives to link points together. In order to score well for Quality of Language, candidates should avoid presenting their answers in bullet points, as this does not allow them to demonstrate the skills required in the mark scheme for Accuracy.

When implied meaning is tested, candidates must think carefully to deduce the answer from the information provided, rather than simply lifting words from the text.

Responses for **Question 5(a)** were usually good but candidates were slightly less successful in scoring high marks in **Question 5(b)**. The language used by most candidates in their answers was highly accurate and included some complex structures, which was reflected in the Quality of Language marks awarded. Candidates should be reminded to present work which is neat and legible.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The overall performance was generally good and the vast majority of candidates were able to find the correct synonyms from the text and write them accurately. To improve performance further, candidates need to better understand the function of the vocabulary and analyse its position within the sentence. The best way to check if the correct synonym has been found is to see if the two pieces of vocabulary are interchangeable in the context.

- (a) Candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the vocabulary tested, with the majority successfully locating 念念不忘 in the passage. It is important that candidates double check their character writing to ensure the characters are accurate. A small number of candidates gave answers like 念念不忘, which unfortunately could not be credited.
- (b) Some candidates found this question challenging. The most common wrong answer provided was 阴雨连绵 which showed that candidates had managed to locate where the answer was in the passage, but did not have a full enough understanding to be precise in their answer and therefore included additional words. Candidates need to be reminded that it is the meaning that matters, not the number of the characters. Typical wrong answer also included 常常.
- (c) This was one of the best answered questions in the paper, with most candidates finding the target vocabulary item.
- (d) Quite a few candidates mistook 真诚 as the answer, furthermore, a few candidates added 最 to the correct answer, which should not have been included.
- (e) This was another well answered question and almost all candidates were able to supply the correct synonym 毅然.

Question 2

The overall performance for this section was the best across the whole paper. The vast majority of candidates re-wrote the sentences correctly using the structures given. Most candidates correctly applied a question mark at the end of **Question 2 (c)**, demonstrating thorough understanding of the application of the structure tested. Though punctuation was not assessed, candidates should try to apply the right punctuation at this level.

- (a) Most candidates secured marks for this question and were able to retain the original meaning in the re-structured sentence.
- (b) The 是.....的 structure was handled well with the majority of candidates answering the question successfully. A few candidates were unsure how to adjust the word order with the given structure, and sometimes 是 was incorrectly placed at the start of the sentence.
- (c) Performance was very strong on this question and most candidates were able to use the structure successfully including changing the full stop into a question mark.

Question 3

Candidates responded very well to this question, showing they had understood the passage about a memory of voluntary teaching in a rural area. Candidates showed evidence that they were able to select the relevant information from the texts to answer the questions, discarding incorrect or irrelevant information. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

- (a) Candidates handled this question very well. Almost all candidates understood that they had to focus on 心情 so they were able to be precise and identify 痛苦, 寂寞 and 满足 from the first

paragraph. Weaker responses copied the whole sentence, which did not show proper understanding.

- (b) The success rate in this question was very high. Answer like 恶劣的天气 demonstrated excellent understanding of the text.
- (c) Most candidates successfully scored one mark in this question, and only the strongest candidates were also able to provide ‘看着一起来的同伴一个个离开’. Candidates must be reminded to read the context and cover the information fully in their answers.
- (d) The majority of candidates were able to accurately locate and present the information 欣赏山村风光 and 体验乡村文化 to score two marks. Some candidates struggled to rephrase the clause where the answer was located into a noun phrase like, 学生们的崇敬 and 村民们的感谢 which suggested an inadequate understanding of the text.
- (e) The question was the best answered across the whole paper with almost all candidates scoring full marks.

Question 4

The overall performance on this question was very similar to **Question 3**. Most candidates demonstrated their understanding of the passage about travelling when doing voluntary work and they managed to use their own words to answer the questions successfully. Again, candidates need to be careful when answering questions as some responses gave the impression that candidates had made careless mistakes when they supplied incorrect answers, rather than not understanding the question.

- (a) The majority of candidates handled this question very well and some managed to skilfully use linking words to create full sentences. There were some examples of careless errors in character writing, e.g. 工益 rather than 公益 which meant that answers could not be fully credited.
- (b) The majority of candidates handled this question confidently, supplying responses like 这不仅圆了年轻人看世界的心愿，而且也让他们实现了自身价值. Answers such as 开支不大 did not reflect the information given in the text.
- (c) Most candidates tackled this question with ease. Whilst lots of excellent answers were seen, 孤寡 was missing from a few candidates’ answers, which caused ambiguity, and meant that no could be awarded.
- (d) This was one of the highest performing sub-questions, with the majority of the candidates securing all available marks.
- (e) Performance on this question was mixed. This question required candidates to give answers linking voluntourism to the promotion of local culture, but not all candidates managed to include this aspect in their answers; answers such as 维护建筑 or 保护动植物 were not linked to cultural preservation, and therefore, no mark was credited. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and give answers directly link to the 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

Candidates handled **Question 5(a)** well. Higher-scoring candidates were able to summarise many relevant points successfully and skilfully from both passages. All candidates kept their answers to the required

character limit. Candidates who paid careful attention to the question and focused their response on specific details of what voluntary activities meant for young people, scored good marks.

The responses to **Question 5(a)** were generally good and most candidates were able to include plenty of relevant information from the passages. Weaker responses were characterised by a tendency to lose focus on the topic, include irrelevant information or to talk about their personal experience without making any reference to the texts. Candidates should be reminded that part (a) is a summary task, and so all points must be drawn from the passages – elements related to personal experience or general knowledge cannot be credited.

For **Question 5(b)**, the most successful responses were those which expressed opinions or related experiences concisely; this allowed them to express different views relating to the points from the texts, staying focussed and avoiding irrelevance. Candidates should bear in mind that it is important to give varied and interesting ideas linked to the question. 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 a relevant response to the question.

Candidates need to be aware that setting the scene or including lengthy introductions is not necessary in this summary question, as it uses up valuable characters and may cause them to go over the 200-character limit. They should go straight in and focus on raising mark-worthy points linked to the question. Candidates need to develop the skills to link the points they are including effectively and succinctly in order to leave sufficient character allowance for the discussion in **Question 5(b)**. In addition, in order to score high marks for language, it is essential that candidates remember to answer the question in a continuous prose style. Candidates need to be able to show that they can use complex sentence structures accurately.

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 different methods in Chinese cooking and the impact that food has brought to society. **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 a limit of no more than 200 characters.

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General comments

A very high performance was seen this year, with candidates showing an excellent understanding of the reading passages, demonstrated through clearly expressed responses to all questions. Many candidates were able to produce accurate answers using sophisticated structures, conjunctions and correct word order, showing a very good level of language proficiency.

Responses for **Question 5(a)** were, in general, slightly less successful compared to **Question 5(b)**. Most candidates were able to use highly accurate language in their answers, including complex structures, which led to good marks being achieved overall for Quality of Language. Almost all candidates paid attention to the requirements of the character limit for **Question 5** and managed to write their summaries within the stated 200 characters.

It was noted in the marking that an increased level of accuracy was seen in responses across the whole paper and more and more candidates wrote in full sentences to answer questions rather than using bullet points or note form. The accuracy of character writing has also improved.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates performed well on this question, and were able to show that they had understood the vocabulary being tested and correctly locating the synonyms from Passage 1. To improve performance further, candidates need to better understand the function of the vocabulary and analyse its position within the sentence. The best way to check if the correct synonym has been found is to see if the two pieces of vocabulary are interchangeable in the context.

