

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/21 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning to those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.
- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases without changing the meaning.
- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions, requiring straightforward and specific answers. Candidates need to read the passages carefully and should answer using their own words based on the information given in the passages. No credit can be given for responses if candidates have lifted an entire unit of language unchanged from the original texts, or if they are based on candidates' general knowledge, or personal experience.
- **Question 5 (a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year were concerned with how to obtain the virtue of honesty. **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 should not be a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. The whole response for **Question 5** is to be kept to no more than 200 character limit.

General comments

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

Most candidates attempted to answer all questions. Candidates usually used their own language to answer questions rather than 'lifting' the original words from the texts.

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

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

Performance on **Question 5(a)** shows that this continues to be the most challenging task for many candidates. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise relevant specific details rather than writing on something either too general or irrelevant.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The performance for this question was excellent, with the vast majority of candidates showing they had understood the vocabulary being tested and correctly locating the synonyms from Passage 1.

- (a) Not all candidates seemed to understand the word 欺骗, as 隐瞒 or 隐藏 were sometimes given as the synonym.
- (b) This vocabulary item was well-known amongst candidates, and the majority could locate 心神不宁 in the text.
- (c) This was challenging for some candidates. Whilst around half the candidates were able to locate 疏忽 in the text, 难免 was a frequently seen wrong answer.
- (d) Most candidates were able to supply the correct synonym 火冒三丈.
- (e) Performance for this question was strong, with most candidates correctly supplying 偶尔 as the synonym for 有时候.

Question 2

The overall performance for **Question 2** was good, although performance amongst the different parts of the question was quite varied. This was sometimes due to the meaning of the sentence being changed whilst manipulating the language to use the required structure. Candidates should be encouraged to check their answers by putting the reworked sentence back into the passage where the original text is extracted from to see if the meaning remains the same.

- (a) Although 不仅……而且…… is quite a commonly used structure, a small number of candidates were not clear about where to position 不仅 and showed some mother tongue interference, producing answers such as, 不仅这会令人心神不宁, 而且也会让人失去他人的信任.
- (b) Some candidates did not seem to be familiar with the 哪怕……也…… structure and therefore found this question challenging. Their principal difficulty was in maintaining the same meaning as the original text. Common incorrect answers were, 哪怕是不是有意犯错, 也都应该诚实认错 or 哪怕是有意犯错, 也应该诚实认错.
- (c) Most candidates were able to use the 把 structure successfully.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. In addition to the correct content, a variety of vocabulary was used in answers alongside a wide range of linking words such, 首先……其次…… 最后…; 第一, 第二…, which contributed to some high scores for Quality of Language as well as Content.

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

- (a) This question was generally well-answered. Candidates managed to use their own words in most cases, and a wide range of variation was seen, including answers such as, 不改变事实; 不对事实添枝加叶; 不对事实作假.

- (b) Candidates needed to be able to select and filter the relevant information to fit the requirements of the question, and this proved to be challenging for some. The text describes the negative impact of hiding the truth, and candidates needed to understand those ideas and then reformulate them to explain how being an honest person would bring benefits. Some candidates struggled to identify the key concepts and gave answers which were not close enough to the ideas in the text to be credited, such as 心平气和 or 保守自己的真实情感.
- (c) Most candidates were able to identify all three points. Where candidates did not gain three marks, this was usually due to omitting a key word like 诚恳, as answering with 道歉 alone was not detailed enough to get the mark. The text in the passage 不是嘴上说说而已 emphasises the idea of sincerity, therefore that concept was required in the answer: 诚恳道歉. Some answers to this question suggested candidates had used their own experience or common sense to guess at a possible answer, rather than using the text.
- (d) Performance on this question was good. The question asked how parents should set an example for their children in terms of honesty, and so answers like 有时候应该跟孩子认错; 鼓励孩子说实话 were not the best fit.
- (e) Most candidates successfully found both points.
- (f) Whilst some candidates managed to gain two marks, others needed to give fuller responses to be credited, for example, 为孩子营造诚恳互信的氛围 was not sufficient without mentioning the key word 家庭.

Question 4

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

- (a) This question was very well-answered, with the majority of candidates finding all four points.
- (b) A mixed performance was seen on this question. There were some excellent answers such as 保持无时无刻的诚实; 要坚持一直不说谎; 对他人一定要忠诚, which demonstrated a thorough understanding of the passage and an ability to rephrase the language used in the text to express the ideas clearly and accurately. Some candidates struggled in switching negative expressions into positive expressions and vice versa. Moreover, some candidates seemed unfamiliar with the structure 跟……一样.
- (c) The majority of candidates responded to this question well and a wide range of good answers was seen in the marking. Almost all candidates secured the mark for the first point 鼓励孩子; answers like 使人变得更努力 or 让他人获得更大的动力去努力; 让人变得更强大 were accepted as the key concept was accurate.
- (d) This was amongst the best answered questions, with the majority of candidates securing all four marks.
- (e) The majority of candidates managed to identify both points correctly. It was rare to see incorrect answers such as 容忍善意的谎言.

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

Some candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise many relevant points from both passages and all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. The most successful responses were those which paid careful attention to the question which had been asked, and focused on the specific details of how to obtain the virtue of honesty. Some candidates also effectively integrated their own ideas for **part (b)** with the summary question (**part (a)**).

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware that they must provide 10 distinct points from both passages according to the question asked for **part (a)** and talk about their opinions or ideas in **part (b)**, all within the word limit of 200 characters.

Some candidates did not score highly in **Question 5 (a)** because they did not address the question and drifted off-topic or peppered their summaries with points from the text which didn't relate to the question. This may suggest a misunderstanding of the question. It is important for candidates to read the question carefully to ensure answers are focussed and relevant in order to be credited with content points.

All candidates would benefit from taking more care when reading the question given on the paper for **5(a)** and checking that their answers are fully focussed on that question. One useful technique is for candidates to highlight the key words from the question to ensure they are writing relevantly. For **5(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/22 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning to those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.
- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases without changing the meaning.
- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions, requiring straightforward and specific answers. Candidates need to read the passages carefully and should answer using their own words based on the information given in the passages. No credit can be given for responses if candidates have lifted an entire unit of language unchanged from the original texts, or if they are based on candidates' general knowledge, or personal experience.
- **Question 5 (a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year dealt with the impact fame might bring on an individual. **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.

