

ARABIC

Paper 3180/01 Composition
--

Key messages

Performance for this series was very good overall.

Many candidates produced pieces of writing ranging from very good to excellent. They understood the demands of the questions and presented work that was characterised with very good content and mostly accurate language. They have demonstrated their ability to use very good variety of structures and sentence lengths, and they have delivered well-structured pieces with the use of paragraphing, connectors and appropriate punctuation marks.

Generally, most candidates delivered good content, but weaker candidates' writing was characterised by many spelling and grammatical errors that had an impact on their achievement.

A positive aspect that has been observed is the fact that fewer candidates deviated from the main topic or wrote irrelevant material.

The use of lengthy introductory and concluding paragraphs in **Section 1** is still an issue, as some candidates dwelled too long on introductory greetings at the expense of the main topic.

Regarding word count, some candidates exceeded the limit. This was mainly because of the lengthy introductory paragraph, or the inclusion of unnecessary clichés.

A further improvement on last year is a reduction in the use of extensive metaphors and similes particularly in the descriptive essay.

One final observation is the use of colloquial language. This was particularly evident in the performance of very weak candidates.

General comments

The question paper is composed of two main sections, 1 and 2. **Section 1** includes three **Questions (1a, 1b, 1c)** from which candidates select one and write about 120 words. The mark is 15. **Section 2** consists of four **Questions (2a, 2b, 2c, 2d)**; 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.

In general, the exam in November 2024 was good, appropriate for the level, and has tested different abilities. The prompts were varied in their challenges to stimulate responses from low, middle, and high ability candidates.

As mentioned above, performance was very good overall with impressive performances for some candidates who demonstrated very good awareness of the demands of the questions, wrote coherent pieces, and their language was mostly accurate. As for weaker candidates, either some elements of the task were missing, or they did not understand the demands of the question in addition to having persistent spelling and grammatical errors in their writing. Also, their sentence structures tended to be in the main simple.

Performance for **Section 1, 1b** was the best (1.9 per cent of candidates), followed by good performance for 1a (88.5 per cent of candidates), and reasonable performance for 1c (9.6 per cent of candidates).

Comments on specific questions

Section 1 – Letter, Report, Dialogue or Speech

- (a) This was the most common choice by candidates (84.5 per cent). Overall performance was good and many candidates understood the demands of the task. Their letter was well-structured in the form of an introduction, presentation and conclusion. The language was generally good, with a very good performance by strong candidates. Weaker candidates wrote lengthy greeting paragraphs before moving to address the main topic, and their language had persistent errors in spelling and grammar. In some cases, the main topic (the kind of help required from a friend) was not addressed sufficiently.
- (b) Although 1.9 per cent of candidates opted for this question (least common choice), performance was the best when compared to the other questions. Many candidates demonstrated good awareness of the topic (environmental issues) and presented very good and relevant information in addition to demonstrating knowledge of how to structure a speech.
- (c) It was the second most popular option (9.6 per cent of candidates). Although the topic is accessible and should be familiar to this level, performance was the weakest compared to the other questions. One reason for this was the use of lengthy introductory paragraph followed by lengthy greetings and responses which had an impact on the key topic, and another reason is the lack of relevant information about the 'importance of walking or using a bike to go to school'. It must be mentioned that there were a few candidates who delivered an impressive dialogue.