- (a) This question was very well answered. Candidates could usually correctly identify 根据 as the synonym. Occasional incorrect answers included 采取 or 特点.
- (b) Most candidates handled this question well and could identify 笑咪咪 as the synonym. Candidates should be reminded to take care when reproducing written characters, as a few candidates wrote the answer as 笑咪咪. Although the characters in 笑咪咪 and 笑咪咪 look very similar, 笑咪咪 was not in the passage, and therefore could not be credited.
- (c) The majority of candidates supplied the correct answer 洽谈. A common incorrect answer was 商业 洽谈 and less frequently, 商业.
- (d) Candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the vocabulary tested in this question with the majority successfully locating 依赖 in the passage. Common incorrect answers were 利用 or 有关.
- (e) This was the best answered question in this section with almost all candidates supplying 遗忘 as the synonym. A very small number of candidates confused the answer with 流淌 or 遗忘家乡.

Question 2

Candidates were well prepared for these grammatical manipulation questions and showed confidence in using the given structures. A key part of this exercise is that the original meaning of the sentences must be retained when re-writing them to include the required structure.

- (a) Most candidates were able to manipulate the 对 structure correctly to produce a new sentence. Only a few candidates had problems with word order, incorrectly placing 对 at the start of the sentence. e.g. 对中国人也很在乎吃.
- (b) The majority of candidates responded accurately, demonstrating a secure understanding of this quite complex structure. Some responses were seen where 连 was placed at the start of the sentence, which is grammatically incorrect. e.g. 连亲戚朋友不说, 同事、三邻六舍都会被请来做客.
- (c) In this question, a large number of candidates *replaced* 利用 with 通过 rather than keeping both in the sentence. This removal, despite the sentence still making sense, led to a slight change in meaning, hence marks were not awarded.

Question 3

Lots of excellent answers were seen throughout this question, showing that candidates had understood the passage about Chinese food culture. Higher scoring candidates demonstrated thorough understanding in their answers, typically generating their own language and managing to use complex structures without lifting from the passage. Questions requiring higher-level thinking or targeting implied meaning were found to be the most challenging. These questions in particular require candidates to use their own words to answer and explain and cannot be successfully answered by just locating then copying from the passage.

- (a) This was the best answered question amongst the sub-questions in this section with a large number of candidates securing all 4 marks. Candidates showed a good understanding of the dependent relationship between the food and the cooking methods, which was needed to give the correct answer, 不同的食材, 烹饪方法不同. Weaker responses defined these separately and supplied answers like 烹饪方法不同. Other excellent answers like 中国菜的菜式五花八门, 很多样

were seen. Some candidates overlooked the significance of including 菜名 and only wrote ‘菜的意义或菜有意义, which did not reflect the original text.

- (b) This question required candidates to deduce Lao Zhao’s attitude from his actions and the way he describes hosting dinner parties. Whilst many candidates were able to give answers linking to happiness, like 高兴, 开心 or 快乐, quite a number of candidates simply described his actions or expression instead, and answers like 笑眯眯 were most common. This question was one which exposed candidates who rely heavily on simply lifting their answers from the passage. Genuine comprehension and the ability to think and reflect on implied meaning was needed here.
- (c) The majority of candidates understood the structure 除了……还……, and hence provided additional information such as 逢年过节 and 家里遇到什么事. In some cases, candidates specified 喜事, 大事, 好事 etc. which limited the range of the term 家里遇到什么事, resulting in ‘incomplete meaning’. Many responses included the idea of 商业洽谈 which was misplaced.
- (d) Lots of strong answers were seen in response to this question. Answers like 不同的节庆吃特定的食物会有好的意义, 好的盼头 showed that candidates had understood the text well. A few candidates found it challenging to rephrase a short sentence like 节庆不同, 菜肴也不同 and used identical wording in their answer. Candidates need to remember they should use their own words to answer the question; the rubric informs candidates that they must not lift full sentences from the passage unchanged, and where this happens answers cannot be credited.
- (e) Candidates were usually able to identify 商业洽谈 and 食疗 confidently. Only the strongest candidates were also able to explain that the examples given in the text showed that some sayings and aspects of the language (语言) are also linked to food culture. Answers such as 俗语, 日常用语 were accepted. Some common incorrect answers just stated 日常生活 or used an example from the text, e.g. 人缘好叫 ‘吃得开’.
- (f) There were some good answers to this question which showed a secure understanding of the reading passage. Lots of candidates produced responses using their own words. Amongst answers which did not secure the marks, 家乡菜融入了血脉 was quite common, or a few candidates gave very specific answers like, 很难遗忘中餐的味道.

Question 4

The overall performance on this question was better than **Question 3**. Most candidates showed they had understood both the passage and questions provided. Most candidates were at least able to locate answers in the relevant paragraph or section of the text, whereas the strongest candidates could also ‘digest’ the answers and then produce a response using their own words. As questions like **4(d)** and **4(e)** could be answered in concise way, quite a few candidates used bullet points rather than full sentences which had an impact on the language mark.

- (a) This was one of the best answered questions in this section and most candidates were able to gain full marks. On occasions, candidates did not include 参观风景名胜 as they had mistaken this for 旅游.
- (b) Most candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the text and were able to identify the part of the sentences where 意义 was mentioned using linking words like, 第一, 第二... or 首先... 其次.... There were a few occurrences where candidates copied large sections of text which was against the rubric instruction and affect the marks awarded.
- (c) A mixed performance was seen on this question. Some very good answers were provided, like, 云南的物种资源非常富饶, 有各式各样的动植物; 云南的气候四季如春, 温暖宜人; 云南的米线品种繁多, 吃法也各不一样. Some candidates included 过桥米线 in their answer which is a specific dish, rather than a characteristic of Yunnan, and so was not credited. Others needed to include the key concept 各式 about the rice noodles in their answer to secure the mark.

- (d) This question was very well answered and full marks were achieved by many. Some careless answers like 细心体贴 and 包容性 were seen; the lack of a subject in the answers caused confusion and ambiguity, which meant regrettably such answers could not be credited.
- (e) Quite a range of responses were seen in this question. Candidates who scored full marks not only demonstrated excellent understanding of the text, but also showed off their linguistic proficiency, as they managed to link the four key concepts clearly and in their own words. Most candidates were able to identify the food linked to the specific place, whilst a few candidates muddled up 麻辣烫 with 火锅 in 四川. Answer like 北京和天津的狗不理包子 caused confusion too. A few careless character errors like 泡膜 or 泡漠 meant these answers did not score.

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 summarise many relevant points successfully and skilfully from both passages. Almost all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. Candidates who paid careful attention to the question and focused their response on specific details or methods in Chinese cooking and the impact that food had brought to the society, scored good marks.

For **Question 5(a)**, the passages offered candidates plenty of relevant content and therefore good opportunities to select information, which resulted in a number of candidates scoring full marks. The most challenging and frequently omitted point was 一些习惯说法和吃有联系. On occasion, candidates seemed to get carried away in talking about their personal experience of Chinese food rather than using the ideas from the text to answer this question.