General comments

The quality of work produced in this year's examination was good. Most candidates showed they had a thorough understanding of the two reading passages and a high percentage of candidates offered complete and accurate answers. In general, candidates answered the questions using full sentences and it was a rarity that candidates lifted from the passages. Answers were presented clearly and, for the most part, handwriting was legible. Most candidates attempted to answer all questions.

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

Candidates used a wide range of connective words in their answers and most candidates made an effort to use synonyms, or rearrange the word order when answering **Questions 3** and **4**. This ensured they were showing their own competence in writing Chinese, which is necessary to reach the higher marking bands for Quality of Language. A small number of candidates even managed to use a range of sophisticated expressions in their answer, which was impressive.

Performance on **Question 5(a)** shows that this continues to be the most challenging task for many candidates. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise relevant specific details rather than writing on something either too general or irrelevant.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question requires candidates to identify a word from the reading passage that is synonymous with the word given in the question. The two pieces of vocabulary must be interchangeable in the context. A high level of performance was seen on this question, showing that most candidates had understood the vocabulary well and also had a solid knowledge of synonyms.

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify 获胜者 from the passage. The most common incorrect answer was 获胜.
- (b) Most candidates understood the word 逾越 and could locate the correct synonym. Those who did not have a solid understanding of the word answered with 频频, 远远 or 远远超出.
- (c) Candidates who did not gain a mark for this question commonly answered 倾诉, which although is a synonym of 诉说, is not present in passage 1. Candidates need to remember that they must locate an appropriate synonym from the text, rather than trying to generate a word themselves.
- (d) Most candidates were able to correctly find 开发 in the passage; only a few candidates gave incorrect answers such as 拓展 or 打开.
- (e) This was the best answered question with most candidates finding the target vocabulary item.

Question 2

A strong performance was seen on this question. Most candidates were aware that they need to use the structure given in the question to re-write the sentence whilst retaining the same meaning.

- (a) Candidates needed to understand which part of the sentence required emphasis in order to correctly place the structure ‘是……的’. In some cases, candidates placed 是 correctly, but did not complete the structure by writing 的 at the end of sentence, perhaps showing a lack of familiarity with the structure.
- (b) Some candidates seemed to find the 被 structure challenging, using both 把 and 被 in the same sentence, supplying answers such as, 曾有朋友把她的隐私被透露给媒体. Other examples of incorrect usage of the structure included 她的隐私曾有被朋友透露给媒体; 曾有她的隐私被朋友透露给媒体。
- (c) The structure tested in this question is one of the most commonly used structures, and the majority of candidates were able to use it confidently.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. In addition to the correct content, a variety of vocabulary was used in answers alongside a wide range of linking words such, 首先……其次…… 最后…; 第一, 第二…, which contributed to some high scores for Quality of Language as well as Content.

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

- (a) This question was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to include the point 自学成才 in their answer. In saying that she won the first prize, candidates needed to say 第一名 rather than 获胜 to convey the precise meaning. Some candidates mentioned 是真人秀节目的获胜者 but needed to include the key concept 第一位 to be credited with the mark. Candidates had worked hard to rephrase the wording of the text in their answers, but in doing so need to ensure that they do not lose the original meaning. The word 不寻常 was frequently rephrased, but vocabulary such as 不可思议, 奇怪 or 特殊 changed the meaning sufficiently to render answers uncreditworthy. It is important that candidates choose synonyms which fit in the context.
- (b) The majority of candidates tackled this question confidently. A small number of candidates missed the signposts in the text 意料之外, 居然 and 更没有想到的是, which cued correct answers.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Once again, a small number of candidates changed the meaning of their answers when substituting vocabulary from the text, e.g. rephrasing 沮丧 as 悲伤 or 难过 and 害怕 as 恐慌. Candidates frequently formatted their answers as bullet points for this question rather than giving a full sentence.
- (d) This question was very well answered. Correct answers clearly mentioned 有心事不敢和朋友倾诉 and 失去了交朋友的机会 to secure both marks. Others needed to include the key concept 有心事时 or 和朋友 to be credited. Some common incorrect answers were 不敢向朋友倾诉 or 不敢诉说心事.
- (e) Performance for this question was very good, with many candidates including the essential details in their answers and therefore receiving all three marks. Those who did not gain all available marks usually presented incomplete responses. Candidates should be reminded to look at the number of marks available for a question to ensure they mention the correct number of points.
- (f) In answer to this question, a few candidates gave their own interpretation of the changes, making inferences beyond what was stated in the text. Some included 米雪不再这么幼稚, which is not the same as 疯疯癫癫.

Question 4

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

- (a) This question required candidates to manipulate the language given in the text to provide an appropriate response, and the most able candidates handled this confidently. There was a wide range of answers and in a few cases, candidates used their own knowledge or personal experience to answer; candidates should be reminded that answers must be rooted in the information given in the text to be credited.
- (b) This was the highest performing sub-question of **Question 4**, with the majority of the candidates securing all available marks.
- (c) This question was generally well-answered. A few candidates wrote 电视节目 or 访谈节目, which was slightly ambiguous and could relate to any TV programme or even be an interview on the radio. 电视访谈节目 was needed to be credited.
- (d) This was the least well-answered question, mainly because key pieces of information were frequently omitted from responses. For example, some candidates needed to include 看演唱会 rather than just saying 花光了零花钱; others missed out 经常 in the 经常通宵达旦在粉丝圈聊天, or only wrote 逃学. Many candidates now fully understand that they should rephrase or manipulate the text when possible, and improvements in this have been evident. However, candidates also need to be careful that in their efforts to use their own words they don't stray too far from the original

meaning of the text and actually change the information, thus no longer answering the question asked. This happened a few times in response to this question, examples of which were candidates who paraphrased 花光零用钱 as 散尽家财 which changed the original meaning.

- (e) The majority of candidates performed well in this question. Those who did not secure all available marks frequently only gave two or three points in their answer, or lifted the whole sentences ‘通过了解明星, 追求更好的生活’. Candidates must remember they must not lift a whole sentence from the text, even if the answer appears in a relatively short sentence.

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

Question 5

Many candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise the relevant points from both passages. The strongest candidates were able to seamlessly integrate the information from the passages into their own writing, articulating their ideas clearly and creating a natural flow. In a few cases, very able candidates did not score highly in **Question 5 (a)** because they did not address the question. It is important to read the question carefully to ensure answers are focussed and relevant in order to be credited with content points.

