CHINESE

Paper 9715/21
Reading and Writing 21

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 focused on music and the power of music in everyday life. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience or 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 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
- have a plan on how long they need to spend on each question, to make sure they have sufficient time for **Question 5**
- attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

A strong performance was seen from candidates in this year's examination. Most candidates showed they had a thorough understanding of the two reading passages and a good number of candidates offered complete and accurate answers. In general, answers were presented clearly and, for the most part, handwriting was legible. The majority of candidates attempted all the questions.

Many good and clearly expressed responses to **Question 3** and **Question 4** were seen. Many candidates demonstrated their ability to rephrase information through using appropriate connectives, using synonyms, rearranging the word order and filtering out the key information. There were a few candidates this year who did not write their answers in continuous prose for **Question 3** and **Question 4**, which had an impact on the Quality of Language marks that could be awarded.

The majority of answers to **Question 5** were written within the word limit. **Question 5 (a)** continues to be less well-answered compared to other questions on the paper. Candidates need to read the questions carefully, making sure they understand the specific focus of the task before beginning to write their summary. This will help them to ensure they response is fully relevant.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to find the correct synonyms from the reading passage and write them accurately. To improve performance, candidates need to better understand the function of the vocabulary tested and to analyse its position in 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, and the majority could locate 特殊 in the passage.

(b)   The performance on this question was still very good, however, relatively speaking this was found to be the most challenging question in this section. The most common incorrect answer given was 比赛场所, which showed that candidates knew where the answer was in the text, but did not have a full enough understanding to be precise in their answer and therefore included additional words.

(c)   This was one of the best answered questions in the paper, with most candidates finding the target vocabulary item.

(d)   Most candidates handled this question well, with only a few candidates struggling to find 七嘴八舌 in the text.

(e)   This was another well answered question and almost all candidates were able to supply the correct synonym 传递.

Question 2

Candidates tackled this question confidently, showing a firm understanding of the grammatical structures being tested and their ability to manipulate them within the sentence.

(a)   Candidates seemed familiar with the structure being tested as a vast majority handled this successfully.

(b)   The performance on this question was very good and most candidates secured the mark.

(c)   The majority of candidates demonstrated they could manipulate the structure correctly. Quite a few candidates wrote 倘若没有合唱团，就没有现在的我, which was also accepted.

Question 3

The reading passage described Xiaoya's experience of participating in a choir competition. Candidates performed strongly on this question. Some very able candidates managed to summarise their answers using their own words, whilst others mainly used the words from the passage.

(a)   Most candidates were able to score 3 or 4 marks on this opening question. The point relating to 代表公司参加 was found to be the hardest for candidates to recognise as making the competition significant for Xiaoya. Quite a few candidates wrote 失去听力 or 是听力障碍人士, which were accepted.

(b)   Some candidates were able to produce excellent concise answers to convey ideas like 团员来自不同的岗位, 不分年龄或资历 from the text. Others simply used the examples from the texts, which were also credited.

(c)   A strong performance was seen in response to this question with most candidates securing at least 3 marks out of 4. The most frequently omitted answer was 早早来到比赛场所.

(d)   Candidates handled this question successfully. Almost all candidates identified the point 更好的自己 correctly, but a few candidates wrote 克服了内心, which was not focused clearly enough on the key point of 收获. Similarly, answers like 收获了兄弟姐妹 did not show genuine understanding, and so could not be credited.

(e) An excellent performance was seen here with most candidates providing accurate answers. Different variations like 有坚持不懈的精神 which had a similar meaning to 内心坚强 were seen, showing that candidates were able to use a wide range of their own words to answer questions.

Question 4

The topic of this passage was music and business culture. Candidates attempted all questions and most wrote in full sentences.

(a) Responses to this question were mixed, as quite a few candidates found it challenging to give the two necessary pieces of information 用特殊的节奏配合劳动动作 and 用简单的语言跟随旋律. Whilst some excellent answers were seen, answers like 节奏配合劳动动作 or 语言跟随旋律 were awarded marks providing the meaning was clear.

(b) Most candidates tackled this question well. Almost all candidates could supply the point 使人放松.

(c) Most candidates scored at least 2 marks out of a possible 4. Answer such as 雄辩的能力 were accepted and a small number of candidates were also able to draw the conclusion from the text that lawyers are 口才好.

(d) Most candidates managed to score 2 marks out of 3. Some candidates included irrelevant answers like 减少压力 which were not credited. When trying to express the concept of increased team spirit or a strengthened sense of cohesion within a company, some candidates gave answers like 让律师们成为一家人 which did not show a full understanding of what the text said.

(e) This was best answered question in this section. Most candidates gave all 4 valid points successfully. Others seemed to have misread the question, as their answers focused on the outcome of the music, such as 调动员工积极性 or 营造良好的文化氛围.

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

Most candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise many relevant points from both passages about the importance of music in the development of businesses.

Almost all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. **Question 5(a)** was found to be quite challenging by some, and there were few scripts which were awarded all 10 content points. Lower-scoring responses were characterised by lengthy sections focusing on only a few points or repeating the same points in different ways. The best responses were those that summarised a variety of points from the passages, articulating ideas clearly. Candidates must bear in mind that it is a summary task and the key is to outline relevant points directly linked to **Question 5(a)** in order to score highly.

For **Question 5(b)**, higher-scoring responses gave 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 relevant responses to the question.

In order to score highest marks for language, it is essential that candidates remember to answer the question in a continuous prose style. Furthermore, candidates need to be able to show that they can use complex sentence structures accurately.

CHINESE

Paper 9715/22
Reading and Writing 22

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 on the topic of politeness and the importance of improving the awareness of good manners amongst young people. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience or opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5(b)** should be a personal response 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 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
- have a plan on how long they need to spend on each question, to make sure they have sufficient time for **Question 5**
- 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. Some responded to the questions fully, using clear expressions and giving focused answers with a range of appropriate vocabulary.

Responses to **Questions 1** and **2** were very good, with most candidates showing they had a sound knowledge of the tested vocabulary and grammar. Similarly, many good and clearly expressed responses to **Question 3** and **Question 4** were seen. Many candidates demonstrated their ability to rephrase information through using appropriate connectives, using synonyms, rearranging the word order and carefully selecting the key information. It is important that candidates pay attention to the mark allocation and cover all the points required by the questions; some able candidates could not be awarded all available marks as their answers were incomplete. It is important that candidates read the questions carefully before giving answers.

There were still quite a few candidates this year who did not write their answers in continuous prose for **Question 3** and **Question 4**, which had an impact on the Quality of Language marks that could be awarded. Candidates should be reminded that it is important to provide well written responses in full sentences rather than bullet points or note-form in order to demonstrate the skills required in the mark scheme for Accuracy.

Most candidates were able to include at least 5 valid points for **Question 5(a)** as well expressing their own views for **Question 5(b)** within the word limit. It was noted that the vocabulary and language used was excellent this year.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The performance on this question was very good and showed that candidates had thoroughly understood the vocabulary, enabling them to locate the synonyms from the passage 1.