For **Question 5(b)**, the most successful responses were those which expressed opinions or related experiences concisely; this allowed them to express different views relating to the points from the texts, staying focussed and avoiding irrelevance. Candidates should bear in mind that it is important to give varied and interesting ideas linked to the question. 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 a relevant response to the question.

Candidates need to be aware that setting the scene or including lengthy introductions is not necessary in this summary question, as it uses up valuable characters and may cause them to go over the 200-character limit. They should go straight in and focus on raising mark-worthy points linked to the question. Candidates need to develop the skills to link the points they are including effectively and succinctly in order to leave sufficient character allowance for the discussion in **Question 5(b)**. In addition, in order to score high marks for language, it is essential that candidates remember to answer the question in a continuous prose style. Candidates need to be able to show that they can use complex sentence structures accurately.

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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 advantages of having a break from mobile phones. **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 a limit of no more than 200 characters.

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- attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked. The majority of candidates used their own words to answer questions with a very good range of vocabulary and structures. Furthermore, an increased level of accuracy in the responses across the whole paper was observed and more and more candidates wrote in full sentences to answer questions rather than using bullet points.

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. When implied meaning is tested, candidates must think carefully to deduce the answer from the information provided, rather than simply lifting words from the text.

Overall, candidates performed better in **Question 5(a)** but were less successful in scoring high marks in **Question 5(b)**. The language used by most candidates in their answers was highly accurate and included some complex structures, which was reflected in the Quality of Language marks awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The performance on this question was outstanding, with the vast majority of candidates showing they had understood the vocabulary being tested and that they could correctly locate the synonyms from Passage 1. To improve performance further, candidates need to better understand the function of the vocabulary they come across and analyse its position within the sentence, rather than simply matching the number of the characters to the question.

Responses to **(a)** and **(c)** were excellent and almost all candidates secured marks. Furthermore, candidates handled **Questions (b), (d)** and **(e)** confidently. A small number of candidates seemed to rely on guessing their answers, as incorrect answers seemed to be quite varied and random, such as 组织、时间感、关注和 记忆.

Question 2

A good performance was seen here. Candidates were fully aware that they needed to use the structures given in the questions to re-write the sentence whilst maintaining the same meaning. On a few occasions, the performance between the different parts of the question was quite varied.

- (a)** A large number of candidates demonstrated confidence and performed strongly in applying the 就 structure accurately.
- (b)** The performance on this question was very strong and the majority of candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the grammar requirement, executing the 给……带来 structure accurately. Occasionally, errors in word order or careless mistakes occurred in answers like: 我们目睹给人类带来了雨林的严重破坏 or 我们目睹人类给雨林的严重破坏.
- (c)** The majority of candidates demonstrated a secure understanding of the sentence and were able to use the 被 structure correctly. Where candidates did not manage to secure marks, this was typically because their rewritten sentences were confusing or ambiguous, such as 雨林拍的照片被领队发到了网上. Another common incorrect answer was 领队在雨林拍的照片被发到了网上, in which the use of 被 was handled correctly, but the intended meaning was not the same as the original. Candidates must bear in mind that answers must retain the original meaning.

Question 3

Candidates responded well to this question, showing a thorough understanding of the passage about an expedition to a rainforest in Borneo. Almost all candidates paraphrased or recast the language used in the passage when answering the questions. Some showed evidence that they were able to select the relevant information from the texts to answer the questions, discarding incorrect or irrelevant information. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

- (a)** This question was well answered, and all responses included a verb such as 卖自己做的蛋糕; 利用周末打工; 把圣诞礼物换成现金 which demonstrated excellent understanding of the text. Common incorrect answers like 卖蛋糕 were not clear or full enough to gain the mark. A few candidates gave answers like 父母觉得打工比玩手机好, which revealed a misunderstanding of the text.
- (b)** This question tested inference and required candidates to deduce the writer's feelings from the descriptions of her physical state. Some candidates were able to offer words to reflect how the author felt 害怕, 紧张 and 疲劳, 累 etc., while others simply extracted the description from the text. The question specifically asked about how the writer was feeling 感觉, and candidates needed to note this and answer appropriately; the text described her physical state, such as 心砰砰直跳 and 睡了 and candidates then had to draw from this what her feeling were. This question was a good filter in differentiating candidates' capability.

- (c) The majority of candidates were able to accurately locate and present the information 打扫朽木 and 种树. In some cases, points were not clear or were incomplete in meaning, such as 把雨林的图片发到网上 when the correct response should be 把雨林被破坏的图片发到网上。Candidates must be reminded to read the context and cover the information fully in their answers.
- (d) This question was well answered and many candidates scored full marks. Where full marks were not awarded, this was usually due to answers such as 为生平第一次刷白墙而自豪. Although the key concept 刷墙 is included, the whole answer does not demonstrate candidates understood the question fully.
- (e) The success rate in this question was very impressive and 无数塑料瓶, 死掉的珊瑚和被冲上岸的冰箱 were usually all accurately located and presented.

Question 4

This passage was about having a break from mobile phones. Most candidates understood the text and successfully rephrased their answers. Overall, the performance on this question was better than **Question 3**. Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of reading the questions properly before answering in order to secure all the available marks.

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to locate the information confidently and gained full marks.
- (b) This question was well answered by candidates. Many were able to identify 爸爸自豪的眼神, 爸爸大声的加油 and 妈妈用他进球的照片做手机背景 as a sign of feeling proud. A small number of candidates only partially answered the question. e.g. giving answers like 爸爸的眼神, 妈妈手机的背景 and so could not gain all 3 marks on offer.
- (c) This question was very well handled by most candidates, who accurately located the key information and presented it clearly.
- (d) This question required candidates to read the question carefully, especially noting the key word disadvantage 坏处. Many successfully responded with 让人过度依赖科技, 让人忽视身边的人. However, 让人离目标越来越远 without the condition of 不正确使用科技 was not detailed enough to be awarded a mark.
- (e) Performance on this question was generally high. Candidates managed to read and understand the key concepts given in the last paragraph, carefully picking out or paraphrasing the key points.

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 handled **Question 5(a)** well. The best responses were able to integrate the ideas from the texts into their own writing to create a natural flow of ideas. Some strong candidates articulated their ideas well and incorporated the ideas from the text with their own seamlessly.

Many candidates managed to write succinctly and were efficient with their character usage in **Question 5(a)** leaving a more generous character allowance for them to express their own opinions in **Question 5(b)**. The vast majority managed to refer to their own experience too. To tackle this question well, candidates need to bear in mind that it is important to give varied and interesting ideas linked to the question. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate build up from their understanding of the passages to express ideas and opinions beyond what the passages offered.

Candidates need to be aware that setting the scene or including lengthy introductions is not necessary in this summary question, as it uses up valuable characters and may cause them to go over the 200-character limit. They should go straight in and focus on raising mark-worthy points linked to the question. Candidates need to develop the skills to link the points they are including effectively and succinctly in order to leave sufficient character allowance for the discussion in **Question 5(b)**. In addition, in order to score high marks for language, it is essential that candidates remember to answer the question in a continuous prose style. Candidates need to be able to show that they can use complex sentence structures accurately.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/31 Essay</p>
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Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- read the question carefully to ensure they have a clear understanding of the task before they begin writing. This will enable candidates to stay on track.
- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed, follows a logical argument and includes apt examples
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic, show they can use idioms appropriately and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper
- leave time to proofread work; planning in time to check work through can greatly reduce the number of mistakes in both characters and grammar.