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware that they must provide 10 distinct points from both passages according to the question asked for **part (a)** and talk about their opinions or ideas in **part (b)**, all within the word limit of 200 characters.

Question 5(b) provides candidates with the opportunity to develop their personal ideas and viewpoints on the topic covered in the texts. Many candidates showed competence in forming and delivering well thought out ideas in **part (b)**. Several candidates also successfully related their own experience either as a ‘celebrity’ or ‘fan’, which made their opinions and arguments more interesting and convincing.

In terms of Quality of Language, the majority of candidates showed they had a high level of written Chinese and were able to communicate clearly and effectively throughout. Very few exceeded the word limit this year.

All candidates would benefit from taking more care when reading the question given on the paper for **5(a)** and checking that their answers are fully focussed on that question. One useful technique is for candidates to highlight the key words from the question to ensure they are writing relevantly. For **5(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/23 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

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- **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 dealt with the benefits of young people taking part in voluntary work. **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.

General comments

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

Most candidates attempted to answer all questions. Candidates usually used their own language to answer questions rather than 'lifting' the original words from the texts.

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

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

Performance on **Question 5(a)** shows that this continues to be the most challenging task for many candidates. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise relevant specific details rather than writing on something either too general or irrelevant.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The performance for this question was excellent, with the vast majority of candidates showing they had understood the vocabulary being tested and correctly locating the synonyms from Passage 1. To improve performance, candidates need to better understand the function of the vocabulary they come across and analyse its position in the sentence.

- (a) This vocabulary item was well-known amongst candidates, and the majority could locate 理由 in the text.
- (b) Whilst the majority of candidates could identify 经历, others seemed to guess their answers, giving incorrect vocabulary such as, 焕发 or 机会.
- (c) Many candidates knew that 机构 was the synonym for 组织, but several incorrect answers were given, most frequently 招生, 推荐 or 了解.
- (d) This question was generally well-answered. Candidates who did not gain a mark for this question gave the impression of picking a word at random from the relevant paragraph so as not to leave an unanswered question, showing unfamiliarity with the vocabulary item 找工作.
- (e) Most candidates were able to supply the correct synonym 求职.

Question 2

Candidates seemed very well prepared and handled these grammatical manipulation questions with confidence. This question had the highest performance on the paper, with many candidates achieving full marks. Candidates were fully aware that they need to use the structures given in the questions to re-write the sentence whilst maintaining the same meaning.

- (a) Most candidates knew how to use the 如果……就…… structure to manipulate the sentence correctly.
- (b) Most candidates were able to use the structure 是……的.
- (c) Many candidates could re-write the sentence using 虽然……但是……. A few candidates omitted the subject 它 in the re-written sentence, but as long as the meaning of the original sentence was retained without 它, the mark was still awarded.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. Some interesting language was used in the answers provided, including a good selection of linking words.

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

- (a) Candidates performed well in this opening question. Some excellent answers managed to take the key concepts from the passage and recast these into the candidate's own words, e.g. 它为你提供机会去体验新东西; 人们可以通过参加志愿活动去获得不同的体验; 参加志愿活动可以丰富你的经历.

- (b) This was the best-answered sub-question in **Question 3** with most candidates finding the answers without difficulty. For this question, short, straightforward answers like 夏令营 and 救济所 were sufficient.
- (c) A variety of answers was given in response to this question, e.g. 首先要有优异的成绩, 其次要有时间观念, 而且要有很强的责任心和应变能力的人最有可能被大学录取. Such answers demonstrated manipulation of the language of the original text and thus contributed well to the award of the Quality of Language mark. Most candidates understood that they needed to take the information structured in a negative way in the passage (*if you don't have ... it would be hard for...*) and change this into a positive statement to answer the question correctly. Some candidates found it difficult to decipher the information when both positive and negative structures were used in the same sentence and gave an answer such as, 成绩是否优异, which was not clear enough to answer the question.
- (d) This question was well-answered and the best responses used a wide range of cohesive devices to link the different points together, e.g. 首先, 然后, 最后; 第一, 第二, 第三; 不仅……而且……. Most candidates included the key points in their answers well, such as, 和当地的人融为一体; 想为改善当地居民的生活做一些事情; 计划在大学学习非洲文化. A small number of candidates needed to give fuller answers to gain all possible marks. This was the case in answers such as 打算学习非洲文化 which needed to also include the key aspect 在大学 to gain the mark. In other examples, the choice of vocabulary was not always appropriate, as in 打算在大学了解非洲文化, where 了解 does not convey the same depth of learning in 学习. Many candidates now fully understand that they should rephrase or manipulate the text when possible, and improvements in this have been evident. It is essential, however, that they choose the right synonym for the key concept to avoid changing the original meaning.
- (e) Performance on this question was mixed. Some candidates managed to fully explain the meaning of the phrase in the context to secure both marks. Others found the question challenging and used their personal experience to describe what the saying meant, rather than using the information from the passage.
- (f) This question was generally well-answered. Those candidates who did not gain both possible marks often gave answers such as 是阅历更加丰富, which conveys a different meaning to 简历 and 阅历.

Question 4

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

- (a) This question was very well answered. Answers which omitted the key word 打工 were rare.
- (b) Many good answers were seen in response to this question, which showed a genuine understanding of the text, e.g. 人事经理觉得小李只会说不会做.
- (c) This question proved challenging to some candidates, which required them to understand the idiom 纸上谈兵 in the context and manipulate the language of the text to answer the question. Some candidates were able to handle this well, giving detailed and thoughtful responses. Weaker answers were characterised by interpretations such as, 不切实际的空谈; 一些无用的东西; 没有实际的行动; 对没有实习经验的高学历者的空谈的无视. All of these answers showed a level of understanding of the four-word idiom in the text but did not translate or explain the idiom fully. Some candidates were even able to demonstrate their understanding of the idiom by telling the story of where the idiom came from in concise language, which was not necessary for the mark, but interesting nonetheless.

- (d) Most candidates gave detailed answers and also managed to rephrase the wording of the text, as in 有无私奉献的精神.
- (e) Many candidates secured both marks by giving sufficient detail as required by the question, e.g. 以为会很顺利地找到工作但现实情况却不是这样, 埃莉四处碰壁.
- (f) This question was very well-answered.
- (g) Most candidates were able to discuss the possible impact of spending a lot of time volunteering.

