

ARABIC

Paper 3180/01
Composition

Key messages

Performance for this series was slightly better than the previous one. Some candidates achieved very high marks, and the overall performance ranged from good to excellent.

In general, candidates understood all the questions and responded accordingly. The language was overall accurate in many cases, except for weaker candidates whose vocabulary was very limited, used basic and repetitive structures in addition to having many spelling and grammatical errors, some of which are exemplified below.

Most candidates adhered to the word count, but it has been observed that several candidates used lengthy introductions and conclusions in the form of learnt clichés, particularly in **Section A**, at the expense of the main topic. There were also instances of the use of colloquial language.

Furthermore, some candidates focussed on using extensive figures of speech and similes instead of focussing on the main topic and its constituent elements.

As for the use of language, it was good overall, but there are still problematic areas in the use of the accusative case, verbal nouns, the dual form, subject-verb agreement, and some cases of noun-adjective agreement (see examples below).

The main spelling errors observed were the use of long vowels instead of short ones (كورة القدم), joining prepositions with the definite article (فلملعب), missing or inappropriate use of the *hamza* (أختلاف، ادرس)، using the shortened 'alif (ى) instead of yaa' (ي)، and adding the 'alif to words like لادن and ذلك.

General comments

The question paper is composed of two main sections, **A** and **B**. **Section A** includes three questions (**1(a)**, **1(b)**, **1(c)**) from which candidates select one and write about 120 words. The total mark is 15. **Section B** consists of four questions (**2(a)**, **2(b)**, **2(c)**, **2(d)**); the candidates must select one and write about 200 words. The mark for this section is 30. The total mark for the paper is 45.

The performance of candidates for both **Sections A** and **B** was overall good to very good. It was slightly better than the previous series, and many candidates achieved a higher range of marks.

Candidates understood the questions and responded accordingly, with appropriate content and language. Very few candidates included irrelevant material in their writing.

There were examples of impressive performance where candidates excelled at fulfilling the task, using appropriate vocabulary, variety of structures including complex ones (see examples below), accurate language, figures of speech and similes, good paragraphing and effective linking words and phrases within and across paragraphs. This made their essays coherent. This is evident in the performance of some candidates who scored a very high range of marks, and in some cases the full mark.

Performance for **Section A**, **1(b)** was very good, followed by good and equal performance results for **1(a)** and **1(c)**. As for **Section B**, performance was slightly less than **Section A**, but it is still good overall: **2(d)** was the best, followed by **2(a)**; **2(b)** and **2(c)** came third with almost equal performance.

Over 50 per cent of candidates achieved a high range of marks (35–45), and by comparison this series demonstrated a slightly better performance than the previous one.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report or Speech, Dialogue

- A** This question was the most popular. Candidates did very well overall. They organised their letter in an introductory paragraph, followed by presenting the main topic, and finishing with a concluding paragraph. The only issue observed in several cases is the use of lengthy introduction of learnt clichés of greetings and wishes as well as further clichés of wishes in the concluding paragraph (see examples below).
- B** This was the least popular question where very few candidates opted for it. However, performance for this question was much better than **1(a)** and **1(c)**. Again, the use of learnt clichés for the introductory and concluding paragraphs was visible.
- C** It was the second most popular option. Overall performance was generally good and equal to that of **1(a)**. Candidates stated several benefits for owning a bike in their attempt to convince their parents of buying one. Some candidates exceeded the word count, and others did not use the appropriate format for a dialogue, in addition to missing the use of question marks at the end of the questions.