General comments

A strong performance was seen throughout. Candidates were well-prepared and understood the requirements of the examination. Higher scoring candidates thoroughly understood the task and then used a wide range of tools to develop their responses. Such essays had a sound, flowing argument with a relevant conclusion, showing off the candidate's ability to use complex sentence structures and a range of vocabulary to develop their arguments. Essays in the middle-scoring range showed that candidates clearly possessed subject knowledge but did not do themselves justice when it came to articulating this on paper, or they needed a sharper focus on the question. The weakest responses sometimes exposed poor exam technique or showed that candidates needed a greater range of vocabulary to make an impact on the task.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Understanding the task is key: candidates sometimes false start because they haven't taken enough time to ensure they have fully understood the question in front of them. This comes down to exam technique. It is also good practice for candidates to reflect on their work to make sure they have stayed on track.
- Constructing a logical response: the strongest responses are those that are focussed. Arguments should be balanced and backed up with sound reasoning. Essays should display knowledge of the mechanics of a sound argument, i.e. have an introduction, set out both positions and provide a conclusion that follows. The better arguments are those that provide apt examples that clearly apply to the topic and impact upon the strength of the viewpoint. Connected to this is the ability to set this out using paragraphing and correct punctuation. Weaker responses are often tangential, a simple list of facts/views and/or heavily laden with anecdotal experience.
- Leaving time for proofreading: candidates often try to maximise their writing time rather than checking what they have already done. This sometimes leads to submitting work which contains careless errors that would have been picked up with more proofreading. Time set aside for checks on spelling and punctuation should be factored into each response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

你怎样理解少年强则国强？

There were many examples of outstanding performance here. The most able candidates developed various layers of argument explaining how a country could only prosper through a promising youth. This involved some excellent examples showing the correlation between creativity/innovation/production and physical capacity. Some also cited moral ideas around duty as a quality that sat predominantly with the youthful part of a society. In addition, strong answers tended to feature eloquent language as well as the necessary devices to ensure they were fluent and enjoyable to read. Other students took a different view and tried to outline the idea that the youth were, by nature, a vulnerable part of society. This worked up to an extent. Weaker responses were those that rehashed pre-learned material about young people and, for example, their hobbies, which failed to address the question and entirely missed the connection between a strong youth and a strong county.

Question 2

新闻的完全公正几乎不可能。你怎么看？

Overall, this question was well-handled although performance was nonetheless mixed. Some candidates were able to set out an argument that, in a free and open society, checks and balances exist to ensure maximum scrutiny when it comes to publishing accurate news. Set out in a well-reasoned manner and good use of examples, these candidates scored well. Less able candidates included those who interpreted the question narrowly and chose to focus on online stories, or simply social media itself discarding the influence of mainstream media. Other weaker candidates would take a position but then fail to develop it by sound argument and simply list examples of fake news.

Question 3

提供免费教育是促进社会平等的重要途径。请讨论。

The least popular question topic but one that attracted some excellent performances. Candidates unanimously agreed that education was the fundamental tool to lift people out of poverty. Some eloquent arguments were used to make that point. This included the idea that education was not just about learning simple facts but also designed to broaden horizons and help generate a sense of purpose.

Question 4

多利用空闲时间参加公益活动对我们有百利而无一害。请讨论。

This was one of the most popular topics. The vast majority of candidates appeared to recognise the virtue of charitable activities and the positive impact it had on society. On a micro level, this included the personal qualities it could foster in individuals. Strong responses included those with fulsome vocabulary and apt idiom. The slightly weaker, though still competent, responses were those which could not quite grasp the structure. This tended to result in a large block of text that, while still relevant, did not fully articulate the point they tried to make.

Question 5

作为医生，医德比医术更重要。请讨论。

This topic inspired some excellent debate among those who opted for it. The question succeeded in creating a level playing field for candidates to take a firm stance in either camp; leading to some potent arguments on both sides. The stronger responses were those that included a detailed look at the academic background and intelligence of doctors as well as their moral character. This included arguments around skill being developmental while virtues such as integrity were more inherent. Contrary arguments examined the technical competence of doctors and held that this far outweighed non-tangible qualities like virtues. The weaker candidates were those that failed to properly connect the two strands of the question, which led to some repetitive responses regarding the importance of both without giving any form of meaningful insight into the issues at stake.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/32 Essay</p>
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Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- read the question carefully to ensure they have a clear understanding of the task before they begin writing. This will enable candidates to stay on track.
- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed, follows a logical argument and includes apt examples
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic, show they can use idioms appropriately and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper
- leave time to proofread work; planning in time to check work through can greatly reduce the number of mistakes in both characters and grammar.

General comments

A strong performance was seen throughout. Candidates were well-prepared and understood the requirements of the examination. Higher scoring candidates demonstrated excellent exam technique, following the rubric carefully and showing understanding of what the question was asking. These candidates showed their ability by use of complex sentence structures and a range of vocabulary to develop their arguments, express and justify opinions and draw conclusions effectively. Essays in the middle-scoring range showed that candidates clearly possessed subject knowledge but struggled when it came to demonstrating this on paper, or they needed a sharper focus on the question. The weakest responses showed that candidates needed a greater range of vocabulary and skills to complete a competent response.

It was noticeable again this year that where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Understanding the task is key: candidates sometimes false start because they haven't taken enough time to ensure they have fully understood the question in front of them and assimilated what is being asked. Candidates should be reminded and encouraged to build in the thinking time needed for an able response. This comes down to exam technique. It is also good practice for candidates to reflect on their work to make sure they have stayed on track.
- Constructing a logical response: the strongest responses are those that are focussed. Arguments should be balanced and backed up with sound reasoning. Essays should display knowledge of the mechanics of a sound argument, i.e. have an introduction, set out both positions and provide a conclusion that follows. The better arguments are those that provide apt examples that clearly apply to the topic and impact upon the strength of the viewpoint. Connected to this is the ability to set this out using paragraphing, correct punctuation and relevant vocabulary. Weaker responses are often tangential, a simple list of facts/views and/or heavily laden with anecdotal experience.
- Leaving time for proofreading: candidates often try to maximise their writing time rather than checking what they have already done. This sometimes leads to submitting work which contains careless errors that would have been picked up with more proofreading. Time set aside for checks on spelling and punctuation should be factored into each response.

- Vocabulary is key: candidates must have enough vocabulary to ensure they can adequately respond to the demands of the paper. Resorting to pinyin and/or English is not an acceptable alternative.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

只有勇于冒险，年轻人才能有收获。你怎么看？

This was a popular question which elicited strong responses in terms of both content and language. Overall, the consensus was that it is important in life to step out of your comfort zone and that risks are necessary to attain rewards. Candidates were, on the whole, very knowledgeable, citing good examples in order to back up their ideas. This included reasoning skills around the notion that by being young you have time to learn from mistakes and recover. Other candidates chose a counter-argument, which was also well handled, citing mental wellbeing as a success in its own right and how this could be best attained by avoiding excessive stress and anxiety from risk-taking. A large number of candidates also showed a good understanding of the concept by categorising risk, for example, ranging from lawful to unlawful means to an end. Weaker responses included those that appeared to misconstrue the question, for example, arguing about the relation between diligence and success.