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

The majority of candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise many relevant points from both passages. Almost all candidates kept their answers to the required character limit. The most successful responses were those which paid careful attention to the question which had been asked, and focused on the specific details of the benefits of taking part in voluntary work. Some candidates also effectively integrated their own ideas for **part (b)** with the summary question (**part (a)**).

Some candidates did not score highly in **Question 5 (a)** because they did not address the question and drifted off-topic or peppered their summaries with points from the text which didn't relate to the question. This may suggest a misunderstanding of the question. It is important for candidates to read the question carefully to ensure answers are focussed and relevant in order to be credited with content points.

All candidates would benefit from taking more care when reading the question given on the paper for **5(a)** and checking that their answers are fully focussed on that question. One useful technique is for candidates to highlight the key words from the question to ensure they are writing relevantly. For **5(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

CHINESE

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

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

- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed and follows a logical argument
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper.

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was positive and showed they were adequately prepared to deal with material at this level. Responses were seen at both ends of the spectrum; some candidates displayed a high degree of excellence and others struggled to produce relevant and coherent responses.

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

Good performance was characterised by strict adherence to the rubric; clear knowledge of the subject area; and the ability to articulate comprehensive responses using appropriate language. This would typically be achieved by using a logical essay structure, which flowed from start to end, showing balance and containing relevant examples culminating in a forceful conclusion. Candidates used logical structures to link the points in their argument with relevant examples and ensured that any given sentence had a purpose and was there to support a particular point. Many candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary in order to write using complex sentence structures.

Weaker responses came from candidates who seemed to misunderstand the paper's requirements or, generally, deviated from the task in hand. This sometimes occurred despite the candidate having a reasonable grip of the subject. In some cases, candidates needed to demonstrate their own views without recourse to simple anecdotal experience.

It was noticeable again this year that where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese. Some candidates also needed a greater awareness of basic grammar, like the use of 的, 地, 得. Others combined two sentences without checking the accuracy of the grammar.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Punctuation: some candidates used minimal or no punctuation, which led to some unwieldy chunks of text. It is important that candidates do not neglect this fundamental area while attempting to formulate their exam responses.
- Taking adequate time to understand the exam requirements: candidates can be prone to misreading and/or misunderstanding questions set out in papers. Taking time to absorb the requirements as set out in the rubric will counter this and ensure time isn't wasted writing something that is not relevant.
- Formatting: some candidates still need to adhere to a basic essay structure, which includes an introduction, main body and conclusion.
- Subjectivity: some candidates relied heavily on personal experience rather than setting out more complex social issues and showing a deep understanding of the topic. Answers need to be detailed, relevant and well illustrated, containing well-structured arguments to reach the highest marking bands.

In order to achieve this, candidates need to include detailed explanations and logical structures to link the points into a valid argument using relevant examples.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 人与人之间

有人说，人与人之间相处，最重要的是交流。你怎么看？

This was the most popular choice of question and in most cases was very well answered. The majority of candidates showed good knowledge of the topic and could write competently on the importance of communication. Stronger responses convincingly listed different scenarios when good communication proved to be the most effective way to improve relationships.

Some candidates spent too much time outlining the different types of communication and the etiquette involved rather than emphasising the importance. Some candidates counter-argued the advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face communication vs. communication via electronic tools and, although detailed and insightful, such responses fundamentally did not address the question.

Question 2 法制

人们享有充分的权利是社会进步的一种体现。请讨论。

A relatively small number of candidates opted for this question, however, it was competently handled and a good standard of performance was seen.

Able candidates demonstrated their knowledge by expanding on people's rights to gender equality and fairness of resources distribution and political democracy; all of which helped to promote a fairer society and stimulate positive progress. On the other hand, weaker candidates merely argued the rights and obligations of citizens, or stated the effectiveness of enforcing law and order rather than responding to the task.

Question 3 工作和休闲

工作和休闲是完全对立的吗？请讨论。

This was a very well answered question, where most candidates performed strongly.

While some candidates convincingly explained the contradictory nature of work and leisure and the importance of seeking a balance, some candidates strongly believed work and leisure are complementary and are interlinked.

Question 4 战争与和平

为了确保世界和平，我们不应该干涉别国的内政。你怎么看？

Very few candidates chose this topic. Some candidates used highly sophisticated language in their responses, but the content was not always as well-developed. Rather than emphasise the importance of peace, or condemning controlling countries, candidates could have focused more on a measured response, or balanced approach to the argument.

Question 5 污染

近年来中国在环境污染的防治方面做得够不够？请讨论。

This proved to be the second most popular option this year and candidates handled the task with confidence. Able candidates possessed an impressive knowledge of Chinese climate mitigation efforts: from renewable energies to implementation of the trialling of sorting waste in Shanghai. Weaker responses showed a general knowledge of pollution and what should be done, but could not provide the more detailed responses sought specifically for this question.

CHINESE

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

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

- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed and follows a logical argument
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper.

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was positive and showed they were adequately prepared to deal with material at this level. Responses were seen at both ends of the spectrum; some candidates displayed a high degree of excellence and others struggled to produce relevant and coherent responses.

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

Good performance was characterised by strict adherence to the rubric; clear knowledge of the subject area; and the ability to articulate comprehensive responses using appropriate language. This would typically be achieved by using a logical essay structure, which flowed from start to end, showing balance and containing relevant examples culminating in a forceful conclusion. Candidates used logical structures to link the points in their argument with relevant examples and ensured that any given sentence had a purpose and was there to support a particular point. Many candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary in order to write using complex sentence structures.

Weaker responses came from candidates who seemed to misunderstand the paper's requirements or, generally, deviated from the task in hand. This sometimes occurred despite the candidate having a reasonable grip of the subject. In some cases, candidates needed to demonstrate their own views without recourse to simple anecdotal experience.

It was noticeable again this year that where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese. Some candidates also needed a greater awareness of basic grammar, like the use of 的, 地, 得. Others combined two sentences without checking the accuracy of the grammar.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Punctuation: some candidates used minimal or no punctuation, which led to some unwieldy chunks of text. It is important that candidates do not neglect this fundamental area while attempting to formulate their exam responses.
- Taking adequate time to understand the exam requirements: candidates can be prone to misreading and/or misunderstanding questions set out in papers. Taking time to absorb the requirements as set out in the rubric will counter this and ensure time isn't wasted writing something that is not relevant.
- Formatting: some candidates still need to adhere to a basic essay structure, which includes an introduction, main body and conclusion.

