

GCE

Edexcel GCE

Chinese (8610/9610)

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Examiners' Report

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AS Unit 1 (6261) - Reading and Writing

The majority of candidates responded well to the examination. There was also evidence of improvement in candidates' responses to section 3 (continuous writing). Hence, the average mark was higher than that of last year. However, examiners noted an increase of candidates who tended to give several answers or extra details using signs such as bracket or slashes in their written response to a question. Some even extended this form of habit to translation and continuous writing. Candidates are to be reminded emphatically that such practice will earn no credit as it exhibits indecision.

Section 1: Reading and Writing

Passage 1

Q1 - very well answered but a small number of candidates opted for B '天氣' as the answer for either (2) or (7) and lost mark. This could be evidence of candidates who were not able to comprehend the text but only seized on one or two key words such as 'summer' or 'sunshine' to work out the answer.

Q2 - very well attempted but with B, C and G more often incorrectly answered by some candidates. This would suggest that either candidates did not know some of the lexical items (C 導演 演技), or they were not reading carefully (B and G).

Passage 2

Q3 - this question differentiated well and a broad range of marks was scored. Some candidates, however, could have scored full marks had they read the text more carefully (for example, c d and e). Some candidates in their response to (d) opted for the wrong answer 'yes', which would suggest that they had not paid enough attention to the term 'particularly'; and had mistaken the terms 'oriental culture' and 'Chinese culture' as synonym.

Q4 - most candidates achieved the maximum marks possible for this question though some were not able to recognise the important notion of '更好地' in their response to (a), thus rendering the answer insufficient by leaving it out and lost mark. There were also a few others who made the same error by omitting '盡量' in their response to (c).

Passage 3

Generally well attempted but (d) (e) and (f) proved surprisingly difficult, with more responses not being able to score marks.

(a) Examiners were surprised to find a sizeable small number of candidates who chose 'golf' as the answer for (i) and lost mark. Many candidates seemed to have difficulties finding the right expression in their answer for (ii), with little awareness of the fact that it was in the text. The examiners marked sympathetically on this point.

(b) Most candidates answered correctly.

(c) Incorrect answer was extremely rare on part (i). On part (ii) some candidates indiscriminately included the details from the last two paragraphs and distorted an otherwise correct answer.

- (d) Some candidates tried to explain ‘ ’ in their own words but showed inadequate comprehension.
- (e) A sizeable number of candidates simply put down ‘費用’ without pointing out ‘高’ or ‘昂貴’ and lost mark.
- (f) Some candidates simply seized on the sentence ‘不需要付其他費用’ as the answer, and lost mark.
- (g) and (h) Most candidates answered correctly.

Section 2 - Translation

Generally most candidates provided an adequate translation. Some answers, however, would have earned higher marks, had the candidates translated the first two paragraphs in the past tense. The second paragraph proved to be challenging to many, both semantically and inflectionally. There were also certain vocabulary items produced some difficulties. A sizeable number of candidates, surprisingly, were not able to give the correct transliteration of the city ‘上海’. Some candidates translated ‘漢語’ as ‘Korean’ or ‘Cantonese’. ‘暖和’ became ‘colder’, and ‘潮濕’ became ‘dry’. Many also translated ‘中國人的生活’ as ‘lifestyle’, while it should simply be written as ‘the life of Chinese people’. Some candidates omitted words or added extra details and twisted the meaning. For example, some candidates omitted ‘大多’ and simply wrote ‘Chinese food was greasy’. Others added comment ‘Chinese food was unhealthy’. And some wrote ‘even more humid than in South Korea’. Candidates need to remember that it is important to read the text thoroughly.

Section 3 - Continuous writing

Candidates in general coped well with the requirements of Question 7. There was evidence of candidates having been well prepared and some were able to transfer the ideas and skills gathered from past papers successfully in their responses. The last bullet point caused problems with a sizeable number of candidates not fully understanding the term ‘期望’. Some candidates wrote about non-Chinese cities (such as Tokyo, Seoul and Manchester etc.) and rendered their response to bullet 1 irrelevant. Those who wrote about provinces rather than cities also lost 1 mark.

A2 Unit 2 (6262) - Reading and Writing; Topics and Texts

Section 1: Reading and Writing

Passage 1

Q1 Posed no difficulties - virtually all candidates answered correctly.

Q2 Mostly answered correctly though a very few candidates included the answer to question 3 in the answer to question 1, and a few missed out the 'tenth floor'.

Q3, 5, 6 and 9 Mostly answered correctly.

Q4 Mostly answered correctly, but a few candidates wrote 求助單位/求助單位。

Q7 There were more incorrect answers, as some candidates omitted 協會/協會。

Q8 Some candidates were not sure exactly how many people were involved in rescuing the cat, and were not sure whose ankles were being held.