Question 2

作为公众人物，名人是否有义务为人们树立榜样？请讨论。

This was another popular question, drawing out some excellent responses from candidates, who should be congratulated on their knowledge of the topic and surrounding issues, for example, the power of social media. Only a small group of candidates correctly identified what constitutes a 'public figure', namely someone who has a role in society, with the larger cohort substituting this idea for 'celebrity'. As a result, top marks tended to go to those who fully understood concepts such as duty, and qualities such as leading by example. Strong answers were backed up by good examples, including those who have been positive role models as well as those who had fallen foul of their obligations through public scandals. Others honed in on the moral idea that public figures have benefitted from society and so they were indebted to give something back. Other impressive responses included those that took a contrary view. For example, that public figures were entitled to a private life and should not be constrained by society, which is a form of moral blackmail. Or, another view, was that their status entitled them to behave as they wished (within certain boundaries). Weaker answers included those that provided simple lists of who does and who does not lead by example, as well as those who padded out their responses by regurgitating events concerning public figures.

Question 3

为残疾人提供便利是任何社会都应该承担的责任。你怎么看？

This question was chosen by relatively fewer candidates, but the vast majority of candidates who did opt for it reached a consensus that there was a social responsibility towards care for others. This was backed up by sound reasoning, for example, citing key concepts such as 'equality' being a necessary condition for a fair society. A small number of candidates did argue against the notion of social obligation by referencing the moral/political concept of utility. That is, that it was morally unfair to overburden the majority to support the minority.

Question 4

如何利用空闲时间决定了一个人的生活质量。请讨论。

Most candidates who answered this question recognised the effectiveness of maximising free time in order to boost quality of life. Stronger answers gave good examples of how such time could be best utilised, for example, spending quality time with family and friends versus spending late nights gaming. Some candidates chose to argue that the quality of life could be determined by other more potent factors, for example, by income, success at work, or that it may be determined more randomly by chance and circumstances. The weaker responses included those which got diverted into other areas, for example, arguing about the importance of free time, or what quality of life actually means.

Question 5

智能机器人永远无法代替人类。你怎么看？

This question was, on the whole, ably handled by those who chose it. Good responses were those that demonstrated knowledge about Artificial Intelligence and how it has impacted on people's lives across a variety of circumstances, for example, in the hospital surgery or in the world of the arts. Most also argued that, despite the advances, AI would never replace humans in the future due to missing ingredients such as critical thinking, feelings and humour. Sharp arguments included the idea that, in contrast, AI would always be dependent on humans in terms of its creation and maintenance. Other good responses took a contrary view and reasoned that there was no limiting factor. They argued that it was logical to assume AI could eventually attain human-like status. Weaker candidates were those who narrowly focused on a list of what could and could not be replaced by AI.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/33 Essay</p>
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Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- read the question carefully to ensure they have a clear understanding of the task before they begin writing. This will enable candidates to stay on track.
- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed, follows a logical argument and includes apt examples
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic, show they can use idioms appropriately and write grammatically accurate Chinese
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General comments

A strong performance was seen throughout. Candidates were well-prepared and understood the requirements of the examination. Higher scoring candidates thoroughly understood the task and then used a wide range of tools to develop their responses. Such essays had a sound, flowing argument with a relevant conclusion, showing off the candidate's ability to use complex sentence structures and a range of vocabulary to develop their arguments. Essays in the middle-scoring range showed that candidates clearly possessed subject knowledge but did not do themselves justice when it came to articulating this on paper, or they needed a sharper focus on the question. The weakest responses sometimes exposed poor exam technique or showed that candidates needed a greater range of vocabulary to make an impact on the task.

Where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese.

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- Leaving time for proofreading: candidates often try to maximise their writing time rather than checking what they have already done. This sometimes leads to submitting work which contains careless errors that would have been picked up with more proofreading. Time set aside for checks on spelling and punctuation should be factored into each response.

- Vocabulary is key: candidates must have enough vocabulary to ensure they can adequately respond to the demands of the paper. Resorting to pinyin and/or English is not an acceptable alternative.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

只有承担更多的社会责任，年轻人才能更成熟。你怎么看？

Those candidates who chose this question had a firm understanding about the younger generation and the various issues they face. Most responses were aligned with the idea that by nurturing young people through good citizenship, you could enhance their life experience and maturity. Some good responses also came from candidates who took a different view and argued that maturity did not depend on societal responsibility. Weaker candidates seemed to get unnecessarily bogged down on the philosophical concept of maturity and a few candidates struggled with the concept of societal responsibility. There was a tendency from candidates answering this question to write what seemed to be pre-learned material about young people. While this did show some linguistic ability, it clearly did not address the question in hand.

Question 2

在自媒体盛行的今天，假新闻现象无法避免。你怎么看？

This was a topical question and gained a lot of solid responses from candidates. The stronger candidates recognised the current climate regarding social media: that despite being a force for good had an insidious side to it such as the proliferation of fake news. Such candidates could also outline what constituted fake news, how it could spread due to lack of scrutiny and how it could be latched onto by certain segments of society. In addition, they utilised a wide range of vocabulary relating to internet reach, free to upload videos, user-friendly social media, advanced technology and digital devices that are used by different age groups. Weaker candidates could outline the phenomenon but digressed into narrow fields, such as how to safeguard against fake news, or be a responsible netizen.

Question 3

男女就业的分工不同导致了他们收入的差距。你怎么看？

This question was answered by only a small number of candidates. However, it is sufficient to say the responses received were nonetheless of a good standard. The stronger answers showed maturity around understanding the concept of equality and drawing on the current landscape. There was some good discussion around stereotyping and biased perceptions that exist in liberal society, as well as examining physical characteristics that seem to earmark different genders to different roles. The weaker candidates tended to limit their responses by putting forth the basis of an argument as to why women may be discriminated against but failing to develop it with enough detail.

Question 4

我们有义务把运动锻炼作为我们日常生活的一部分。你怎么看？

This was another popular question among candidates. The vast majority of candidates saw a correlation between physical exercise and the positive impact it could have on wellbeing. The top responses were those that went deeper and talked about a benefit to wider society, for example, better health equals less burden on the society and family.

Question 5

加大对太空计划的投入是完全值得的。请讨论。

This question was answered by a small number of candidates. The higher scoring candidates explored the notion by presenting a scientific argument that deteriorating global conditions, such as overcrowding, meant investment in this area was a logical step. These responses also included the idea that such a move helped fulfil some inherent human desire to branch out into the universe. While others highlighted the pragmatic view that space exploration was an international enterprise and, as a result, could bolster more cooperation

between competing countries. Given such subject matter, stronger candidates were able to employ some excellent vocabulary to articulate this. The candidates who argued to the contrary contended that using precious resources on the great unknown was risky and that we should rather concentrate on the issues confronting us now. Weaker candidates tended to fixate on a simple costs argument or safety of space travel and needed to be able to expand on their arguments.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/41 Texts</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1 part (a)**, all subsections must be answered. When candidates answer **Questions 1, 2 or 3, part (a) in Section 1**, they must answer both **(i)** and **(ii)**. A number of candidates this year could not be fully rewarded as they only answered subsections **(i)** or **(ii)**.
- **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 poem/book as a whole. **Part (b)** of each question in **Section 1** should be answered with reference to the whole text.
- Candidates need to read the questions carefully to ensure they fully address all aspects of the question asked. An element of evaluation and analysis of the text is needed to reach the higher marking bands; a simple re-telling of the story is not required.
- The questions in **Section 1 part (b)** and **Section 2** 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

Most candidates showed detailed understanding of the Chinese texts, and many were also able to demonstrate knowledge of literary techniques when responding to the questions.