Section 2 – Essay

- (a) This was the most popular question (30.8 per cent of candidates). Despite this, performance was the weakest compared to the other questions. Many candidates understood the demands of the question, but the main issue was persistent spelling and grammar errors, particularly for weaker candidates, in addition to other candidates writing pieces well short of the word count. Also, it has been observed that the writing of some candidates was more narrative than descriptive, and it is important for candidates to distinguish between these two forms of writing.
- (b) This was the least popular choice by candidates (16.8 per cent of candidates), but performance was the best compared to the other questions. Many candidates were able to come up with a creative story about the 'flying bicycle'. Some content was very interesting, and the language was mainly accurate for many candidates. There was also a good use of reported speech. As for weaker candidates, the main issue that impacted their achievement was persisting errors, illogical sequence of events, and lack of focus.
- (c) The question was the third most popular (22.7 per cent of candidates). Performance was reasonable overall. Many candidates were creative in the type of story they came up with, but it has been observed that one of the main reasons for this lower performance is again the use of lengthy introductory paragraphs before starting/continuing with the story. It is also unfortunate that despite good creative stories and content, the spelling, grammar and structures were erratic in many places, particularly for weaker candidates. In addition, weaker candidates' writing had patches of ambiguous content as well as not presenting events logically.
- (d) This question was the second most popular choice by candidates (29.7 per cent). Performance was very good overall and almost equal to the performance of 2b. Many candidates argued well the pros and cons of 'working whilst studying'. The writing of many candidates was well-structured, and the language was accurate in the main. As for weaker candidates, the main issue was the lack of giving relevant information on the topic, and in some cases their writing included repetitive themes. In addition, there were persistent errors in their language particularly when attempting to use more complex structures. It has also been observed that the use of metaphors and similes this series was less than that reported last year.

Spelling and Grammar Errors

The errors observed this series are like those reported last year. Below are some samples of weak and strong language/structures:

Examples of strong structures

- فاستعنت بالله ثم شغلت محرك الدراجة وقفزت بها. كانت السعادة تغمرني عندما حلقت في أعالي الجبال كالصقر، ولكن فرحتي سرعان ما تبددت.
- عندما يزور الشخص مدينة جديدة، مشاعره وأحاسيسه تتغير نوعاً ما، فإنه يتعرف على حضارات جديدة ويخوض تجارب مشوقة ويتذوق أطعمة لا مثيل لها فتتعلق روحه فيها وتنشأ علاقة بينه وبين هذه المدينة.
- على النقيض، يقول المعارضون أن العمل أثناء الدراسة يفيد الطلاب، حيث يكتسب الطالب مهارات مثل المسؤولية وقدرة تنظيم وقته والجدية أثناء العمل، وهذه المهارات مفيدة في الدراسة وقد تساعد الطلاب على التفوق.
- شعرت بالارتياح بعد أن عرفت مالكة المفتاح، ورجعت إلى منزلي وأنا أفكر فيما حدث وكيف وصل إلي مفتاحها، وبالكلام الجميل الذي قاله لي المدير العام فعرفت أن هذا كله كان تجربة اجتماعية.

Examples of weak/awkward structures, misspellings and grammar errors

- كتبت هذه الرسالة إلى أنت (إليك) لأن تطلب منه (أطلب منك).
- أشعر السعيدة (أشعر بالسعادة).
- كانت السنة الأخير (الأخيرة).
- كان الشمس (كانت) ترسل خيوطها ذهبية (الذهبية).
- الفراشات الملون (الملونة).
- بدأت أن أشعر القلق (بالقلق).
- طيرت من فراح كالفرشات (طرت من الفرح).
- سنضعنا المكاتب والكراسات (سنضع المكاتب والكراسي).
- أريد أنت يذهب (أريدك أن تذهب).
- أريد أنت مساعدت في التحضير لحفلة (أريد مساعدتك).
- في يوم السبت أنا وأبي وأمي وأخي يسافر إلى ملبوريا (سنسافر إلى ملبوريا).
- هنا كثير بسيارات جداً، وكثير الشخص أيضاً (هنا يوجد سيارات كثيرة جداً، والكثير من الأشخاص أيضاً).

ARABIC

Paper 3180/02
Translation and Reading
Comprehension

General comments

The performance of most candidates this year is good overall. The majority of candidates attempted all questions, and a high percentage of them scored well. Good translation skills were displayed, with a suitable knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation into English

Many candidates achieved high marks in translating this section as they successfully displayed a good knowledge of Arabic/English vocabulary and used correct grammatical structures. However, for some candidates, certain words in the text proved to be challenging which resulted in only few scoring the very top mark. This is especially reflected in the performance of the less able candidates who did not understand the meaning of the key word in the text, 'dictionary' (قواميس/قاموساً). There were some instances of inconsistent phrasing and a lack of coherence in some sentences.