- **Subjectivity:** some candidates relied heavily on personal experience rather than setting out more complex social issues and showing a deep understanding of the topic. Answers need to be detailed, relevant and well illustrated, containing well-structured arguments to reach the highest marking bands. In order to achieve this, candidates need to include detailed explanations and logical structures to link the points into a valid argument using relevant examples.

Question 1 人与人之间

你怎样理解“良药苦口利于病；忠言逆耳利于行”？

This was one of the more popular questions this year. Most students were able to articulate an understanding of the famous Chinese proverb, ‘A bitter medicine cures the disease and unpalatable advice benefits behaviour’. Stronger candidates were not only able to show a clear opinion with detailed explanations and coherent argument, but also provided relevant examples to support their stance. Some candidates only talked about the definition of the proverb at a superficial level, and needed to include more detailed and in-depth discussion to achieve the highest band.

Question 2 法制

服刑的犯人是否应该拥有政治权利？请讨论。

Fewer candidates chose to answer this question. However, those that did were generally able to provide a strong argument about whether prisoners serving a sentence have a political right or not – which included relevant examples to bolster the point. Weaker responses tended to lack the latter.

Question 3 工作和休闲

收入的高低决定我们就业的选择。你怎么看？

A large number of candidates opted for this question. The majority of those agreed that the pay scale determined the employment options. Strong candidates were able to analyse and explain the reasons why the pay scale plays, or does not play, the prime part in choosing a job, e.g. for a better future and/or quality of life; or genuine interest/ability should be the first consideration, and so on. This included detailed, clearly relevant and well-illustrated examples as well as coherently argued and structured prose. Weaker responses tended to merely focus on the topic of work and leisure rather than examine the question in any great depth, or offer any real insight.

Question 4 战争与和平

如果我们没有国界，就不会有矛盾与战争。请讨论。

This was another well-tackled question, in spite of the fact it was chosen by a small number of candidates. The best responses showed careful analysis of the question coupled with strong arguments on why if there were no state borders there would be no conflicts or wars. A small number of responses were not supported by good examples, or simply lost focus on the key theme meaning no coherent argument was formed.

Question 5 污染

对改善空气质量来说，禁止燃放烟花爆竹并不是个有效的办法。你怎么看？

This proved to be the most popular question this year. Most candidates were able to show good knowledge around the topic of banning fireworks and firecrackers as a non-effective way to improve air quality, e.g. by using comparisons to automobile exhaust fumes and general industrial pollution. On the other hand, some candidates still managed to handle the task competently using a counter argument, e.g. fireworks and firecrackers cause a sudden increase in PM2.5 concentration and/or produce toxic and harmful gases such as sulphur dioxide, nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide, etc. Other responses showed good knowledge about the impact of air pollution on the environment, but then lacked sufficient detail or complexity when it came to setting out arguments for banning fireworks.

CHINESE

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

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

- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed and follows a logical argument
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper.

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was positive and showed they were adequately prepared to deal with material at this level. Responses were seen at both ends of the spectrum; some candidates displayed a high degree of excellence and others struggled to produce relevant and coherent responses.

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

Good performance was characterised by strict adherence to the rubric; clear knowledge of the subject area; and the ability to articulate comprehensive responses using appropriate language. This would typically be achieved by using a logical essay structure, which flowed from start to end, showing balance and containing relevant examples culminating in a forceful conclusion. Candidates used logical structures to link the points in their argument with relevant examples and ensured that any given sentence had a purpose and was there to support a particular point. Many candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary in order to write using complex sentence structures.

Weaker responses came from candidates who seemed to misunderstand the paper's requirements or, generally, deviated from the task in hand. This sometimes occurred despite the candidate having a reasonable grip of the subject. In some cases, candidates needed to demonstrate their own views without recourse to simple anecdotal experience.

Overall, the quality of the language in the majority of responses was rated in the 'good' to 'very good' range. Some of the best answers showed great confidence in using complex sentence patterns and extensive vocabulary; and also applied idioms appropriately.

It was noticeable again this year that where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese. Some candidates also needed a greater awareness of basic grammar, like the use of 的, 地, 得. Others combined two sentences without checking the accuracy of the grammar.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Punctuation: some candidates used minimal or no punctuation, which led to some unwieldy chunks of text. It is important that candidates do not neglect this fundamental area while attempting to formulate their exam responses.
- Taking adequate time to understand the exam requirements: candidates can be prone to misreading and/or misunderstanding questions set out in papers. Taking time to absorb the requirements as set out in the rubric will counter this and ensure time isn't wasted writing something that is not relevant.
- Formatting: some candidates still need to adhere to a basic essay structure, which includes an introduction, main body and conclusion.

- **Subjectivity:** some candidates relied heavily on personal experience rather than setting out more complex social issues and showing a deep understanding of the topic. Answers need to be detailed, relevant and well illustrated, containing well-structured arguments to reach the highest marking bands. In order to achieve this, candidates need to include detailed explanations and logical structures to link the points into a valid argument using relevant examples.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 人与人之间

人与人之间相处，应适当保持距离。你怎么看？

Most candidates who answered this question agreed that it was reasonable to keep a moderate distance between people. Strong candidates were not only able to show a detailed and coherent explanation, like that a certain distance between people can protect personal privacy and personal space as well as produce closer relationships, but also provided relevant examples to support the argument. A few candidates talked about the reasons why people should keep a distance between each other in a very general manner, which did not always retain relevance to the question. There were candidates who relied on simple personal experience as examples, and needed to include further evidence to create a more well-rounded and supported response.

Question 2 法制

网络犯罪的无国界性让执法更难。你怎么看？

Significantly fewer candidates opted for this question. Weaker responses were those which only talked about online crimes, and didn't mention the complexities which would make this difficult to police in practice on the international stage.

Question 3 工作和休闲

有人说，兴趣是工作的动力。请讨论。

This was one of the most popular questions, and also a very well answered question. The majority of candidates showed good knowledge of the relationship between one's interest and work. Some candidates analysed and explained the reasons why interest was a strong motive to work (such as gaining the passion, putting enough time and effort, no pressure when working, etc.) with good examples. Some other candidates argued that other elements are also a motive to work, like the family financial situation, and the realisation of one's ambitions. While the overall response was positive, weaker candidates lacked sophistication when it came to written analysis and the ability to make in-depth arguments in order to evidence their understanding of the topic.