This year there were still a some candidates who did not follow the instructions correctly.

It is important that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front page of the question paper and remain unchanged. 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 must be on a different text. Those who answered three questions from the same section or who answered both options on the same text were credited with the two highest marks only. This year, there were also cases where candidates wrote about poems not listed in the syllabus; such work cannot be credited.

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes.

Most candidates were aware that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and they were able to analyse the plot or characters with supporting textual references. Several essays would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. Candidates should avoid summarising or repeating the story but rather 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.

In a small number of cases evidence of unfamiliarity with the works showed up through misunderstandings, such as thinking that the Zongzhen and Cuiyuan are lovers who reunited after a long absence, etc. Candidates are advised to choose questions based on the works they have read and studied to avoid major mistakes in answering questions.

Most candidates were able to answer questions 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 most successful responses were those that showed evidence of pre-essay planning and good time management. Each of the three essays is marked out of 25, so candidates need to ensure they give themselves enough time to answer all three equally well.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

艾青诗选 (Selected poems by Ai Qing)

- (a) This question was not answered by many candidates and performance in general was quite low. Most candidates were able to analyse the theme of the poem in combination with the material provided and the background of the war in the North at the time. In order to score more highly, candidates needed to include an interpretation of the author's emotions. In some cases, candidates produced a limited analysis relating to **Question a(ii)** which only reflected the section of the poem provided on the question paper, not the whole poem.
- (b) Some good responses were seen in answer to this question in which candidates were able to select two suitable poems by the author, analysing the author's love for his motherland with detailed and convincing examples. The poems chosen by some weaker candidates were not particularly suitable for this question, for example '*Shou Tui Che*' which led to a less-convincing analysis as well.

Question 2

夏衍: 《上海屋檐下》 ("Shanghai wuyan xia" by Xia Yan)

- (a) This was quite a popular question and candidates showed familiarity with the play. Many were able to give a detailed analysis of Huang Jiamei's complicated psychological state and the reasons for his emotional changes. They could also comment on the difficulties faced by the Huang family and use their knowledge of the social situation and historical context to analyse possible causes of these difficulties, showing good understanding of the author's intention. Weaker responses tended to focus on the Huang family's situation from Huang Jiamei's personal perspective, and did not touch the social background, or concentrated solely on the family relationship, which is off topic.
- (b) Only a small number of candidates chose this question. Whilst some candidates showed understanding of the theme of the work and the meaning of the words, "大家联合起来救国家! 救国家!", many responses simply retold the story with little analysis. Answers needed to include analysis of the darkness of society and the plight of the five families, as well as the power of the new generation represented by Baozhen and its meaning in the story in combination with the lyrics.

Question 3

张爱玲：《封锁》（“Fengsuo” by Zhang Ailing）

- (a) Some good responses were seen to this question which showed knowledge of the plot and the dialogues between the two main characters which came before and after the extract printed on the question paper; candidates who were familiar with the whole story were able to give a detailed analysis of the psychological activities behind Zongzhen’s language and behaviour. They could also interpret the impact of the blockade on the mentality of everyone in the book, especially on the two main characters, so as to analyse the bell ring in combination with the theme. Weaker responses sometimes focussed too heavily on the question posed in **part (i)** did not answer **part (ii)** fully enough. Some candidates misjudged the relationship between the two, for example, treating them as a pair of long-lost lovers.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question well, analysing the meaning of the title ‘Feng Suo/blockade’ in combination with specific plot points and symbolic meaning. Some candidates also pointed out the contrast and transformation between the blockade in reality and the mental block, which showed a good understanding of the theme and the author’s intention.

Section 2

Question 4

张抗抗《残忍》（“Canren” by Zhang Kangkang）

- (a) In this question, most candidates reached a very clear conclusion, and could support their arguments through the analysis of a range of relevant examples. Stronger responses also used Fu Yongjie’s cruelty to analyse the era and the social reasons behind it, thereby demonstrating their understanding of the theme of the work. Weaker responses were often more limited and only conducted an analysis of the behaviour of the characters.
- (b) This was a popular question. Some strong responses analysed the character 马嵘 in a detailed manner from multiple perspectives, including discussion of the social background as well. Weaker responses often simply retold elements of the story involving the character, with a summary of Ma Rong’s relationship with cruelty – greater analysis was needed to reach higher marking bands.

Question 5

沈从文：《边城》（“Bian Cheng” by Shen Congwen）

- (a) This question was not frequently chosen by candidates. Some candidates were able to give a detailed discussion of all aspects of grandpa’s character using specific examples, including how his character had an impact on Cuicui’s love life and marriage as well as the fate of the three young people. These candidates also combined their analysis of the characters with the theme of the writing.
- (b) There were too few answers to make an appropriate comment on this question.

Question 6

萧红：《手》（“Shou” by Xiao Hong）

- (a) Most responses demonstrated a good understanding of the characters and storyline. The strongest answers were clearly structured, conducting not only an analysis of the superficial reasons for the principal’s behaviour, but also an in-depth discussion of the principal’s mentality when facing Wang Yaming, reflecting the theme of the work. Weaker candidates were characterised by a more superficial analysis of the reasons why the principal refused to let Wang Yaming wear gloves.

- (b) This was the most popular question on the paper. Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the theme and showed that they were familiar with the story. They answered well with specific examples and produced essays with a clear structure. Weaker responses often needed a more comprehensive analysis to score more highly or to remain more tightly focussed on the question asked.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/42 Texts</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1 part (a)**, all subsections must be answered. When candidates answer **Questions 1, 2 or 3, part (a) in Section 1**, they must answer both **(i)** and **(ii)**. A number of candidates this year could not be fully rewarded as they only answered subsections **(i)** or **(ii)**.
- **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 poem/book as a whole. **Part (b)** of each question in **Section 1** should be answered with reference to the whole text.
- Candidates need to read the questions carefully to ensure they fully address all aspects of the question asked. An element of evaluation and analysis of the text is needed to reach the higher marking bands; a simple re-telling of the story is not required.
- The questions in **Section 1 part (b)** and **Section 2** 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

The performance on this component was very good and many outstanding essays were produced. Candidates seemed well-prepared and many were able to show knowledge about the historic setting of the text as well as the authors' intentions for the work. Most candidates showed detailed understanding of the Chinese texts, and many were also able to demonstrate knowledge of literary techniques when responding to the questions.

This year there was still a significant number of candidates who did not follow the instructions correctly. It is important that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front page of the question paper and remain unchanged. 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 must be on a different text. Those who answered three questions from the same section or who answered both options on the same text were credited with the two highest marks only. This year, there were also cases where candidates wrote about poems not listed in the syllabus; such work cannot be credited.