Section B – Essay

- A** This was the second most popular question. Less than third of the candidates (23.7 per cent) opted for it. The overall performance was good. Many candidates addressed the topic very well. They described their family home and their favourite room, giving relevant details, using appropriate vocabulary, good language, and figures of speech and similes. There were few candidates who did not describe the home in detail, but they focussed on describing nature with excessive use of imagery and figures of speech. Some others mainly described their favourite room, with hardly any description of the family home.
- B** This was almost equal to **2(a)** in terms of popularity (23.6 per cent). Performance ranged from average to good. Generally, candidates demonstrated good understanding of the task and wrote relevant and creative content about ways of helping a friend to look after the monkey. There was one odd case where a candidate wrote about taking care of a cat.
- C** The question was the least popular 19.6 per cent of candidates opted for it. Overall performance was like **2(b)**, ranging from average to good. Again, candidates understood the task and wrote relevant content about the importance of an annual gathering with their neighbours. They described the values of celebrating, giving good reasons.
- D** This question was the most popular choice for candidates where third of them (33 per cent) opted for it. Many candidates argued the pros and cons of building new roads well. There were some candidates who included repetitive phrases and structures in their argument. Others had learnt lengthy clichés in the introduction at the expense of the main topic (see examples below).

Common Spelling mistakes

The following spelling mistakes were observed in the writing of many candidates, particularly weaker ones:

- Using the normal 't' instead of the feminine 't' and vice versa: ذهبة، تغيرة كثير من الأشياء، غرفت الرياضة
- Using the letter ه instead of the feminine 't' (taa' marbuuTa): حديقه البيت
- Incorrect adjoining of the prepositions with the definite article: فلببيت، فلملعب، أشعر بلراحة
- Adding the letter ي at the end of attached pronouns and other forms: لأخبركي، أشناق إليكي
- Adding the 'alif to demonstratives and comparative particles: لآكن، ذالك
- Missing or incorrect use of the hamza: اسبح، منزل الأتسان، أشتقت، رغم أتساع بيتنا

Common grammatical errors

- Incorrect use of the accusative/genitive cases: كنت ذاهب لمنزل صديقي، كنت متحمس جداً لرؤيته، كان الحيوان قرد.
- Verb-subject agreement: أنا ذهب إلى منزل صديقي، كانت الحيوان قرد
- Noun-adjective agreement: ترحب ببيك الأشجار الجميل، أسرتي كبير جداً
- Incorrect use of relative pronouns: من الأشياء الذي تراها
- Pluralising the verb before the plural subject: يذهبون الأطفال
- Plural form of verbs instead of the dual: جدي وجدتي كانوا يسكنون في هذا البيت
- Using a plural verb instead of the dual: أبي وأمي كانوا مشغول جداً
- Using verbs in the past instead of verbal nouns: بعد دُخل في غرفته

Examples of strong structures and good connectors

- ثم ينتهي الحفل ونعود إلى منزلنا حاملين العديد من الذكريات الجميلة التي سوف تبقى قابعة في تلافيف ذاكرتنا.
- لقد جعلتني السباحة أتعرف على العديد من الأصدقاء الرائعين التي تتلاشى معهم أترلحي وتتنامى معهم أفرلحي.
- ختاماً، على النقيض من ذلك، أخيراً وليس آخراً، مما لا شك فيه، علاوة على ذلك، لأزيدك من الشعر بيتاً.

Examples of learnt clichés

- أبعث إليك هذه الرسالة بكل تحياتي وتقديري وأشواقي داعياً الله أن تكونين في أسعد حال وأهنأ بال ومتمنياً منه أن يلبسك رداء الصحة والعافية وأن ينعم عليك بموفور من السعادة والرضا.
- منعمك الله بالسعادة وجنبك مزلق الحياة وعصمك من الزلل وجعلك عضواً نافعاً لنفسك لائقاً بإنسانيتك.
- خلق الله الكون مليء بالتوازنات التي تقضو بالتضادات فجعل الظل كما جعل الحرور، وجعل الظلمات كما جعل النور. أيضاً جعل في الأرض يابساً كما جعل البحور وهكذا الناس مختلفون في كل الأمور.
- وفي النهاية الحقيقة أثبت من الوشم لا يمكن طمسها وهي ترتفع فوق الكذب كما يرتفع الزيت فوق الماء.