Passage 2

The major problem with this passage was word order and sentence structure. Many candidates adhered to the English word order, or sentence structure, producing rather odd Chinese sentences. There was also a tendency to translate 'while (the mother was big enough)' in a temporal sense, whereas it is contrastive in this context, and is probably best translated with a simple 但是。

Some candidates found it difficult to decide who was doing what - for example translating the piece as if it took the mother duck four hours to save the ducklings, or as if it was the RSPCA team which heard the ducklings cheeping, or as if it were the mother duck who watched anxiously as officers removed the drain cover. Not all vocabulary items were correctly translated, for example, 'anxiously,' 'desperately' etc.

Another quite common problem was the tendency to explain and embroider the story, rather than translate it. In these cases it was not possible to see whether the candidate was merely guessing, and it was thus not possible to award high marks.

The last sentence of each paragraph was well translated in most cases.

Section 2

Examiners continue to feel concerned about the number of candidates who were not adequately prepared and heavily relied on a descriptive approach in their responses.

Question 1

Q1(a) was not a popular question. Candidates attempted this question were able to display some knowledge, though a bit insufficient and patchy.

Q1(b) Not always answered successfully. Candidates ignored the time frame (1949-76) or misunderstood the term 'political movement.' Where candidates knew about the various movements, they did not have a good knowledge, particularly of the reasons for the movements.

Question 2

Q2(a) Most answers appeared to be unprepared. There was evidence that many candidates had either not read, or did not understand 自然風景/自然風景, and simply wrote about tourist attractions. Those choosing Hong Kong as their exemplar city tended to have a better knowledge and understanding of the issues, and gave more concrete examples.

Q2(b) Most answers to this question were disappointing. Most candidates did not understand the term 'globalisation' - instead giving examples which illustrated a colonial past or international present.

Question 3

- Q3(a) Most of the candidates who answered this question had a rough idea of what '風水/風水' was, but their knowledge was scanty. There was little evidence of textual knowledge of the phenomenon, as found in, for example, the 易經/易經. Some had it mixed up with palmistry and horoscope. Few gave a reasonable argument for the scientific aspects.
- Q3(b) This was one of the most popular questions. Candidates usually recounted the Chang E story, with varying details, showing little evidence that they were thoroughly prepared or researched. Some candidates wrote about the tales of the Girl Weaver and lost marks. Very few candidates realised that the festival had its basis in the agricultural calendar, and dwelt on the family reunion aspects of the festival.

Question 4

- Q4(a) The answer to this question tended to be brief. The quotations from Confucian classics were repeated without evidence of understanding, and most candidates limited their answer to 'obedience to the older generation,' without giving any account of the broader political and social implications of 孝。
- Q4(b) This question was more popular than Q4(a). There were a few good answers with candidates making effort to draw examples from history to substantiate points. Most candidates, however, answered in a very similar way to Q4(a).

Question 5

- Q5(a) was less popular compared to Q5(b). There is a limited amount of material in the short story itself, but not many candidates who answered this question were able to use it satisfactorily. Some candidates rightly mentioned the act when the bride placed her own quilt on a plank out in the courtyard. Candidates, however, displayed a lack of understanding by making the suggestion that this was the evidence of the bride being selfish.
- Q5(b) This was a very popular question. There were some very good answers. The majority, however, tended to tell the story rather than analyse and give evidence from the story. Many candidates spend so much time and energy retelling in detail the events of the walk to the field hospital, that they have no time left for the significant later parts of the story when the change in attitude of the protagonists actually takes place.

Question 6

- Q6(a) was not a particularly popular question. Most candidates in their response to the latter part of the question tended to focus on the story of Shuying rather than Hui. This could be evidence of candidates regurgitating notes that worked for a similar question on Hui in past papers.
- Q6(b) was attempted by very few candidates, usually with satisfactory knowledge in their response to the first part, but had a tendency to give generic views in the second part.

Question 7

- Q7(a) While most candidates were able to give a good description of Ding Yi's character, they found it harder to link the events of the story to the social and political background of the story.
- Q7(b) As with Q7(a), the problems of the factory were not difficult to describe, but not many candidates were able to draw materials from the story that enabled them to analyse the background.

Question 8

There were virtually no responses to make comments.

Statistics

Unit 1 (6261) Reading and Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	78	66	54	42	30
Uniform boundary mark	300	240	210	180	150	120

Unit 2 (6262) Reading and Writing; Topics and Texts

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	140	95	83	72	61	50
Uniform boundary mark	300	240	210	180	150	120

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