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was

often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes. In a few cases understanding of the context was less secure, especially when analysing poetry. Sometimes more contextual understanding was needed to enable full understanding and analysis, for example some candidates were not sure of the situation at the time Ai Qing's poems were written, which resulted in a misunderstanding of the theme. When candidates study the works, it is important and helpful to make sure they understand and consider the backgrounds of these works. Candidates are also advised to choose questions based on the works they have read and studied to avoid major mistakes in answering questions.

Most candidates were aware that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and they were able to analyse the plot or characters with supporting textual references. A few responses became distracted by giving general information about the author's life or even relating elements of the texts to their own personal experiences, which is not necessary. Several essays would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. Candidates should avoid summarising or repeating the story but rather 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.

Most candidates were able to answer questions 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 most successful responses were those that showed evidence of pre-essay planning and good time management. Each of the three essays is marked out of 25, so candidates need to ensure they give themselves enough time to answer all three equally well.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

艾青诗选 (Selected poems by Ai Qing)

- (a) Most candidates were able to analyse the image of beggars as presented in the poem 《乞丐》 and explained how the descriptions portrayed their state of poverty, extreme hunger, and homelessness. Stronger candidates also used the whole poem and knowledge of the social context to interpret the author's hatred of war, and sympathy and compassion for beggars. Some candidates were less secure in the analysis of the historical background, whilst others misunderstood the author's emotions and the theme of the work, and misinterpreted the poem as being critical of beggars.
- (b) The best responses to this question used two suitable poems by Ai Qing to analyse how the poet expressed concern for people and life through the image of land, using detailed and convincing examples to support their argument. Weaker responses needed to take note of the keyword "land" as they were often limited to an analysis of the content of the poems. In some cases, candidates chose to write about poems that were not suitable for this question and did not exemplify what the question asked for, such as 'Dayanhe' which made their analysis less convincing. In addition, the poems selected by a few candidates were not listed in the syllabus; candidates should be reminded that their answers should refer to material within the syllabus content.

Question 2

夏衍：《上海屋檐下》（“Shanghai wuyan xia” by Xia Yan）

- (a) Most candidates showed good understanding and knowledge of the play. They knew that Yang Caiyu and Lin Zhicheng lived together and could also analyse the reasons behind it. Stronger candidates were able to provide further analysis on the social causes contributing to the situation, such as the government's oppression of revolutionaries at that time, the low social status of women who struggled to find jobs, and so on. Some weaker responses revealed a misunderstanding of the reasons for Kuangfu's departure from Yang Caiyu, whilst others over-analysed Kuangfu's mental state after returning, which was unnecessary for this question.
- (b) Most candidates performed well and could compare in detail the different living situations and psychological states of the two characters as exemplified through the songs they love to sing. Stronger responses also provided deeper discussion on the influence of their different life experiences, connecting this to the social background at the time, and the different roles of the two characters in bringing out the theme. Weaker responses were characterised by an unbalanced or incomplete analysis of the two characters.

Question 3

张爱玲：《留情》，《封锁》（“Liuqing” and “Fengsuo” by Zhang Ailing）

- (a) This was a popular question and most candidates showed that they had understood the similarities between Cuiyuan and Zongzhen's life experiences. Many candidates were able to cite these similarities as the following: the influence of family members, troubles at work, involuntary marriage, and most importantly, the fact that they couldn't do what they wanted to do and they had to play the part of a good person instead of being themselves; candidates then went on to explain and analyse the themes of the work. In response to **part (i)**, most candidates included a discussion of Cuiyuan's disappointment and sadness at Zongzhen's leaving, but only the best responses also specifically analysed her psychological changes. The highest scoring responses included detailed and specific analysis of both **parts (i) and (ii)**.
- (b) This was also a very popular question. Most candidates produced an accurate analysis of the marital relationship between Mr. Mi and Dunfeng, pointing out that although they had a marriage of convenience, they developed a sense of warmth and love for each other in daily life. The strongest responses also referenced the theme of work and discussed the author's understanding of marriage and relationships. Some weaker answers were less convincing and focussed too heavily on the relationship between the two people and their predecessors.

Section 2

Question 4

张抗抗《残忍》（“Canren” by Zhang Kangkang）

- (a) Most candidates showed familiarity with the plot of the novel and were able to use specific examples to discuss the relationship between Niuben and Yangyang, sometimes including detailed analysis of Niuben's possessive love and Yangyang's ambivalence. Weaker responses mainly framed their answer from Niuben's perspective and needed to also include Yangyang's viewpoint to score more highly. Some others described the conflicts between Niuben and Fu Zhenglian, rather the relationship with Yangyang, thus missing the focus of the question.
- (b) Stronger candidates used ample evidence to analyse the reasons why the soldiers of the company failed to appeal. These including examples such as the following: Niuben handing over the confession easily, the regiment headquarters covering up Fu Zhenglian, the regiment headquarter's unwillingness to be implicated, exposing themselves to corruption and bribery, Niuben's unpardonable crime of homicide and the lack of social legal system at that time. These answers and examples reflected the candidates' ability to think independently and their understanding of the background of the work and the author's intention. Some weaker responses relied too heavily on simply describing the plot and analysing the theme of cruelty, which was not always relevant and did not link well to the question asked.

Question 5

沈从文：《边城》（“Bian Cheng” by Shen Congwen）

- (a) This question was not frequently chosen by candidates. Those candidates who did answer on this text were often able to carefully analyse the author's description of the natural environment and were able to connect the unsophisticated and beautiful natural environment with the beauty of human nature praised in the novel, showing good understanding of the role of environmental descriptions and the theme of the work. Weaker responses showed a tendency to use a large number of quotations from the text describing the environment but needed to also include an analysis of these quotations in their answers to make them relevant and justified. Candidates sometimes needed to take into consideration the difference between the social environment and the natural environment, and to focus their answers on the latter to meet the requirement of the question.
- (b) Candidates who chose this question demonstrated their familiarity with the work. They were able to select specific examples from the two brothers' pursuit of Cuicui to analyse the brothers' attitudes towards love and family. Stronger candidates could further analyse and compare the brothers' characters from what they said and what they did. Weaker responses mainly retold the storyline, focusing on the tragic love ending, but omitting analysis of the brothers' characters.

Question 6

萧红：《手》（“Shou” by Xiao Hong）

- (a) Many candidates chose this question. Most showed that they were familiar with the plot and had a good understanding of the themes. Stronger candidates also gave a detailed analysis of the process of Wang Yaming's psychological changes from when she first came to school to when she was forced to leave. Such responses often also made the connection with the theme of the work and analysed the specific reasons for the changes. It was evident that some candidates had perhaps misunderstood Wang Yaming's mental state when leaving school, with some interpreting the situation as her giving up of her own accord or no longer being able to bear the bullying and needing to escape from school.
- (b) This was also a very popular question. Most candidates were able to analyse the differences between Wang Yaming and her classmates, citing a range of differences including hand colour, learning attitudes, educational levels, family background/living habits, differences in social class, etc., which resulted in the bullying and discrimination of the upper class against the lower class.