(a) This question was very well answered. Candidates could usually identify 规则 as the synonym. Occasional incorrect answers included 却礼貌, 交谈 or 遵守.

(b) Almost all candidates were able to gain the mark for this question. If an incorrect answer was supplied, it was usually 被视为，被认为, 认为 or 巷尾.

(c) The majority of candidates demonstrated a correct understanding to the tested vocabulary. In a minority of cases, responses such as 欠缺礼貌, 教育, 管诚, 管教子女, 质疑 or 痛惜 were given, which may indicate an element of guessing rather than leaving the answer space blank.

(d) This was a well answered question with majority of the candidates correctly supplying 殊不知. Infrequent incorrect answers included 不良印, 但殊不知, 必可不少 or 态度.

(e) Overall, candidates answered this question well, but a wider variety of performance was seen, including more incorrect responses compared to other questions in the section. These wrong answers included: 注意，礼貌，出乎意料，正式，具备，接洽，凝聚，姿势 or 讲话. A few candidates also left this question unanswered.

Question 2

Most candidates completed the grammatical manipulation questions successfully and managed to re-write the sentences correctly using the structures provided. Candidates needed to take care to place the given structures in the right place in order to ensure the new sentences were logically correct. To be awarded marks for **Question 2**, the original meaning of the sentence must be retained after the inclusion of the given structure.

(a) Most candidates were able to manipulate 把 structure successfully whilst maintaining the original meaning. Some candidates had problems with word order, which created sentences which did not make sense, such as 被大家誉为礼仪之邦把中国一直以来 or 中国把一直以来都被大家誉为礼仪之邦.

(b) This was generally well answered. Some candidates retained 仍 or 仍然 in the sentence after applying the required structure 尽管……还是…… and could not be credited as a result.

(c) The majority of candidates knew where to place 之所以, but some candidates seemed unsure where to place 一个有礼貌的人. Answers such as: 一个有礼貌的人很少之所以给别人留下不良的印象，是因为往往会结交到更多的朋友 or 之所以往往会结交到更多的朋友，是因为一个有礼貌的人很少给别人留下不良的印象 were not credit worthy.

Question 3

The topic of this passage was politeness and the benefits of having good manners. A strong performance was seen, with candidates generally attempting all questions. Candidates showed command of a variety of vocabulary in their answers and were able to use a good range of linking words, such as 首先……其次……最后；第一，第二…… enabling them to access the higher mark range for Quality of Language. Candidates were aware that they should not lift language extensively from the passages, and generally wrote using their own words.

(a) The question required candidates to identify the factors that influence politeness, as described in the first paragraph. A good number of candidates showed excellent understanding and gave precise answers, whilst others found this question very challenging, as answers could not be simply lifted from the text, and required some interpretation. Weaker responses struggled to paraphrase the language correctly, or simply lifted a section of a sentence '用和朋友聊天时的言语和老师交谈', which did not answer the question and therefore could not be credited.

(b) This question had the best performance in this section, with the majority of candidates successfully locating the required information. Candidates who simply quoted 百善孝为先 needed to add further explanation to say that this was used to educate children to gain the mark here.

(c) Candidates in general read this question carefully and responded accordingly. Weaker responses showed a misreading of the question and typically stated all the bad behaviours rather than the circumstances leading to those behaviours. Common wrong answers were: 一些不良行为在没有诚信的人的情况下; 只顾个人利益的人的情况下; 有粗鲁无礼的人的情况下.

(d) This question was well-answered as most candidates were aware that a positive adjective was needed to define each quality. The majority of candidates secured 3 marks out of a possible 4. Candidates were expected to make the term 交谈方式 positive in their answer to secure the mark, and quite a few candidates handled this successfully.

(e) Most candidates achieved 3 marks out of 4, with the point about 成为成功人士 being most frequently omitted. Weaker responses simply stated '接到更多订单' from the text, which could not be credited.

Question 4

The topic of this passage was about teaching young people good manners. The performance on this question was better than **Question 3,** which demonstrated the excellent understanding and language proficiency candidates have. Some interesting language was used in the answers provided, including a good selection of linking words. Overall, a large number of candidates were able to use the information from the texts to answer questions.

(a) There was a high performance on this question. Most candidates scored 2 out of 3 marks, with the point '少训斥孩子' being most frequently omitted; candidates often included '不要拉开和孩子的距离 or 拉近彼此的距离' in their responses instead. Some candidates mixed up action 少训斥孩子 and consequence 拉大了与孩子的距离, and needed to note that the question asked for the action '该怎么做' not the outcome.

(b) This was one of the best-answered questions in the section. The majority of candidates responded very well, giving answers such as '见到老师问好', '排队打饭' etc.; It was regrettable that some candidates gave answers describing negative behaviours rather than changing them into positive behaviours to fulfil the task.

(c) This question was well-handled and a strong performance was seen. Occasionally, a small number of candidates neglected to specify whose safety 奶奶 was concerned about, and so did not gain the mark.

(d) The performance on this question was mixed. Quite a few candidates found it difficult to identify that teachers should create a positive environment within the school or that young people need to want to learn good manners themselves. Answers like 有一个好的校园环境 or 有从自身做起的意识 were not detailed enough to reflect the text fully.

(e) This was the best-answered question in this section with almost all candidates securing both marks.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions. Although the mark scheme is presented in bullet point format, this is to show the key concepts required for each mark-bearing content

point only. It is expected that candidates try to use full sentences when answering questions, as they need to show they can use more complex structures accurately to reach the highest marking band for Quality of Language.

Question 5

Candidates handled **Question 5(a)** well. Higher-scoring candidates were able to integrate information from the texts seamlessly into their own writing, creating a natural flow and articulating their ideas clearly. In **Question 5(a),** most candidates were able to identify poor behaviour as discussed in the second passage, but found it more challenging to identify the characteristics of politeness from the first passage. There were still some candidates this year who responded to **Question 5(a)** by expressing their own ideas and talking about personal experience without referring to the texts at all. 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.

In **Question 5(b)**, most candidates were able to express their personal views very well. They were able to show their knowledge, attitudes and opinions about manners. 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. Ideas and opinions were generally not as well developed this year; this may be due to the restriction of the character count or limited personal experience. However, some excellent answers with a wide range of opinions, ideas and facts were seen.

Most candidates showed that they could write accurate Chinese and were able to communicate clearly and effectively throughout.

CHINESE

> **Paper 9715/23**
> **Reading and Writing 23**

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 on the topic of external and internal beauty. **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 synonyms, conjunctions and linking words, and 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
- have a plan on how long they need to spend on each question, to make sure they have sufficient time for **Question 5**
- attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

The quality of work produced in this year's examination was very good. Most candidates demonstrated their genuine understanding of the two reading passages and were able to respond clearly and accurately. Answers were presented clearly and most questions were attempted by all.