Question 4 战争与和平

世界上任何战争都是可以避免的。你怎么看？

This was a very popular question. Most candidates showed good knowledge of the topic, around whether all wars were avoidable. Strong answers explained the reasons and were also supported by strong evidence. The slightly weaker candidates need to ensure they relate every point back to the question and provide relevant examples to back up their rationale.

Question 5 污染

请谈谈污染给人们的健康带来哪些危害。

This proved to be another popular question, and the answers to it were varied. Some candidates showed general knowledge about pollution but could not provide the responses geared specifically to the demands of the question. Stronger candidates demonstrated a clear and viable opinion backed up with details of what impact pollution had on people's health. These included convincing examples.

CHINESE

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

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both Section 1 and Section 2. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1** 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

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

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes. In a few cases understanding of the context was less secure, with examples of confusion between the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976).

Most candidates were aware that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and analyse the plot or characters with illustration. A few responses became distracted by giving general information about the author's life or even relating elements of the texts to their own personal experiences, which is not necessary. A number of essays would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. Candidates should avoid summarising or repeating the story but rather choose a short quote to illustrate the point, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay.

Most candidates were able to answer questions in an academic essay style with a clear essay structure, including a short introduction, the main body of the argument and a conclusion, using clear paragraphs. Although candidates are not assessed on their linguistic accuracy in this paper, candidates need to communicate clearly and effectively.

This year there was still a significant number of candidates who 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 credited with the two highest marks only.

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 sufficient time to answer all three equally well.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

- (a) Most candidates showed a good understanding of the literary techniques used in the poem and of the poet's thoughts and feelings. They pointed out that memory was personified as a friend and could be present throughout the poet's life. Stronger candidates also discussed that the poet used parallelism as a device to emphasise the importance of memory, expressing the poet's attachment to memory.
- (b) This question required candidates to understand the background and theme of the poem. The majority of candidates showed a sound understanding of the poems they were writing about. The most frequently chosen poems were 《我用残损的手掌》和《狱中绝壁》. Stronger responses used quotations to analyse how the poet showed no fear of sacrifice in the face of aggression and his deep love for the motherland.

Question 2

高行健: 《绝对信号》 ("Juedui Xinhao" by Gao Xingjian)

- (a) To answer this question, candidates needed to understand the plot and the relationship between the characters 蜜蜂 (Mifeng) and 黑子 (Heizi). Most candidates pointed out that Mifeng tried to help Heizi when he felt his life was 'lost'. Some candidates needed greater familiarity with the content of play to avoid misunderstanding the dialogue between the gangster and train captain, which was seen in some responses. Many skilled responses explored the deeper meaning or subtext of the dialogue and discussed how the dialogue advances the plot.
- (b) Most responses showed that candidates had understood the plot and characters of the play. They were able to discuss that the three characters were classmates and that the intertwining love between them caused a complex relationship. Many candidates provided detailed answers which analysed how the feelings of the characters and their situations caused conflict between them.

Question 3

王安忆: 《本次列车终点》 ("Benci lieche zhongdian" by Wang Anyi)

- (a) This was a popular question and most candidates performed well, showing a sound knowledge of the background and plot. The majority of candidates compared the feeling of deference between

袁小昕 Yuan Xiaoxin and 陈信 Chen Xin with the difficult life of 知青 Zhiqing who came back to Shanghai. The best responses explained the reasons why Yuan Xiaoxin thought the cost of returning to Shanghai was too high, with detailed analysis of Chen Xin's life in Shanghai.

- (b) In general, candidates who answered this question gave a clear answer discussing the changes both Chen Xin and his family went through. Conscientious candidates compared and analysed the changes from different angles, i.e. the changes in Chen Xin's life, the harmony and conflict in family relationships, and his incompatibility with city life in Shanghai. Stronger candidates discussed how the issues Chen Xin had to deal with back in Shanghai also made everything different from before.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍:《骆驼祥子》("Luo tuo Xiangzi" by Lao She)

- (a) Most candidates showed their in-depth knowledge of the characters and plot, but some needed a greater understanding of 个人主义 (individualism) to fully answer the question. Many candidates discussed the three occasions Xiangzi attempted to buy a wagon and concluded that society itself eventually caused him to fall and die; such responses frequently needed a greater focus on individualism. The most successful responses argued that individual effort and self-abandonment were two aspects of Xiangzi's individualism and ultimately the root of his tragedy. They reasoned that Xiangzi's personal effort and determination alone couldn't give him a 'good life'. His loss of hope and final collapse into indulgence all indicated that individualism could not provide a way out.
- (b) Candidates showed familiarity with the character and plot, writing about how Mr. Cao helped Xiangzi and treated him well. Many candidates discussed the reasons why Xiangzi considered Mr. Cao to be a saint and compared Mr. Cao to other characters in the story. Some candidates also discussed that Mr. Cao's thinking was progressive and revolutionary but that he had his own limitations, so could not save Xiangzi from the dark side of society.

Question 5

韩少功:《归去来》("Gui qu lai" by Han Shao Gong)

- (a) This question examines candidates' understanding of the plot and themes running through the story. Candidates summarised the story and analysed how Huang Zhixian gradually identified himself as 马眼镜 Mayanjing. Some candidates discussed that Huang Zhixian's past experience was an influence on assuming Mayanjing's identity and losing his real self.
- (b) The title of this short story has a very strong link to the theme and author's purpose. Candidates showed a good understanding of the two characters and explained the meaning of the title in terms of both 'going away' and 'coming back'. Successful responses not only showed an understanding of the relationship between the two roles but also went further to discuss how these two identities changed throughout the story.

Question 6

鲁迅:《故乡》("Gu Xiang" by Lu Xun)

- (a) This question was answered by a high number of candidates, most of whom were able to analyse the character well using appropriate quotations to illustrate their points. Some compared Runtu as a child and then in later life, and discussed the changes in his portrait, language, psychology and thought, and the reasons for the changes. Many good answers also comprehensively described the character and analysed the author's intention in writing this character.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question well. Many focused on the meeting between the middle-aged Runtu and 'I' before leaving the hometown and discussed the changes in their relationship and the psychological changes they go through. Candidates pointed out that Runtu changed from a close friend to estrangement, and 'I' changed from having enthusiastic expectations to disappointment. Stronger responses compared the differences between their childhood and middle age, and further analysed the social causes of the psychological changes, the underlying theme of the text, and the author's writing intentions.

