

BENGALI

Paper 3204/01
Composition

General comments

Candidates' performance was varied this year. Regardless of ability, candidates attempted to answer both sections of the paper. There were some scripts with outstanding quality that attracted high score. A few others lost marks for a number of reasons e.g. missing reference to some parts of bullet points in the letter section and for deviation from the original theme, spelling errors, colloquialism, meaningless words or phrases in the essay section. Some candidates crossed out several parts of their work randomly for the sake of word count. There were also a few instances where the candidates answered both questions from **Section A** by ignoring the rubric. In **Section B**, all essays were attempted by candidates according to their ability and personal preference. Use of idioms and proverbs seems to be in decline whilst spelling mistakes are increased in the current series.

It is hoped that future candidates can benefit from the content of this report so that they are successfully able to show their full ability under exam conditions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Candidates were required to write a letter to a friend seeking their suggestion how to spend some money won through lottery. Most candidates referred to bullet points one and two quite spontaneously. However, in response to bullet point three, some candidates gave irrelevant reasons. In response to bullet point four, some candidates simply asked for a piece of advice from their friend instead of seeking their assistance to implement the plans, and hence they lost marks. Candidates should read all parts of the prompt in the bullet points to score highly.

Question 2

In response to this question, candidates needed to write a report on a recent Inter-School sports competition hosted by their School. Whilst most candidates referred to all bullet points properly, a few others seem to have rushed and answered partially in response to fourth bullet point. Candidates of this category lost some marks. Future candidates should be advised to answer each bullet point with due regards to the question's demand and context.

Question 3

Candidates were required to write an essay on the best gift of their life. Some responses focused on an object and established the statement with valid logic, whereas a few others wrote about their own mother or father with a little or no valid logic subsequently applied to explain why and how this person became the best ever gift in their life. This type of undeveloped answer attracted lower marks. Candidates are advised to read the essay title thoroughly and plan two or three directions for development prior to embarking on writing.

Question 4

In this question candidates were expected to write about the scientific research in their own country. Some candidates presented their work with specific reference to a scientific research project. These answers tended to secure high scores. Other candidates wrote the essay with appropriate introduction but went on to describe the contribution of science to the modern world, or the merits and demerits of science or even

progress in the world of science today. Quite naturally, their score was relatively low. Candidates must read carefully every word of the essay title to be fully familiar with question's demand.

Question 5

Candidates were required to write an essay about a study tour. Some candidates presented their work with good reference to a specific study project related to their School with some details of knowledge acquired during the tour and how it would help them with their current and future studies. This type of response tended to attract higher marks. However, some other candidates appear to have misread the essay title and instead wrote a full length essay on a day out or a family holiday, without any reference to curriculum related studies. Candidates in this category scored relatively lower marks. Future candidates are advised to read every word in the question thoroughly and make a pre-planned scenario to ensure a high score.

BENGALI

Paper 3204/02
Language Usage and Comprehension

General comments

Candidates were tested on their knowledge of grammar, manipulation of sentences and comprehension skills through a variety of tasks. The majority of candidates completed the paper within the time allowed. There were very few examples of unfinished or partially answered questions.

The performance of several candidates was outstanding, though there were examples of candidates who could have achieved better with adequate and relevant exam technique. To help candidates successfully show their full ability under exam conditions, it would be prudent to practise completing example papers within the time constraints.

Generally speaking, able candidates coped well with basic grammar tasks and the comprehension questions, though at a varied level. The quality of the Bengali in answers was very wide. Some candidates demonstrated the ability to manipulate the language very skillfully, but there were also instances in open-ended comprehension questions (**Questions 33-38**) of candidates being unable to write answers in their own words, even at a very simple level.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Exercise A1 (Separation/Combination of Words)

This year candidates were required to separate words and this exercise was generally well answered, with a few notable exceptions. In **Question 1**, many candidates answered রূপ + অন্তর or আন্তর instead of রূপ + অন্তর, and often missed the sign 'dirghoukar'. Similarly, in answering **Question 2**, a number of candidates wrote ভয় + আর্ত while the correct answer was ভয় + ঋত, the sign 're' was often missing in candidates answers. These errors resulted in many candidates scoring lower marks. Only the most able candidates scored full marks in this question.