Candidates, in general, were able to use varied vocabulary and some used complex structures to answer questions. There were some candidates who did not write their answers in continuous prose for **Question 3** and **Question 4**, which had an impact on the Quality of Language marks that could be awarded.

It was noted that **Question 5 (a)** was the least well-answered compared to other questions and there was evidence that candidates found locating the relevant information from the passages quite challenging. Furthermore, some candidates struggled to use concise language to organise the ideas from the texts within the word limit. Candidates showed their command of written Chinese by using a variety of complex structures accurately in their responses.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A high level of performance was seen in the answers to this question, showing that most candidates had understood the vocabulary well and also had a solid knowledge of synonyms. In some cases, candidates needed to be more careful with their character writing to avoid missing or adding strokes which might cause ambiguity.

(a) Most candidates were able to identify 狭隘 from the passage.

(b) Performance on this question was split between those who could locate the correct answer well and others who just seemed to guess the answer, writing answers that were quite random.

(c) An excellent understanding of the vocabulary was shown here with the majority of candidates securing the mark, despite the fact that the character 瞬 was quite hard to write.

(d) Candidates successfully handled this question and most answers were accurate.

(e) This was another well answered question with almost all candidates supplying the correct synonym 无妨.

Question 2

In general, candidates did well in this question. The vast majority of candidates re-wrote the sentences correctly using the structures given.

(a) Candidates generally answered this question successfully using the 只有……才…… structure. A small number of answers omitted 觉得, which had an impact on the meaning and therefore could not be credited.

(b) Overall, this was the best answered question in this section. Some incorrect answers such as 牙齿美白法是对牙齿造成的破坏不可逆转 were occasionally seen and were not accepted.

(c) There was a strong performance on this question too. Answer such as 一个人的美除了外貌以外，还有内在 were frequently seen and as the meaning was retained, credit was given.

Question 3

The topic of this passage was how social media affects people's idea of beauty. Performance was generally good, and some candidates managed to locate and extract material accurately, using their own words to rephrase the information. The majority of candidates used full sentences in their answers, which helped them achieve good marks for quality of language. Candidates seemed aware that they should not lift large amounts of language directly from the passages.

(a) There was quite a mixed performance on this question. More able candidates were able to precisely locate and extract the concepts of beauty discussed in the opening sentences. Others copied more extensively from the text. Lots of candidates wrote 片面 or 局限 which were accepted for 狭隘.

(b) Most candidates could supply 不化妆不出门 but found the second point (照镜子时看不到自己的美) more challenging. It was noticeable that those candidates who did not secure the second point only gave a partial answer like 看不到自己的美, and needed to include the essential element 照镜子时.

(c) The vast majority of candidates were able to give accurate answers to this question. A few answers like, 牙齿美白法对健康产生危害, 减肥药对身体有副作用 were relevant, but not precise enough to warrant the mark because they did not reflect a genuine understanding of the text.

(d) Candidates handled this question well. Almost all candidates could say 大家都只会选晒自身最美的地方. A range of different acceptable answers were seen for the second point, such as 在照片上只

能看到外貌美. Answers like 只在乎外貌 or 只能看到外貌美, 忽略了内在美 only paid attention to the beauty side without mentioning 照片 which was key to the answer, therefore, no mark could be awarded to such answers.

(e) There was a strong performance in this question. A few candidates elaborated their answers extensively, which unfortunately meant that they strayed so far from the original text their answers were no longer valid. Answers like 不在不必要的人身上浪费时间, 不要浪费时间去关注不值得关注的人 of which 不必要的人 or 不值得关注的人 is different from 不值得尊敬的人, and therefore couldn't be credited.

(f) Most candidates managed to score 2 out of the possible 3 marks available. Answer like 可以学习新技能 which did not specify that the learning was happening through watching videos (看视频) were not credited.

Question 4

The main focus of this passage was the idea that beauty could be seen in many different ways. The overall performance on this question was better than **Question 3**. Candidates in general attempted all questions and most candidates wrote in full sentences.

(a) The best responses demonstrated an excellent understanding of the text and gave answers along with the key concept: 恶劣的天气, 得在拂晓或深夜工作, 得干最脏的活儿. Some candidates showed that they were able to locate the answers but could not rephrase them confidently. Answer like 从早到晚 included an element of personal interpretation which didn't accurately reflect the text, and so could not be given the mark.

(b) Lots of positive responses were seen and most candidates were able to use descriptive words to show the hardship of being a 清洁工.

(c) This question was very well answered by most candidates.

(d) Candidates' answers covered both the tough working conditions the traffic police endured and how responsible and devoted they are. Answers like 不顾自身的不适, 把车辆和行人的安全放在首位 showed genuine understanding of the text and excellent quality of language.

(e) This was the best answered question in this section. Quite a few candidates used 拾金不昧 which was a positive example of language command at this level.

(f) This question produced a variety of answers. Some excellent answers demonstrated a clear understanding of the points required. Answers which had clear meaning like 有点偏执的人, 不能用心的人 were accepted. A few candidates missed out a key part of the answer 有无谓的烦忧的人 and only wrote 有烦恼的人, which did not fully convey the required meaning.

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

Most candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise the relevant points from both passages about how external and internal beauty is portrayed in everyday life.

Almost all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. A number of candidates found it challenging to include ideas from both passages in their responses to **Question 5(a)**. Key points from passage 2 were frequently used, whereas the concepts from the first passage usually only covered觉得没化妆就不能出门 and看不到自己独特的美. For **Question 5(b)**, quite a few candidates found it hard to give more examples or ideas linking 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.

Language accuracy was generally good. Candidates wrote in continuous prose and were able to use complex structures accurately.

CHINESE

| Paper 9715/31 |
| Essay |

Key messages

There was a good performance overall in this paper. It is important to highlight several areas: candidates must always be mindful to absorb the task's requirements before committing to their answers. They must also structure their answers confidently. This should be practised before sitting exams. Finally, it remains important to remember that the use of hybrid language, namely pinyin and/or English, will not be an acceptable substitute for native vocabulary. Candidates must possess adequate vocabulary to be able to gain full marks.

General comments

This year's cohort performed well, and centres deserve great credit for their role in this. Questions were pitched at the right level and the subject themes drew a rich array of responses. Candidates were well prepared for the questions, which allowed ample opportunity to showcase subject knowledge. The more able candidates possessed such knowledge and were able to demonstrate it on paper. They started with a firm understanding of the question, putting together a well-structured argument, with meaningful examples, using a good range of vocabulary, and checked their answers. Less proficient answers contained some of these elements but with avoidable errors or did not fully address the question. Only a very small section of the cohort did not perform well.

In summary, candidates should:

- take time to understand the question. The question should inform the candidates' approach to the task, and they should refer back to it as and when required. Teachers need to reinforce this in the preparation phase, and it should be central to good exam techniques. Past papers combined with feedback should help develop this skill.