CHINESE

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

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both Section 1 and Section 2. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1** 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

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

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes. In a few cases understanding of the context was less secure, with examples of confusion between the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976).

Most candidates were aware that the focus of responses should be firmly on the text itself and analyse the plot or characters with illustration. A few responses became distracted by giving general information about the author's life or even relating elements of the texts to their own personal experiences, which is not necessary. A number of essays would have benefited from a judicious use of well-chosen brief quotations from the texts to illustrate the points they were making. Candidates should avoid summarising or repeating the story but rather choose a short quote to illustrate the point, then go on to explain why the quotation or reference supports the argument/discussion running through the essay.

Most candidates were able to answer questions in an academic essay style with a clear essay structure, including a short introduction, the main body of the argument and a conclusion, using clear paragraphs. Although candidates are not assessed on their linguistic accuracy in this paper, candidates need to communicate clearly and effectively.

This year there was still a significant number of candidates who 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 credited with the two highest marks only.

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 sufficient time to answer all three equally well.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

- (a)** Many candidates who answered this question were able to analyse the poet's intentions and discussed the poet's worries, linking these to loneliness and a deep melancholy over his beloved. Weaker responses tended to misinterpret the poet's feelings as missing his hometown or related the author's worries to his imprisonment during the Japanese incursion of 1941. In part **(ii)**, the best answers not only analysed the effect of the techniques used, but also discussed the rhythm and musicality brought by the repetition of the lines of the poem.
- (b)** Candidates who chose to answer this question showed a good understanding of the poet's intentions and were able to examine the author's literary technique of comparison to express his views and feelings. Most candidates chose to discuss the poems 《我用残损的手掌》《狱中绝壁》 or 《过旧居》 and extracted appropriate and brief quotations for analysis, producing confident responses on the concept of love and of the poet's patriotism. The majority of candidates performed well with very clear comparisons and convincing conclusions.

Question 2

高行健: 《绝对信号》 ("Juedui Xinhao" by Gao Xingjian)

- (a)** Most candidates showed a good understanding of the play and clearly expressed two or three motives using sound reasoning and analysis for why 黑子 stopped 蜜蜂 announcing their relationship to 小号. Most responses included an evaluation of the personalities of the three characters and their family situations, including relevant observations about the three young people's job opportunities and employment issues. The strongest responses also displayed solid knowledge of the dominant social economic background against which the story took place. Weaker responses tended to include too much narrative material extracted from the immediate text, thus only providing fairly simple points and lacking solid detail.
- (b)** In response to this question, many candidates discussed the literary technique of subtext in the play. They were able to use the conversations between 车匪 and 站长 or 黑子 and 站长 to illustrate and develop a thorough response. Weaker answers often only explained the surface meaning of the conversations between characters and needed to also include a discussion of the underlying meaning in those conversations for the in-depth level of analysis needed.

Question 3

王安忆: 《本次列车终点》 (“Benci lieche zhongdian” by Wang Anyi)

- (a) The vast majority of candidates performed well with a good focus on the key aspects of the question using detailed illustrations to support their answers. In **Question (a)(i)** candidates were able to provide relevant and logical reasons why the unemployed youngest brother became a worry. In answering **(a)(ii)**, stronger candidates wrote very thorough responses and discussed many reasons why Chen Xin’s life in Shanghai was made difficult. These included: the change in lifestyle, the very small living space, marriage difficulties, as well as the sister-in-law’s intention to be separated from the whole family.
- (b) Most candidates composed their essays with a clear structure and were able to organise materials to support their argument/discussion in a focused manner. Many candidates pointed out the relevance of the title 《本次列车终点》 and the analogy that the train and its final destination may represent and reflect Chen Xin’s thoughts on his uncertain life and future. Stronger candidates were able to see the transformation of the protagonist’s thinking throughout the plot from feeling 茫然 frustrated and at a complete loss, to feeling discomfort during his hardship, and finally into feeling more encouraged and motivated to keep moving towards the next “destination”. The best responses also provided a sound background knowledge together with an in-depth analysis about the themes and the author’s intentions.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍: 《骆驼祥子》 (“Luo tuo Xiangzi” by Lao She)

- (a) Most candidates who chose to answer this question showed detailed knowledge of the work. They were able to summarise the plot and discussed the themes running through the novel. Stronger responses avoided a more narrative approach which simply listed the ups and downs of Xiangzi’s life and rather chose specific content relating to the topic to answer the questions in a targeted manner. Many strong candidates understood the term ‘个人主义’ (individualism) and selected relevant examples for analysis. They discussed that 祥子 Xiangzi’s individualism is about his hard work to achieve his own aims and also about being selfish and focusing on his own benefits.
- (b) The question required an examination of the characters’ relationships. Many good responses focussed in on the affective behaviour and developing emotions that truly bring an understanding of the characters. A number of candidates went beyond the immediate material to discuss the deep social and personal problems which contributed to forming the personalities of Xiangzi and Huiyu, ultimately resulting in their sad life and the unfortunate love-hate relationship. The best responses showed an in-depth knowledge of the social, political and historical background with articulate and intelligent writing.

Question 5

韩少功: 《归去来》 (“Gui qu lai” by Han Shao Gong)

- (a) Many candidates who chose to answer this question used their own language to illustrate 马眼镜 Mayanjing’s life and experiences, and also included insightful discussion of the symbolic significance of the character. Stronger candidates were able to piece information together and give a full picture of Mayanjing’s life experience as well as discussing the social background at the time of Mayanjing’s story.
- (b) The majority of candidates showed a good understanding of the text and the connection between the two characters 黄治先 Huang Zhixian and 马眼镜 Mayanjing. Candidates discussed Huang Zhixian’s crisis of self-identification. Stronger candidates also analysed how and why these two identities were changed as well as Huang Zhixian’s confusion and dissatisfaction with reality.