Exercise A2 (Idioms, Proverbs and Words in Pairs)

This exercise comprised a gap filling task with options provided for candidates to select for each gap. A good portion of candidates were able to answer four or more of these questions correctly, though there were some instances where candidates failed to select the correct answer. In **Question 6**, many candidates wrote তর্কবিতর্ক instead of বারো মাসে তেরো পার্বণ. In **Question 9** many candidates answered পায়ামি instead of অকাল কুম্ভাণ্ড.

Marks were sometimes lost when candidates selected more than one response option for a question. Candidates should note that an incorrect answer will invalidate any correct answer to the same question, unless the incorrect answer has been clearly crossed out.

Exercise A3 (Sentence Transformation)

The exercise required candidates to re-write sentences to include a prompt phrase either at the beginning or at the end of the sentence (as appropriate), without changing the meaning of the original sentence. This grammar exercise differentiated well between the able and less able candidates. To score highly, candidates must remember that they should not alter the essence of each sentence, and must check to ensure their new sentence is a grammatically appropriate for the prompt phrase given.

In **Question 12**, many candidates omitted the word স্থাপিত or স্থাপন করা and lost a mark. Similarly in **Question 13**, quite a few candidates wrote সকলে or সবাই instead of কেউই or কারোই. A significant number of candidates scored 0 marks on one or more questions in this exercise as they did not understand the sentence and therefore could not manipulate it. For example, কারোই অবোধ্য ছিল না would score 0. Most candidates answered **Question 14** correctly but some candidates were not able to transform the interrogative form into an affirmative form. **Question 15** was answered well by almost all candidates.

Exercise A4 (Cloze Passage)

Only a handful of candidates answered all questions in this cloze passage correctly. Most candidates understood that they had to select the appropriate word for each gap from those provided, but candidates at the lower end of the mark range tended to select incorrect words for **Questions 16** and **18** in particular. For **Question 16**, a common incorrect answer was ক্রমশ instead of আপোসহীন. Similarly in **Question 18**, many candidates selected দেখার whereas the correct answer was পরিচর্যার.

Section B

Exercise B5 (Multiple Choice Comprehension)

Very few candidates answered all the questions correctly. The most challenging part of this exercise was **Question 29**. Most candidates selected option 3 whereas the correct answer was option 1. **Question 26** was also wrongly answered by many candidates.

Section C

Exercise C6 (Open-ended Comprehension)

This exercise provided a suitable level of demand to differentiate between candidates of different abilities. A wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures is useful in this exercise. To score the highest marks, candidates must manipulate the text so that their answers are written in their own words. It should be noted that candidates who rely too heavily on the text cannot gain access to the higher marks for the quality of their language.

In **Question 33**, almost all candidates were able to manipulate their responses and so scored full marks. By contrast, **Question 34** and **Question 37** were the least well answered, as candidates often failed to change the wording of the text at all here.

Exercise C7 (Vocabulary)

Candidates needed to write the appropriate meaning of 5 words taken from the comprehension text. The vocabulary for **Questions 39, 40** and **43** seemed to be least well known by the candidates.

To score highly in this exercise, candidates should check that their selected meaning matches that of the original word in the context of the text. It ultimately proved very important for candidates to respond with only one synonym or synonymous phrase. Some candidates lost marks by invalidating an otherwise correct response by including incorrect alternatives. Where candidates make several attempts at a question in this exercise, they must remember to cross out any attempts they do not want the Examiner to mark. It is not in the spirit of this exercise for Examiners to select an answer from many attempts. As mentioned before, candidates sometimes penalized themselves by writing one correct synonym, followed by another incorrect synonym which was not crossed out.