- understand and be confident with logical arguments. Following the point above, examination techniques should encompass the art of forming convincing arguments on paper, i.e., one that contains an introduction, balanced arguments, and a logical conclusion. The strongest responses also contain suitable examples to bolster their viewpoint.

- know how to format their work. Candidates should be able to read back their work, observing a natural flow with no ambiguity. They need to spend more time on basic formatting and punctuation to avoid meanings being misconstrued.

- be able to demonstrate their subject knowledge. The strongest answers are those that express knowledge of the topic of the task. They make salient points which a wider audience can relate to, especially through use of examples. They are pertinent and specific. Optimally, this should be done using a rich source of vocabulary to best exploit the range of marks on offer. Weaker answers are those which are generalised, non-committal, subjective and employ repetitive vocabulary.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The candidates who selected this question were largely unanimous in the views that space for family members was a necessary condition for a well-functioning family environment. This included some convincing arguments around the idea that the need for space did not belie a lack of love or affection. Indeed, some argued it could make family bonds even stronger. Weaker performances listed family members and the types of hobbies and interests they had. While a useful reference point, such responses did not link back to the argument.

Question 2

This proved to be a thought-provoking question which sparked some heated debate. It also drew a range of opinions. Those who accepted the premise cited historic cases where money and power led to high-level global corruption. This was a good opportunity to use examples to strengthen such arguments and to introduce philosophical views on human nature. Those on the other side of the fence put forth the idea that ultimately no one is above the law. These candidates could again cite well-known cases to bolster their arguments. There were cases where some candidates extended their response to include discussions around what a just society would look like. While this was a small digression amid a cogent response, a small number of candidates took it further and got side-tracked by arguments about what constitutes an ideal society. Overall, examiners were impressed by the standards demonstrated.

Question 3

This was another popular choice for candidates. The question showed some divergence in performance. Candidates generally displayed an understanding of the topic and were able to put forth decent arguments, which impressed examiners. A significant number of candidates agreed with the premise and could cite examples of affluent people and their lavish modes of transport. This showed good subject knowledge. Other candidates took the line that travel was not just about class or style, it was more to do with enjoyment, experience, spiritual enlightening, or learning. Weaker candidates were offered a very generic view of the topic without getting into the crux of the argument.

Question 4

Another popular topic among candidates. Examiners would like to congratulate those who attempted it and demonstrated strong subject knowledge coupled with excellent arguments. While most candidates appeared to agree that technology can bring significant advantages to teaching and learning, opinions on whether it could replace standard education was more divided. Those who supported the argument reasoned that AI could deliver more bespoke learning and cater for individual needs far more effectively than the current model, and that this technological trend would only grow stronger. Those against the premise argued that there was more to education than learning, e.g., the social aspect, and all that student life entails. Some candidates delved further into psychological aspects around character and nurturing; putting forward the view that educators were an essential influence, for example, in showing empathy towards their students. The slightly weaker responses were those that spent too much time discussing AI itself, e.g. its features and benefits, without forming a view on one side or the other of the argument. However, in summary, a good performance was noted across the cohort.

Question 5

Too few candidates took on this question for the examiners to provide feedback.

Advice for centres

Exam preparation clearly begins well in advance of the examination itself. This includes general examination techniques such as how to deal with opinion questions: even some able candidates sometimes do not fully express themselves clearly on paper because they are not putting forth a structured argument. Others need to factor in time to proof their work. Finally, candidates should be reminded that the rubric must be strictly followed. Deviating from the topic to demonstrate knowledge will not garner marks; similarly, resorting to English and/or pinyin will not result in positive marks.

Suggestion to centres

1. Prime candidates to stick to the examination questions in front of them. They should use the question as a referral point throughout their response to ensure they stay on track.
2. Good arguments adhere to structure: introduction, both sides of the argument then a conclusion that follows. Use of good examples will further bolster marks. Listing facts, regurgitating learned words for the sake it, as well as, providing simple anecdotes will not profit answers.
3. Candidates need enough subject knowledge to provide fulsome answers. At a basic level, this means having enough vocabulary that you can adhere to the points set out above without the need to resort to English and/or pinyin. Further, a firm grasp of basic grammar will avoid simple mistakes, e.g., using 的、地、得; and some candidates mixed two sentences together without checking the grammar.

CHINESE

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

Key messages

To excel in this paper, candidates should:

- Read the question carefully to understand the task fully before starting the writing process. This facilitates keeping focused.
- Organise the essay to ensure it follows a coherent argument and incorporates relevant examples.
- Display a command of advanced vocabulary pertinent to the subject, use idioms, and produce grammatically precise Chinese.
- Write a response that is unequivocally pertinent and directly addresses the question in the paper.
- Allocate time for proofreading: spending time for thorough checking significantly diminishes errors in both character usage and grammar.

General comments

The performance on this paper was strong. Candidates appeared well-prepared and effectively showcased their subject knowledge. An increasing number of candidates intentionally organised their arguments into paragraphs or introduced their points using phrases like 首先，其次 or 然而，反之 and reclaimed their argument in the concluding paragraph using phrases like 总而言之/综上所述.

The top performers demonstrated their expertise through straight and focused answers, employing a wide range of vocabulary supported by a logical argument, relevant examples, and a convincing conclusion. These candidates exhibited a clear understanding of the task at hand and displayed diligence, especially in matters such as proofreading.

Essays within the intermediate score range indicated that candidates ihad a solid grasp of the subject matter. Some fell short of effectively conveying this knowledge on paper: clarity in articulation or more focus on addressing the question would have been beneficial.

The candidates with the lowest scores needed a more comprehensive understanding of the question, and a broader range of topic-specific vocabulary. Weaker responses required more robust arguments, additional details, and examples.

A small number of candidates wrote sentences that were too long and with a lack of punctuation. Many candidates used '的，地，得' incorrectly in their essays. Candidates need to remember the functions of the Chinese structural particles and use them properly They also need use accurate punctuation. A growing number of candidates demonstrated an understanding of idioms and made a concerted effort to use them, albeit with some inaccuracy. Candidates with vocabulary gaps often resorted to a combination of Chinese characters with pinyin or English. In such instances, candidates are encouraged to adjust their expression, using alternative vocabulary they are confident in using and can correctly write in Chinese.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- A thorough understanding of the task: candidates occasionally initiate their responses prematurely due to insufficient time spent to understanding the question. Candidates are advised to engage in self-reflection, ensuring they have stayed on track.
- Constructing a coherent response: the strongest responses show a clear focus, presenting well-balanced arguments supported by sound reasoning. Essays should demonstrate an understanding of the structure of a strong argument, incorporating an introduction, presenting clear and logical explanation and argument, and offering a concluding statement. The most effective arguments include

relevant examples that directly apply to the topic. Additionally, proficiency in organising content and using correct punctuation is essential. Weaker responses tend to be a simple list of facts or views and may be heavily reliant on anecdotal experiences.