Here is a list of some challenging words/phrases in this section:

- العلمية والفنية التعبيرات was not always translated in full.
- الأمثلة العربية Only a few candidates translated the word أمثلة (proverbs/sayings) correctly.
- لقد بدأت كتابة القواميس Not many candidates identified that the verb 'started' refers to 'dictionaries', although it was vocalised in the text (Writing dictionaries started ...), instead, it was translated as "I started writing dictionaries...".
- عصر التكنولوجيا A good number of candidates missed to translate عصر 'age, era', but where a similar meaning was used, it was accepted.
- فجّمت القواميس إلكترونياً Some candidates missed the word 'electronically'.
- باستخراج المعاني The word 'extract', was translated into a similar meaning word, like 'get' and it was accepted.
- Some candidates used the adjectives instead of the adverbs for 'quickly' and 'easily', and this was leniently marked.

Question 2 Translate into Arabic

Overall, candidates did well in this section. The great majority translated the text in full which indicates a good learning process is taking place. A few candidates, however, left some blanks for the words/phrases that they did not know the meaning of.

Here is where some candidates struggled with advice on how they could improve:

- Only a few candidates identified the plural form of 'الصحراء'.
- Candidates could benefit more from practising the use of comparative and superlative forms, as in 'الأكبر من حيث الحجم والأشد حرارة'.
- Many candidates found the expression 'الصحراء الكبرى' fairly challenging, but a similar meaning was accepted.

- Candidates could also benefit from learning the direction vocabulary such as 'north, south, east, west', as some were mixed up, as in 'غرب آسيا'. Also, not many candidates were successful in translating 'the south and north poles' correctly.
- Some candidates struggled with the plural form of certain words like, الجمال، الثعالب، الثعابين، الأوراق، الرمال، الامطار، الرياح, but these were leniently marked.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

Most candidates answered these reading comprehension questions successfully and confidently. It was evident that most candidates read the questions carefully before answering. The best candidates also knew how to select the specific information required from the text.

Questions 3 – 12

Question 3, Question 4, and Question 5

These were straight forward questions which almost all candidates answered correctly.

Question 6

A few candidates gave a wrong answer by saying 'مراسم الزواج' instead of 'صاله العرس'. The question asks to list three places. So, the focus is on the place not the event.

Question 7

Most candidates were able to provide full answers here showing a good understanding of the text. Incomplete answers were not rewarded as they were missing key information.

Question 8

Some candidates did not provide all three elements required by the question and/or provided incomplete responses. It is recommended that where the question asks for 2 or 3 pieces of information that candidates list their answers rather than copy or lift a whole paragraph from the text. This could indicate a lack of full comprehension of the text as well as the question.

Question 9

Most candidates answered this question correctly with very few who gave incomplete answers, thus missing vital information like المتفحة and لليوم التالي.

Question 10 and Question 11

These questions were answered correctly by most candidates albeit with some lifting from the text by few candidates.

Question 12

Given the choice in this question, those candidates who attempted to provide synonyms for all the words increased the likelihood of getting full marks on this question.

Question 13

The best candidates who did very well in this question chose three words out of five and gave their meanings/synonyms in Arabic. Some candidates correctly wrote the synonyms of all the words and the Examiner marked the best three. This should be encouraged by all candidates and could benefit the weaker ones, because it gives them a better chance of scoring some marks.

Candidates also should be trained to give/explain the meaning of the words within the context of the text, because certain words can have many synonyms, and some can be unrelated to the text.

Cambridge Ordinary Level
3180 Arabic November 2024
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

Candidates who used dialect or incorrect spelling were penalised. A few candidates did not answer this question. This could be because they ran out of time. Candidates should be reminded that time management in the exam is crucial.

A final remark to those candidates who put some answers in the blank pages (at the end of the exam paper): Although it is the Examiner's role to check the whole paper for any answers, it is the candidate's responsibility to label these answers correctly or put a note next to the question number. In addition, where an alternative answer to a question is given at the end of the paper, the answer in the body of the test paper should be crossed out. It should not be left to the Examiner to mark or pick the correct answer because the Examiner will only mark the first response.