Question 6

鲁迅：《故乡》（“Gu Xiang” by Lu Xun）

- (a) Most candidates provided relevant and logical reasons as to why ‘I’ no longer missed his hometown. Almost all candidates discussed the changes of 闰土 Runtu and 杨二嫂 Yangersao. Stronger responses also explained the reasons for these changes with analysis of the relevance of the social background. Apart from the change in these characters (闰土 and 杨二嫂), many candidates also discussed the changes in the hometown and the author’s purpose in mentioning it.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the key ideas from the text and elaborated on the relevant details to explain the change in the relationship between Lu Xun and Runtu. Stronger responses also discussed the literary technique of contrast used in describing the changes in this short story and analysed the reasons for those changes.

CHINESE

<p>Paper 9715/43 Texts</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should read the rubric carefully in order to understand the format and structure of the paper. Only three questions should be answered, and these must all be on a different set text and must come from both Section 1 and Section 2. Candidates should write the question number in the left margin of the answer booklet.
- In **Section 1** 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

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

Most candidates showed a thorough understanding of the characters and content of the texts. Candidates not only discussed the plot of the story, but some were also able to show awareness of the social, political and historical context in China at the time. Familiarity with the social background of the play or poem was often present in those responses showing understanding of the underlying themes. In a few cases understanding of the context was less secure, with examples of confusion between the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976).

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Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

戴望舒 (Selected poems by Dai Wangshu)

- (a)** Most candidates were able to write about the personification techniques used to make the abstract memory concrete. Candidates discussed that the treatment of memories as old friends in the poem helped readers to gain an insight into the poet's perspective and feel the poet's affection for memory. Many candidates showed a good understanding of the theme and the author's intention. Some argued that describing a memory as being loyal showed a dependence on memory and perhaps therefore avoidance of reality.
- (b)** In answering this question, most candidates agreed with the statement that Dai Wangshu's poetry articulates sentimentality and sadness and chose two poems to illustrate this, analysing the poet's expression of emotion. Many candidates showed a breadth of knowledge of his poetry and popular choices of poems to discuss were 《我的记忆》 or 《雨巷》. Weaker responses relied heavily upon quotations from the poem printed on the paper for **part (a)**. Stronger responses not only gave detailed and in-depth analysis of the emotions in the poetry, but also discussed the social backdrop of his work.

Question 2

高行健: 《绝对信号》 ("Juedui Xinhao" by Gao Xingjian)

- (a)** This question was answered by a high number of candidates, who showed they had a good understanding of the plot and characters. Most candidates pointed out that both 站长 and 蜜蜂 were caring for 黑子 and paying attention to the changes he was going through and trying to help him. Candidates also discussed the relationships between the characters in the play and Heizi's psychological changes. Stronger responses focussed on the reasons for the changes in Heizi's thoughts and actions.
- (b)** 站长, the captain of the train, is an important character in the play and most candidates had a good understanding of this character. The majority of responses provided a summary of the captain's characteristics and conducted a detailed analysis with quotations to support their points. Many good answers gave a full and detailed analysis, concentrating on different aspects of the character such as his actions, language and attitude to young people and work.

Question 3

王安忆: 《本次列车终点》 (“Benci lieche zhongdian” by Wang Anyi)

- (a) Most candidates showed they had thorough knowledge of the characters and plot. Many suggested that the reason why Chen Xin’s feelings changed from apologetic to calm was linked to what he had done for his brother ten years ago. In a small number of cases it seems that candidates had misunderstood the question and therefore only mentioned that 陈信 Chen Xin had been happy to come back to Shanghai. For **part (ii)**, most candidates supplied one or two reasons, but stronger candidates also included an explanation of contributing factors, such as the difficulties of his new life, the new job, and his marital problems.
- (b) This question required candidates to compare the characters of Chen Xin and his older brother. Most candidates approached the essay by giving a balanced analysis of the two characters. The best responses were thorough and intelligent and included relevant quotations from the whole story.

Section 2

Question 4

老舍: 《骆驼祥子》 (“Luo tuo Xiangzi” by Lao She)

- (a) Most candidates tried to analyse the personality of Huniu from different perspectives, ranging from 虎妞 Huniu’s ‘ugly’ appearance and moral ugliness to her possession and love of 祥子 Xiangzi. Most candidates concluded that Huniu was rude, fierce and lazy, but that she was also a character who could be sympathised with, showing strong management skills at her place of work and a love of children and the family unit. Stronger candidates argued that her life was a social tragedy, supporting this notion with relevant quotations.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to provide examples of the reasons contributing to Xiangzi’s ‘tragedy’. Many cited that Xiangzi had made several attempts to buy a rickshaw to make a living. Candidates frequently explained that it was not only society in general that was to blame. They were able to outline the specific reasons that led to this tragedy, e.g. the warlord soldiers and the extortion and exploitation by a police secret agent. Some well-argued responses also concluded that individual effort alone could not succeed in such a ‘dark’ society.

Question 5

韩少功: 《归去来》 (“Gui qu lai” by Han Shao Gong)

- (a) In general, most candidates understood that the title ‘return’ expressed 黄治先 Huang Zhixian’s search for self-identity. Candidates summarised the story and analysed how Huang Zhixian gradually identified himself as 马眼镜 Mayanjing. Stronger responses discussed that his experience as an 知青 (educated youth) made him feel particularly familiar with the village, and that the hidden memories were linked to a dissatisfaction with reality which awakened his self-identity.
- (b) This question examined candidates’ understanding of the plot and theme of the short story. Candidates showed good insight into the two characters Mayanjing and Huang Zhixian, and summarised the psychological changes that Huang Zhixian goes through. Many candidates pointed out that Huang Zhixian assumed the identity of Mayanjing but could not get rid of his actual identity. Some answers showed impressive levels of analysis, arguing that the process of psychological change reflected the conflict between his true ego and his real self.

Question 6

鲁迅: 《故乡》 (“Gu Xiang” by Lu Xun)

- (a) Most candidates who answered this question showed a thorough understanding of the story. Many identified the environment, people’s living conditions and the two characters 闰土 Runtu and 杨二嫂 Yangersao as points of comparison, discussing the differences between the past and present.

Many sound responses revealed the pain and spiritual restraint of peasant life and the isolation between people brought about by feudalism.

- (b)** This was a very popular question, testing candidates' understanding of theme and of the author's intentions. Most candidates explained what kind of hope 宏儿 Honger and 水生 Shuisheng brought to the protagonist, making comparisons across the two generations. The strongest answers discussed the social darkness and the traditional restraint on people, analysing the author's desire to change society and create a new life.