- Allotting time for proofreading: candidates often prioritise their writing time over reviewing their work. This practice can result in work containing errors that could have been rectified with more thorough proofreading. Adequate time for checking spelling and punctuation should be incorporated into the response.
- Clear handwriting is encouraged: candidates need to take greater care in writing characters. Any unclear handwriting may affect the meaning and the flow of the sentence.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: 世界上只有父母的爱才是无条件的。你怎么看？

A good number of candidates chose this question and eloquently presented multiple reasons supporting their arguments, using a variety of instances to demonstrate the greatness or depth of parental love. Some candidates compared parental love with the affection from friends and other individuals, and examined why parental love is often considered less selfish and more unconditional. Some candidates excessively focused on parental love and its greatness without explaining its unconditional nature.

Question 2: 凡是有劳动能力的犯人都应该参加劳动改造。请讨论。

This question was chosen by fewer candidates. Candidates who received high marks in the content section were able to clearly articulate their understanding of 劳动改造 and explain why prisoners should or should not participate in 劳动改造. Their insights shown in the essay impressively surpassing the expected depth of knowledge for their age group. Some candidates did not understand the definition of 劳动改造, resulting in a less persuasive argument.

Question 3: 随心地旅游更能让人们体验乐趣。你怎么看？

This was a very popular question. Most candidates showed a solid grasp of the topic, giving an accurate definition of free-spirited travel, describing the activities and impacts on individuals. Exceptionally well-crafted responses showed clear viewpoints and concise expressions. Some candidates believed that 随心地旅行 was self-drive. Being able to argue clearly that spontaneity leads to a more enjoyable experience scored well. Some candidates could have scored higher by not only focusing on the benefits and drawbacks of 随心地旅游, but also linking them to 体验乐趣。 Less able candidates only discussed the advantages and disadvantages of travelling.

Question 4: 有需求才会创新。请讨论。

This question was not very popular. Most candidates who chose this question were able to respond clearly about the relationship between demand and innovation, and supported their arguments with a variety of examples. Some candidates focused on the development of technology or the significance of technology innovation to humans and nations instead of the link with demand, resulting in not getting the highest marks.

Question 5: 绿色消费可以有效地减少污染。你怎么看？

Another frequently chosen topic, where candidates conducted thorough analysis of 'Green consumption'— the practice of purchasing environmentally friendly products or services. Examples of such understanding included green travel, reducing the use of disposable packaging, or avoiding excessive consumption. Some candidates focused excessively on explaining pollution and protection rather than what green consumption is and how it can help reduce the pollution.

CHINESE

Paper 9715/33
Essay

Key messages

To score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to select relevant pieces of information and organise them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature. Candidates should display a good use of idioms and appropriate vocabulary.

General comments

Most candidates were well-prepared for the examination, and the level of the linguistic ability shown by some candidates was outstanding. Centres and candidates should be praised for this. Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clear understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the chosen question was maintained throughout. A coherent structure was demonstrated with a logical progression of ideas leading to a sound conclusion. The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalised statements, limited use of supported examples, reliance on anecdotes. Some candidates restricted their marks for content by wandering off task or allowing needless errors.

In order to do well, candidates need to ensure they:

*   start with understanding the task fully and manage their time efficiently. Good exam techniques, including the use of timed challenges, should help reinforce good habits and prevent loss of marks.

*   demonstrate sound subject knowledge by focussing on the key issues at stake and presenting a competent argument that can stand up to scrutiny. These responses will be replete with vocabulary and show a certain depth.

*   form a cogent argument, namely, an introduction, both sides of the argument, then a conclusion that follows. The strongest answers also contained relevant examples and vocabulary that showed depth. When properly assembled, such responses tended to flow without any ambiguity and led the examiner through the argument in a persuasive manner.

*   pay attention to detail. Some good responses had careless errors that would have been picked up with more proofreading. Time should be set aside for checks on spelling and punctuation.

Comment on specific questions

Question 1

This was a very popular question among candidates and was mostly answered competently. Most candidates tended to agree with the premise and used arguments paralleling a parent's role in their child's basic development with their role as teacher and educator. They reasoned that parents are natural role models, leading by example and are in a prime position to influence their child's learning. Some candidates chose to develop this thread by putting forth some moving words about the profound affect parents can have on a child's life. Weaker answers included those that focussed on different family dynamics in other cultures. For example, some candidates cited instances where grandparents play a more active role in the lives of their grandchildren than parents. While relevant, such answers tended to be too simple to challenge the validity of the premise.

Question 2

This question drew less interest. Those who attempted it provided answers to a good standard. The general agreement was that there is a clear conflict between human feelings and dispassionate law. To endorse that view, some candidates relied on a popular movie where a normally law-abiding citizens willingly broke the law to address an injustice. Others cited similar real-life cases where individuals were found to have committed an illegal act with genuinely good intentions. These candidates argued that this was evidence of the inevitable tension between human feelings and the law.

Question 3

This was another example of a topic question that candidates felt able to take on. Most answers agreed with the premise that travel broadens one's horizons, although the standard of response was mixed. Simple answers tended to argue that when travelling, you can learn about your destination's history, culture, and language. This was often coupled with the argument that doing this in person left a more permanent mark on someone's character rather, than reading about it or watching videos. More elaborate responses included other facets around travel. For example, that the planning and organising phase, e.g. budget and itinerary, were also educational. Piecing this together with the other aspects of travelling created a much more comprehensive argument. Less able candidates narrowed their answers by citing specific destinations and then listing the benefits of travelling to these places.

Question 4

This question resonated with many candidates and proved to be one which split views. Most accepted the basic premise that technology can make us feel safe. They provided examples such as the resources we have at our fingertips through our mobile phones, as well as our reliance on GPS navigation and the belief CCTV deters crime. Stronger answers included counterarguments that enhanced technology was a double-edged sword, i.e. more human reliance on it leaves us vulnerable to malicious acts. These candidates cited examples around the growing trend of online fraud as well as the repercussions when technology fails, e.g. when the internet signal drops out, some businesses and services cannot function.

Question 5

Too few candidates took on this question for the examiners to provide feedback.

Advice for centres

Top candidates were those who had adequately prepared. Often, candidates underperformed because they did not fully understand the task or know how to express themselves properly on paper. Teachers must influence this process from an early stage. Attention to exam techniques should be a crucial feature of any syllabus and candidates should be well-drilled on what to expect and how to perform. While there were few examples of candidates using pinyin or English, it is important to remember that it is never an acceptable compromise when candidates lack vocabulary. Alternative vocabulary must always be sought.