CHINESE

Paper 9715/43
Texts

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1 part (a)**, all subsections must be answered. When candidates answer **Questions 1, 2 or 3, part (a) in Section 1**, they must answer both **(i)** and **(ii)**. A number of candidates this year could not be fully rewarded as they only answered subsections **(i)** or **(ii)**.
- **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 poem/book as a whole. **Part (b)** of each question in **Section 1** should be answered with reference to the whole text.
- Candidates need to read the questions carefully to ensure they fully address all aspects of the question asked. An element of evaluation and analysis of the text is needed to reach the higher marking bands; a simple re-telling of the story is not required.
- The questions in **Section 1 part (b)** and **Section 2** 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

Candidate performance this year was generally good, with a wide range of sound and competent essays seen, showing evidence of thorough preparation. Most candidates showed detailed understanding of the Chinese texts, and many were also able to demonstrate knowledge of literary techniques when responding to the questions.

This year there were still a some candidates who did not follow the instructions correctly. It is important that candidates are familiar with the requirements of the examination; details are given in both English and Chinese on the front page of the question paper and remain unchanged. 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 must be on a different text. Those who answered three questions from the same section or who answered both options on the same text were credited with the two highest marks only. This year, there were also cases where candidates wrote about poems not listed in the syllabus; such work cannot be credited.

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes.

In a few cases, responses exposed that candidates were unfamiliar with the works, and misunderstanding or guesswork was evident. Candidates are advised to choose questions based on the works they have read and studied to avoid major mistakes in answering questions.

Most candidates were aware that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and they were able to analyse the plot or characters with supporting textual references. A few weaker responses became distracted or lost relevance to the question by giving general information about the author's life or even relating elements of the texts to their own personal experiences. Several essays would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. Candidates should avoid summarising or repeating the story but rather 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.

Most candidates were able to answer questions 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 most successful responses were those that showed evidence of pre-essay planning and good time management. Each of the three essays is marked out of 25, so candidates need to ensure they give themselves enough time to answer all three equally well.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

艾青诗选 (Selected poems by Ai Qing)

- (a) Most candidates could analyse the importance of 手推车 in the poem, analysing both the literal and symbolic meanings. Most candidates showed an understanding of the historical context when the poem was written and could describe the social reality in China at that time. Stronger candidates could further analyse the use of language and techniques used in the poem to support their argument.
- (b) This question was a popular choice and most candidates who chose this question successfully used two suitable poems in their answers. The best responses also analysed the language used in the poems in detail, highlighting features such as the simple language and style, which also demonstrated their understanding of the author's style and the theme of the poems. Weaker responses often included an interpretation of the poem as a whole but needed to also focus on the style of the language. Some candidates confused simplicity of language with plain language.

Question 2

夏衍: 《上海屋檐下》 ("Shanghai wuyan xia" by Xia Yan)

- (a) Very few candidates chose this question. Those who did were usually able to compare the differences between the personalities of Zhao Zhenyu and Zhao's wife. It was not unusual to see answers to this question which revealed unfamiliarity with the extract supplied on the question paper, as responses often contained errors and misunderstandings in their analysis. A relatively small number of strong responses included a detailed analysis of the mental state of Mrs. Zhao at that time based on the plot before and after the moment of the extract. They suggested Mrs. Zhao's complacency was due to her dislike and contempt for Shi Xiaobao, and identified that she was the first to discover Shi Xiaobao's disgraceful life, and so on.
- (b) Most candidates were more familiar with the life experiences of Kuang Fu, Yang Caiyu and Lin Zhicheng and the complex relationship between them. In order to improve, a more substantial interpretation of their marital status and the social reasons behind it was needed. The best responses included a deeper analysis of the historical background, such as the government's

oppression of revolutionaries at that time, the low social status of women, the difficulties faced by single mothers, the exploitation of workers by capitalists and other social problems, and the release of political prisoners after the Xi'an Incident the Sino-Japanese war.

Question 3

张爱玲: 《留情》, 《封锁》 (“Liuqing” and “Fengsuo” by Zhang Ailing)

- (a) For question 3(a)(i), most candidates were able to analyse Dunfeng’s language and behaviour in order to present a very strong argument and clear conclusion that Dunfeng was not happy to let Mr. Mi visit his ex-wife. They were also able to examine the character of Mr. Mi from different perspectives using specific examples. Stronger responses made connections with the wider theme and discussed the author’s understanding of marriage and relationships. A small number of candidates only partially answered the question – candidates should be reminded that in Section 1 where several sub questions are given (e.g. (i)(ii)(iii)), they must answer all parts.
- (b) This was a very popular question, and candidates presented differing arguments which asserted either that Cuiyuan and Zongzhen were really in love (in the short term) or that they were not in love (in the long run); either was acceptable, as long as the analysis presented by the candidate was reasonable and supported. When analysing the relationship between the two, stronger responses discussed the different mental states of the two characters and related this to the theme of the story, which reflected their deep understanding of the work.

Section 2

Question 4

张抗抗《残忍》 (“Canren” by Zhang Kangkang)

- (a) This question required a careful analysis of the behaviour and motivation of Niuben. Some high-scoring responses linked the plot to Niuben’s personality to analyse the reasons why Niuben had the trial before killing Fu. These reasons included the following: to make sure Fu Zhenglian pleaded guilty and to leave evidence to prevent him from overturning the case; Niuben believed that that he represented justice and had the right to try Fu Zhenglian in revenge for all the Zhi Qing (educated youth) in oppression; he wanted to know if Fu Zhenglian bullied YangYang; he did not intend to kill Fu at the beginning, he just wanted him to confess, etc. Responses from weaker candidates were often characterised by a partial analysis focused on the cruelty of the two characters and needed a stronger connection to the question asked.
- (b) This was another very popular question. Most candidates were familiar with the plot and conducted a good analysis of the two changes in Ma Rong’s attitude towards Niuben’s death decades later, emphasising his betrayal and cruelty. In order to improve, some responses needed a deeper analysis of Ma Rong’s thoughts and attitudes when Niuben was executed. Stronger responses focused on the key word “change” and discussed Ma Rong’s mental journey more completely. They also interpreted the theme in connection with the social reasons behind it.

Question 5

沈从文: 《边城》 (“Bian Cheng” by Shen Congwen)

- (a) Although not many candidates chose this question, most who did answered it comprehensively and in depth, from the perspectives of family, lovers, friends, villagers, etc. Candidates analysed the relationships and care between people in the novel with specific examples, and interpreted the theme of the work, praising the beauty of humanity.
- (b) This question was not chosen by many candidates. Stronger candidates comprehensively analysed Cuicui’s character and its importance in the realisation of the theme, using a number of relevant examples to support their arguments. The analysis of weaker candidates mainly focused on her attitude towards love, and a more rounded examination was needed to score more highly.

Question 6

萧红: 《手》 (“Shou” by Xiao Hong)

- (a) This was the most frequently chosen question on the paper. Most candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the theme of the work and exhibited familiarity with the story. The strongest responses discussed the social problems reflected in Wang Yaming’s unfortunate experience, citing details such as the gap between the rich and poor in society at that time, class differences, intolerance towards people from lower social classes, condescending attitudes towards foreigners by some in the field of education, etc. The analysis of the weaker candidates was not always comprehensive enough.
- (b) Candidates showed knowledge of Wang Yaming’s experience in the school. In some cases, candidates needed to read the question more carefully, as they discussed other people’s attitudes towards Wang Yaming rather than Yaming’s attitude towards learning and other students, as asked for in the question. Stronger candidates were able to analyse the reasons behind Wang Yaming’s attitude towards study and other people, and they discussed the society’s ruthless and unfair treatment of her from Wang Yaming’s perspective, demonstrating their understanding of the author’s intentions.