ARABIC

Paper 3180/02
Translation and Reading
Comprehension

Key messages

In this paper candidates should:

- Expand their range of vocabulary by reading a rich variety of materials and learn more descriptive structures.
- Learn correct conjugation of verbs, the use of هم with verbs in the present tense.
- Practise the use of verbs correctly, particularly the jussive and the subjunctive cases.
- Application of the definite article with 'idafa phrases'.

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates this year was very good. The great majority attempted all questions, and a high percentage of them scored well. Excellent translation skills were displayed, with a good knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation

Question 1 Translate into English

The standard of translation on this question was very good overall and many candidates achieved a high range of marks. Good syntax was evident in the rendered translation and good knowledge of the subject matter about 'Leopards'. However, a few candidates translated the text leaving some gaps for the words they did not know, or kept the English words from the text in these gaps. Also, a very small number of candidates wrote a short piece of composition in English completely unrelated to the text which is in the exam.

Candidates could benefit from being trained on good spellings and highlighting the importance of good spelling if they are to achieve excellent marks.

Here are some examples of incorrectly translated words/terms:

- وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (social media).
- تُدرسه (This was sometimes translated as 'to study' instead of 'to be taught').
- التسويق ('marketing' was translated as 'shopping' by some candidates).
- السياسة والقانون والاقتصاد والثقافة These terminologies (Politics, Law, Economics and Culture) were not always fully and successfully translated.
- المعرفة والمهارة (knowledge and skill).
- حملات تسويقية (marketing campaigns).
- تضيف إلى الأرباح (adding to profits).

Question 2 Translate into Arabic

Most candidates performed well in this translation. The results ranged from good to excellent. Some, candidates, however, struggled with certain expressions. Compared with the previous series, this year there were many spelling and grammatical mistakes.

Here are some examples where the translation could have been better:

- The very first word in this translation (الفهود Leopards) proved to be very challenging for many candidates. Often, it was transliterated rather than translated as (الليوبارد). Candidates could be trained on the different names of animals in Arabic. This also applies, to a lesser extent, to the word in point 16 in the mark scheme (tigers).
- Point 4 in the MS (spotty fur): some candidates either did not translate 'fur' فـرـو correctly or missed it out altogether.
- Points 11 and 14 in the mark scheme (African and Asian leopards): there were many spelling mistakes in the translating these.
- Point 36 (tiny cubs): was not translated correctly by many candidates.

However, overall candidates did better in translating **Question 2** than translating **Question 1** this year. Therefore, candidates need to be trained on translating from and into Arabic equally.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

Questions 3–13

Most candidates answered these reading comprehension questions successfully and confidently. It was evident that most candidates read the questions carefully and made sure they were giving the correct answers to the right questions. The best candidates also knew how to select the specific information required from the text.

However, very few candidates did not give the correct answer to **Question 6**. Also, in **Question 7**, a few candidates copied a large chunk from the text without being clear about their answers. It is recommended that candidates are trained and advised to avoid lifting from the text. Sometimes a manipulation of the language is required to display a full understanding of both the question and answer.

The biggest challenge this year was in **Question 12**, and very few candidates identified the correct answer to this question. The response needed a very close reading of both the question and the text in order to pinpoint the three points required in order to be awarded 3 marks. This example can be used by teachers to train their candidates on how to respond to such a question in order to aim for an A* outcome.

For **Question 13**, candidates should be encouraged to answer all five words, and not just three as the question states, unless they are excellent candidates and are very confident in their three responses. This will give the less able candidates a better chance of achieving higher marks, since examiners will mark the best three answers and ignore the rest. Candidates are also advised to give or explain the meaning of the words within the context of the text, because certain words can have many synonyms, and some can be not related to the text.

Question 13 has six marks for three responses. In this series one mark was not awarded for a partially correct answer, and where there was a benefit of the doubt, two marks were fully awarded.