Suggestion to centres

1. The message to candidates about fully understanding the exam question should be reinforced where possible. Only when they know what is being asked should they commit pen to paper. This should better equip them to stay on track.
2. Answers should be focussed. Strong performers will provide efficient arguments with relevant examples. General discussions, simple listing of known facts and anecdotes will score lesser marks.
3. Candidates must proofread their work. Some errors could have been avoided with greater attention to details. This is highlighted in recurring grammatical mistakes.
4. Candidates should walk into an exam with healthy balance of vocabulary in the bank. This will demonstrate good subject knowledge.

CHINESE

Key messages

* Candidates should read the rubric carefully to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered. 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 **Question 1**, **2** or **3** **part (a)** in *Section 1*, they must answer both **(i)** and **(ii)**. A few candidates this year could not be fully rewarded as they only answered one subsection.

* **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, 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, many candidates did not follow the instructions correctly.
Candidates should be 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 could not achieve the highest marks.

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 responses showing understanding of the underlying themes.

Most candidates remembered that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and analysed the plot or characters with examples. 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, and then explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay.

Some candidates needed to be more familiar with the works, for example they mistook Mrs Yang for Mr Mi's wife, or they praised Captain Leng as a hero, 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 A

Question 1

顾城 (Selected poems by Gu Cheng)

(a) Some candidates performed well in addressing the first sub-question, analysing the topic from perspectives such as experiences from rural to industrialised urban settings, conflicts between ideals and reality, and the poet's refusal to grow up. However, they needed to give a more thorough and detailed analysis in the second sub-question of the poem titled 'Resume'. Some candidates only provided a simple explanation of the meaning of a resume, while others interpreted the poem without specifically analysing it from the 'Resume' title.

(b) This question focused more on the candidates' understanding of the artistic techniques employed in poetry rather than the theme. Strong candidates were able to choose two suitable poems by the author and analysed the author's use of personification. Some candidates chose poems that were not entirely appropriate; and others, even though they manage to select poems that utilised this technique, only interpreted the meaning of poems line by line which did not respond well to the question.

Question 2

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

(a) Strong candidates provided very precise analysis of the differences between Zhao Zhenyu and his wife: their personalities, their relationships within the family, and their attitudes toward life. The examples selected to support their analysis were also highly appropriate. These candidates were able to make a connection between the two characters' attitude towards life and their societal background, demonstrating a profound understanding of the theme. Some candidates were able to analyse specific incidents and the character traits of Zhao Zhenyu and his wife but overlooked the societal reasons. A small number of candidates relied solely on the selected extracts from the question, offering superficial interpretations.

(b) Only very few candidates chose this question. Strong candidates were able to analyse the role of Baozhen's singing from both a family and societal perspective. For instance, they highlighted that the singing could inspire patriotic spirit and symbolize the strength of a new generation, or that it was used to represent hope and to reignite Kuangfu's passion for the revolution. Some candidates' responses would have benefited from more focus as a significant portion of their answers was

dedicated to describing the societal background and the lives of the Wu family, rather than placing the main emphasis on Baozhen.

Question 3

张爱玲：《留情》《封锁》 ("Liuqing"and "Fengsuo" by Zhang Ailing)

(a) This was a relatively popular question. Strong candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of the relationship between Dunfeng and Mr. Mi, their dynamics in interaction and the two characters' attitudes towards each other. These candidates were able to analyse the psychological aspects of their dialogues to effectively address the first question. When answering the second question, most candidates could point out that although Dunfeng's marriage to Mr. Mi was somehow based on finances, they could see the growth of affection during their time together, even if Dunfeng might deny in order to save face. Stronger candidates supported their answers with appropriate examples. Weaker responses misunderstood the dynamics, incorrectly asserting that Dunfeng harboured complete disdain for Mr. Mi.

(b) This question was the most popular one among candidates and overall, the responses were satisfactory. Most candidates were able to analyse the process of Lu Zongzhen's shift in interest in Cuiyuan using specific examples. They interpreted the theme of the work by examining his psychological changes and analysing the transformation between being a 'good person' and a 'real person.' Weaker responses tended to focus on descriptions or criticized Lu Zongzhen's irresponsible attitude without delving into the main theme.

Section 2

Question 4

莫言：《红高粱家族》第一章《红高粱》（"Hong Gaoliang Jiazu" by Mo Yan）

(a) Candidates performed well in this question in general. They were able to connect the title 'Hong Gaoliang Jiazu' with specific elements in the story, such as the setting, characters, and plot. They further analysed their symbolic meanings (vitality, spirit of resistance, national spirit, etc.). This demonstrated a deep understanding of the theme of the work. Weaker candidates needed to provide more in-depth analysis rather than focussing on retelling the plot.

(b) It is not possible to comment on the performances for **4 (b)** since no candidates chose this question. An ideal answer would have involved analysing the character by combining typical storylines (such as Captain Leng, who had agreed to resist the Japanese but arrived late after significant casualties in Yu Zhan'ao's troops), the actions of the character, and language descriptions. Additionally, candidates should analyse the role of this character in the novel.

Question 5

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

(a) Strong candidates were highly familiar with the plot and provided detailed analysis of the grandfather's thoughts based on the development of the story and Shunshun and Nuosong's changing attitudes. In doing so, they highlighted the grandfather's concerns about Cuicui's marriage, his regrets for making a wrong judgment, and his eagerness to dissolve the misunderstandings. Weaker candidates tended to focus less on the events that occurred after Dalao's death and instead described and analysed the grandfather's language and actions throughout the entire story, resulting in less focused responses.

(b) This was a rather popular question. Most candidates demonstrated their understanding of the theme of Bian Cheng. Outstanding candidates exhibited strong summarisation and organisational skills, presenting sub-points based on the relationships between different characters or the distinct characteristics of these relationships. They supported their viewpoints with appropriate examples too. Some candidates primarily analysed the positive traits and qualities of the people in the border town and needed to focus on the relationships between individuals. Weaker candidates only recounted the story, without in-depth analysis.

Question 6

白先勇：《台北人》("Taibei ren" by Pai Hsien-yung)

(a)   This was a popular question. Outstanding candidates could analyse the reasons why people were attracted and captivated by Yin Gong Guan from various perspectives, such as the characteristics of Yin Gong Guan itself, and its symbolic significance. They could also differentiate between the different psychological states of new and old friends. Weaker candidates often provided fewer comprehensive discussions, focusing only on one of the mentioned points above.

(b)   Strong candidates could analyse Wu Zhuguo's subtle and complicated phycological evolution from various angles. For example, they could discuss his surprise not only at Yu's misunderstanding of his life and mindset abroad, which contradicts his true spirit, but also his astonishment at Yu Qinlei and other old friends' distorted understanding of their lives and mindsets. They demonstrated an understanding of the author's intent in setting this plot and shaping the two characters through their analysis. Weaker candidates needed more in-depth discussions, and mainly focussed on why Professor Yu said these words to Wu.

