

ARABIC

Paper 3180/01
Composition

Key messages

- Candidates should adhere to the word limit as much as possible.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully and focus on the main topic in their writing.
- Overall, there were issues with the application of grammatical structures in context, particularly the use of gender agreement, subject-verb agreement, the dual form, and verb patterns and their conjugation in the present and in the past.

General comments

- Performance was good across centres, although some demonstrated higher performance than other centres, which indicates good preparation and teaching methodology.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report, Dialogue or Speech

- (a) This letter writing topic was the most popular. Candidates did well but there were many cases of repeated paragraphs for the introductory part of the letter (greetings) and the end part (also greetings and wishes). Candidates seem to have been trained to use ‘clichés’ that they have memorised rather than using their creative writing skills to produce varied vocabulary of their own. In many instances, the lengthy introductory paragraph of greetings and wishes meant that candidates lacked focus on the main topic; ‘the fire in the clothes shops’.
- (b) This topic was the least popular. Candidates performed well overall, using appropriate vocabulary and a good range of structures.
- (c) This was the second most popular question. Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of how to conduct a dialogue and used appropriate vocabulary and reasoning for their absence from school. Some candidates demonstrated a more creative approach whereby they produced an introductory paragraph prior to the dialogue whilst others started the dialogue without such any introduction.

Section B – Essay

- (a) This was the second most popular topic in the essay section. Candidates dealt with it well. They produced strong creative writing, whilst applying wide-ranging situations and imagery in narrating what happened.
- (b) This was the most popular topic in the essay section. Stronger candidates used imaginative language to describe what happened during their parents’ absence. There were instances of language and imagery that are very impressive for this level. It is unfortunate though that, in quite a few cases, the lack of knowledge of applying some critical grammatical structures in context impeded the success of such imaginative scenarios.
- (c) Although candidates did well with this topic, there were many cases where candidates did not read the question carefully and went on to describe their childhood memories and personal experiences rather than focusing on describing the village or town. Candidates are reminded to carefully read the question and directly respond to it, rather than reproducing pre-learnt chunks of irrelevant text.

- (d) This was the least popular topic. Some candidates argued their case well by comparing the position of women between the past and present, presenting the pros and cons in a convincing manner and supporting their case with real life examples. Erratic grammatical structures and lack of vocabulary characterised weaker essay responses.

ARABIC

<p>Paper 3180/02 Translation and Reading Comprehension</p>

General comments

The performance of the majority of candidates is of a very high quality. In the main, candidates have completed all the tasks through which they have displayed a variety of grammatical structures and a wide range of vocabulary. This reflects their diligence and the good teaching techniques that they have been exposed to.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 – Translate into English

Most candidates did extremely well in this section, giving the overall meaning of events and displaying understanding of the cultures of both languages. In some cases, certain terms were translated by giving a lengthy explanation such as 'pensioned of' was translated as a 'woman who does not work and gets a salary from the government'. Few candidates incorrectly translated 'kind-hearted' as 'heart doctor'. Hence, a focus on learning idioms is highly recommended.

Question 2 – Translate into Arabic

Most candidates did well in this section albeit the grammar and spelling in some cases could be improved, especially in the first and third paragraph. A few candidates lost some marks as a result of translating the overall idea instead of giving a detailed account of events as per the mark scheme. Again, certain idioms were incorrectly translated or rephrases such as 'higher education' and 'people believe'.

Questions 3–13

Most candidates performed extremely well in this section. There was a clear evidence of good understanding of the text and responding well to the questions. Very few lifted the answers by rewriting almost a whole paragraph in some occasions. In the last three questions on synonyms, candidates should be encouraged to use their words to show clear understanding of the terms given instead of using a derivative of that word such as using the verb form of the noun e.g. 'suitable: something that suits'.