白先勇：《台北人》("Taibei ren" by Pai Hsien-yung)

CHINESE

Paper 9715/42
Texts 42

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** option **(a)**, all subsections must be answered. When candidates answer **Question 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. **Question (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 essays showed evidence that candidates had studied the texts thoroughly and that they were able to understand and analyse the texts; some candidates also demonstrated knowledge of literary techniques when responding to the questions. Whist language is not directly assessed in this component, candidates did show strength in expressing their ideas and constructing logical arguments and most could communicate clearly and effectively. 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.

Once again, there were a number of candidates who seemed unfamiliar with the requirements of the rubric and a significant number of candidates chose questions that did not meet the exam requirements, which affected their overall mark. Candidates should be 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 was credited with the two highest marks only.

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 analyse the plot or characters with illustration. 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.

Lower-scoring essays often showed unfamiliarity with the works. Such pieces contained numerous errors during their retelling and analysis of the plot. Candidates are advised to choose questions based on the works they have read and studied to avoid major mistakes in answering questions.

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

顾城诗选 (Selected poems by Gu Cheng)

(a)   Most candidates were able to answer the first sub-question quite well, pointing out the characteristics of the poet's portrayal of scenery: free, glorious, lively and natural. Stronger responses also analysed the reasons behind the poet's depiction of such scenes and could quote the original text to analyse the poet's life attitude when facing the conflict between ideals and reality. Weaker answers were characterised by a somewhat simplistic response to the second sub-question. Some lower-scoring responses placed too heavy a focus on describing the poet's life experiences.

(b)   This question was not chosen by many candidates. The best answers showed that candidates had carefully read the question, as they both chose two appropriate poems and also analysed the linguistic features of the works related to the theme of 'innocence and purity.' Such responses often analysed specific words, phrases, and sentences to identify particular linguistic features and then analysed how the use of language better expressed the theme. In weaker responses, inappropriate poems had been selected, and tended to focus mainly on analysing the content of the poems rather than the linguistic features.

Question 2

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

(a)   This was a relatively popular question. Most candidates were familiar with the plot and could analyse the reasons behind Lin Zhicheng's suffering based on the experiences and relationships between Lin, Kuang, and Yang. Stronger candidates could highlight Lin's mixed emotions of guilt towards Kuang and his reluctance to leave Yang Caiyu. They could also combine this with Lin's work-related distress and societal factors. In the second sub-question, some candidates focused on analysing Kuang Fu's psychological transition from shock to helplessness then to acceptance, rather than on his views on the relationship between Lin and Yang. For example, initially, he thought that the two were together for the sake of life, but later came to believe that there were genuine feelings between them, and so on. If only the changes in emotions were discussed, it was somewhat off-topic.

(b)   Only a small number of candidates chose this question, but those who did could generally provide detailed accounts of the living conditions of the five households and were able to describe the challenges they faced. Stronger candidates demonstrated solid summary skills to analyse their

common characteristics. They further analysed the reasons for their difficulties and their life attitudes in the face of adversity. Some candidates' answers only included three or four households, which was not complete enough.

Question 3

张爱玲：《留情》《封锁》 ("Liuqing" and "Fengsuo" by Zhang Ailing)

(a) This was a relatively popular question and many candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of the relationship between Dunfeng and Mr. Mi. They also showed a good understanding of the storyline, pointing out the reasons for the initial eye contact between the two characters and their complex inner thoughts. Candidates generally provided good analyses of Mr. Mi's thoughts on his first wife, supporting their answer with relevant quotations. Weaker candidates showed a misunderstanding of the dynamics between Dunfeng and Mr. Mi, and some were unaware that Mr. Mi's intention to visit his first wife triggered this particular plot development.

(b) This was the most selected question by candidates. Stronger candidates not only focused on discussing the transformation of people from 'good people' to 'real people' using Zongzhen and Cuiyuan as examples during the blockade but also analysed the behaviours of people inside and outside the car during the blockade compared to normal times. They further linked these observations to the theme in a comprehensive manner. Weaker candidates needed to focus their answer on Zongzhen and Cuiyuan, rather than providing a generic discussion of the plot; such responses demonstrated a less thorough understanding of the theme.

Section 2

Question 4

莫言：《红高粱家族》第一章《红高粱》("Hong Gaoliang Jiazu" by Mo Yan）

(a) Candidates generally performed well on this question. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the character traits of Dai Fenglian and selected appropriate examples to showcase different aspects of the character, such as: her courage in resistance, her pursuit of freedom and personal happiness, her wit and intelligence, a sense of justice and in a broader perspective her patriotic spirit, and more. Weaker candidates typically struggled to organise their material coherently, or they needed to focus their analysis more specifically on Dai Fenglian, rather than providing excessive descriptions of other characters and plot elements.

(b) This was not chosen by many candidates, but those who did performed very well, choosing dialogues with typical characteristics and providing a detailed analysis of the dialogues to demonstrate the personalities of different characters. The best answers paraphrased the dialogues, rather than supplying direct quotations and described the personalities of both characters involved, rather than focusing solely on one.

Question 5

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

(a) This was a relatively popular question. Stronger candidates could combine the plot with their analysis of Cui Cui's transition in her attitude towards love - her longing, shyness and then devotion. They also provided specific examples as evidence. Additionally, they could discuss the author's intentions and the theme of the work through such character development and the tragic love story. Weaker candidates tended to mainly retell Cui Cui's love story and only briefly answered the question towards the end of the essay.

(b) The best answers to this question meticulously discussed the differences between the Biancheng and other places, looking from different perspectives including the geographical environment, local customs, characteristics of local people, their attitudes towards life and the interpersonal relationships, etc. These candidates demonstrated a solid understanding of the theme. Weaker candidates often described only one or two aspects, and needed to highlight the distinctive features of the Biancheng or to compare it with other places to score more highly.

Question 6

白先勇：《台北人》 ("Taibei ren" by Pai Hsien-yung)

(a)   This was a very popular question and a range of performance was seen. Some candidates
provided a limited response, only analysing the reasons for Yin Xueyan's everlasting youth based
on her appearance and personality. Higher-scoring answers included an analysis of the symbolic
significance of Yin Xueyan, such as being a symbol of the past prosperity of Greater Shanghai, a
nostalgic expression of people's hometown, or a projection of desires, etc. Specific examples
should be provided as evidence, demonstrating the candidate's understanding of the author's
intention in creating this character. Weaker responses tended to narrate the plot where Yin Xueyan
brought destruction to families, and needed to include greater analysis to score more highly.

(b)   Most candidates were familiar with the plot, demonstrating a good understanding of the work and
the changes in the two characters over twenty years. Stronger candidates could also compare the
two characters from various perspectives such as appearance, physical condition, marriage,
mentality, living conditions and social status. They could also point out the social and personal
reasons behind these changes. Weaker candidates had less knowledge about the youth of the two
characters, resulting in an unbalanced analysis, especially in the case of Wu Zhuguo.

CHINESE

> **Paper 9715/43**
> Texts

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully 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 option **(a)**, all subsections must be answered. When candidates answer **Question 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. **Question (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 essays showed evidence that candidates had studied the texts thoroughly and that they were able to understand and analyse the texts; some candidates also demonstrated knowledge of literary techniques when responding to the questions. Whist language is not directly assessed in this component, candidates did show strength in expressing their ideas and constructing logical arguments and most could communicate clearly and effectively. 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.

Once again, there were a number of candidates who seemed unfamiliar with the requirements of the rubric and a significant number of candidates chose questions that did not meet the exam requirements, which affected their overall mark. Candidates should be 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 was credited with the two highest marks only.

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 analyse the plot or characters with illustration. 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.

Lower-scoring essays often showed unfamiliarity with the works. Such pieces contained numerous errors during their retelling and analysis of the plot. Candidates are advised to choose questions based on the works they have read and studied to avoid major mistakes in answering questions.

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 A

Question 1

顾城诗选 (Selected poems by Gu Cheng)

(a)   Stronger candidates were able to offer their own interpretations of the rich symbolic meaning of the lamp, such as hope, home, brightness, confidence, etc. They could specifically analyse the role of three different scenes where the poet expressed thoughts and emotions, and they examined how the changing scenes contributed to the expression of the theme, symbolising aspects like growth, transformation, and renewal. Weaker candidates tended to provide more strained interpretations of the poem, such as suggesting that the lamp symbolises the sacrifices made by parents for their children or the poet's later life, and so on.

(b)   There are numerous poems expressing Gu Cheng's contemplation on life, so most candidates could find two suitable poems to discuss when answering the question. Some candidates analysed the poems in a straightforward linear way, paragraph by paragraph and could have improved by using Gu Cheng's contemplation on life as a central point for analysis. Stronger candidates excelled in organising their essays coherently, capturing key points, and responding effectively to the question.

Question 2

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

(a)   Well-prepared candidates were familiar with the plot. They analysed the role the descriptions of setting and surroundings in the stage instructions played and pointed out how these instructions: 1) portrayed the characters' living conditions and life states, 2) functioned as a symbol of the social environment of the time, 3) set the atmosphere of the script, 4) metaphorically represented people's mindset at the time. These candidates could also find suitable examples to analyse the melancholy and restlessness of the characters in different scenes, while weaker candidates provided fewer comprehensive analyses of the role of environmental descriptions, lacking coverage of the social background. Their choice of examples for the second sub-question were also not always suitable.

(b)   Fewer candidates chose this question, but the responses were generally satisfactory. Most could point out Lin Zhicheng's major change from being weak, repressed, and irritable to daring to confront the situation, expressing his determination to resign, and ultimately bravely expressing his feelings for Caiyu. Stronger candidates could further analyse the psychological reasons for his attitude change and related it to the social background and the theme of the work.

Question 3

张爱玲：《留情》《封锁》 ("Liuqing" and "Fengsuo" by Zhang Ailing)

(a) This was the most popular question among candidates, and most could provide a competent analysis of the living conditions of the Yang family based on the information in the selected extract. Stronger candidates were also able to analyse the reasons for the worsening financial situation of the Yang family. The second sub-question was generally well-answered, with stronger candidates providing a more comprehensive interpretation of Dunfeng's views on marriage from various aspects such as appearance, reputation and finance. Some even pointed out the comparison and contrast between Mrs. Yang and Dunfeng's marital situations, demonstrating a good understanding of the author's intentions. It was evident that some candidates had misunderstood Dunfeng's attitude towards Mr. Mi, believing that Dunfeng was with Mr. Mi purely for material gain, without acknowledging the emotions between them.

(b) This was another very popular question. Candidates were generally familiar with the plot. Stronger candidates could analyse in detail the gradual changes in Zong Zhen's views on Cui Yuan, interpreting the reasons for the formation of his views at each stage, and ultimately related them to the main theme. Weaker candidates tended to focus too much on summarising the story and did not concentrate on analysing Zong Zhen's views on Cui Yuan.

Section 2

Question 4

莫言：《红高粱家族》第一章《红高粱》 ("Hong Gaoliang Jiazu" by Mo Yan）

(a) There were some very good answers to this question which focused on the two key terms, 'wildness' and 'heroic spirit'. They responded to the question by using examples of individuals and groups, citing the deeds and words of characters in their fight against feudal ethics and Japanese aggression. Weaker candidates often chose materials that were less suitable, or their analyses were relatively vague.

(b) Very few candidates chose this question, but those who chose it were familiar with the plot and provided specific analyses of the reasons for Uncle Luo's killing of the mule. Some excellent responses analysed Uncle Luo's character traits, including his loyalty, boldness, and hatred towards betrayers, by looking at his mental and physical actions. This reflected their thorough understanding of the theme.

Question 5

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

(a) The majority of candidates analysed the strong affection between the Grandfather and Cuicui using specific examples of their interactions. Stronger candidates could conduct a more comprehensive analysis from different perspectives of the Grandfather and Cuicui. For instance, analysing the relationship between Grandfather's love for Cuicui, his concerns about her marriage, and Cuicui's mother's experiences. Additionally, they could highlight the significance of the emotions between Grandfather and Cuicui in expressing the theme. Weaker responses sometimes showed a misunderstanding of the later relationship between Grandfather and Cuicui. For example, some wrongly perceived that Cuicui's reluctance to confide her feelings was an indication of their growing apart.

(b) This question was not frequently chosen by candidates. Those answering this question could choose to argue either for or against the return of Nuosong. Most candidates could use the plot, character personalities, and relationships between characters as the basis for their arguments, providing reasonable analyses to support their viewpoints. Stronger candidates not only discussed specific aspects of the question but also connected them to the author's intent in crafting this ending and its relevance to the theme of the work. Weaker candidates mainly narrated the love story between Cuicui and Nuosong, and could have improved by providing their own interpretation of the work.

Question 6

白先勇：《台北人》 ("Taibei ren" by Pai Hsien-yung)

(a) This question was among the most popular. It required an analysis of Manager Wu's role, but weaker candidates typically only focused on describing Manager Wu's character. Stronger candidates could interpret Manager Wu as representing a group of once prominent but now fallen individuals from mainland China in Taiwan. They understood the role of Manager Wu in shaping the image of Yin Xueyan and connecting various plots, such as facilitating the acquaintance between Yin Xueyan and Xu Zhuangtu, and his contribution to expressing the theme. Their analysis was detailed and comprehensive, reflecting their understanding of the author's intent in creating this character.

(b) Higher-scoring responses to this question provided a detailed analysis of Wu Zhuguo's experiences from the May Fourth Movement to his time abroad, combining historical and social backgrounds. Such responses could intricately analyse the psychological reasons behind his reluctance to talk about the history of the Republic of China. Furthermore, they could delve into the disappointment and loss of the May Fourth spirit represented by Wu Zhuguo's generation of intellectuals, demonstrating a profound understanding of the theme. Weaker candidates mostly narrated Wu Zhuguo's experiences, and needed to include more specific analysis.