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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

ARABIC

GCE Advanced Level

Paper 9680/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

The performance of candidates this session was somewhat better than last year, particularly with regard to **Section 2** of the question paper. However, candidates still require more practice in extracting words from the text which correspond to the meaning given, and the use of the dual case. They also need to develop their ability to express themselves in a grammatically correct way using a wide range of suitable vocabulary. A number of candidates copied out sections of the passages in their responses to **Questions 3, 4 and 5**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

A large number of candidates did not achieve good marks for this question. Many gave a meaning for each word which was not extracted from the first passage, as required by the question rubric. Examples of common errors are as follows:

أ- تساؤلاته ب- المهمات ت- المؤتمرات العائلية ث- العلاقة ج- السلوكيات الغربية

Question 2

Candidates generally did better in this question than in **Question 1**. However, few candidates managed to score full marks. Examples of incorrect answers include the following:

ب- واتساع الزمنية المخصصة للبيت في المساحتين . ج- وبذلك تخلاف إلى هذا الجهاز وظيفتان أخرى

Question 3

Candidates were required to answer in their own words a series of questions which tested their comprehension of Passage One. Many candidates provided correct answers, but imitated the style of the passage. Others wrote in their own style but made grammatical or spelling mistakes. An example of a good answer to parts **(a)** and **(b)** is the following:

أ- المؤثر المباشر في الأطفال قبل غزو التلفاز للمنازل كان الأم والأب / أو : الوالدان كانا المؤثر المباشر في الأطفال قبل غزو التلفاز للمنازل.
 ب- مما يدل على قلق الكاتب بسبب التلفاز أن الأسرة صارت مختصرة الشكل، كما أن العلاقة التي كانت بين الأطفال وأبائهم تحددت وتقلصت ، وانحسرت المؤتمرات العائلية حتى صارت نادرة.

Question 4

This question tested candidates' comprehension of Passage Two. It was well answered by the majority of candidates, although many imitated the author's style. Candidates should therefore practice answering such questions in their own style in order to gain the full number of marks available for quality of language. An example of a good answer to this question is the following:

أ- ترى الكتابة المنظر ظاهراً مع التلغاف لأن المشكلات التي تصاحبه أعظم وأكثر من منافعها.
ب- إن أعضاء الأسرة يستيقظون في الوقت الذي عليهم أن يناموا، لجرد انتظارهم لمشاهدة البرامج المحببة لديهم كما فقدت النشاطات العائلية التي تجمع بين الأفراد، وخسارة الأعمال المفيدة لأنه لا وقت لها فالتلغاف احتل كل الوقت.

Some candidates lost marks because their answers were simply illegible, or irrelevant to the question. Others would have achieved higher marks if they had written the information in their own words, rather than copying out extracts from the passage.

Question 5

Candidates were required to answer both parts of this question in no more than 140 words, although some wrote as much as 300 words. There was a wide range in the quality of answers, from excellent to very poor. The answers which scored high marks were those in which the candidate had extracted ideas from both passages and summarised this information in his/her own style of writing and choice of words, as required by the question rubric.

Some candidates wrote only about the negative effects of television on family life and did not mention any benefits. Others copied out sections from both passages and so lost the marks available for quality of language and style of writing. Many of those candidates who tried to answer in their own words made a large number of grammatical and spelling mistakes and so, again, lost the marks available for quality and style of writing. Examples of such errors follow:

لايستطيع الوالدين أو أحد منهما جلوساً مع الأبناء.
عليهم أن يشاهدوا البرامج مفيد فقط الذي فيه علوم ومعلومات لفكرتهم.
لابد على الوالدين أن يضع النظام.

Paper 9680/03

Essay

General comments

In order for candidates to improve their writing skills they should be given practice in writing in a variety of forms, for example writing letters, diaries and essays on different topics and themes.

Candidates should aim at accuracy in the use of grammatical rules and structures. There were many mistakes in the use of gender, singular, plural and dual verbs.

Candidates should widen their vocabulary through extensive reading and writing assignments.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Contemporary aspects of your country

The topic focused on the problem of water shortage and candidates who chose this topic wrote well on the whole.

Question 2

Law and order

Few candidates chose to write about this topic.

Question 3

The media

This was a very popular title. This topic prompted some interesting responses from candidates, writing about the negative and positive aspects of watching TV.

Question 4

The developing world

Few candidates chose this topic and answers on the whole were adequate.

Question 5

Health and fitness

This was another popular title. A large number of candidates were aware of health matters and wrote well about the reasons for, and cure of, certain diseases.

Question 6

The family

This was the most popular title on the paper. Candidates were asked to write about the family in the past, present and future. Most candidates expressed themselves vividly and freely when writing about their own family background.

Paper 9680/04

Texts

General comments

The level of performance of candidates was varied. In spite of the wide choice of books offered and the number of questions given, in general candidates did not have a good detailed grasp of the content of the texts and as such very few candidates were able to achieve very good marks.

Candidates' work was assessed against the descriptors set out in the marking scheme which is included in the syllabus. The following observations affected the general performance of candidates:

- Candidates should answer only three questions from a choice of eight, each on a different set text. Many candidates answered more questions than was required. Some candidates answered all the questions on the question paper but very briefly, showing that they were not familiar with the requirements of the syllabus and indicating that they may not know any of the texts in any depth.
- Candidates tended to answer **Question 1 (a)**, **Question 2 (a)**, **Question 3 (a)** and **Question 4 (a)** as comprehension questions rather than as essay-type questions in which they should show detailed and solid knowledge of the literary texts selected. Instead their answers were very brief and specific. Candidates should understand that the questions are set as a stimulus to allow them to bring a focus to their answer. The **(b)** essay questions, which required candidates to write between 500 – 600 words, were rarely attempted by candidates.

- Most candidates answered the questions in less than 300 words. Though their answers were specific, they did not show close attention to the detail of the passages or good insight when discussing characters. The knowledge they showed was superficial and at times pre-learnt and not adapted to the question being asked.
- A number of candidates copied out paragraphs from the selected books and used them as their answers. This is not satisfactory, and focuses on only one small part of the question. As such many candidates were unable to express their ideas in a comprehensible way.

Recommendations

- Candidates should focus on reading and understanding only three books chosen from the list of set texts in the syllabus and develop a good knowledge of the major characters or ideas in the texts selected.
- The questions are set to enable to candidate to select and apply the most relevant of these ideas to the question being asked and to support their points with close reference to the texts. Candidates are not penalised for linguistic errors which do not impede the communication of meaning.
- Candidates should summarise in a sentence or two the main points at the end of their answer to show that they have answered the questions comprehensively.
- In mock/trial tests, teachers can refer to the Mark Scheme contained in the syllabus to evaluate their candidates' answers.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Naguib Mahfouz: *The Whisper of Madness*

- (a) Candidates generally tended to summarise the story without referring directly to the questions given. Most failed to compare the events at the beginning and end of the story. Candidates who were able to do that achieved higher marks because they showed an awareness of the events that linked the beginning and end of the story.
- (b) Naguib Mahfouz criticised Egyptian society in his book. Most candidates who answered this question tended to ignore the characters and the events in the book and wrote about Egyptian society in general. By doing so they failed to write an essay which related to the book.

Question 2

Abu Al-A'la Al-Ma'rri, His Life, His Poetry

- (a) The poem cited in the question paper is about the poet's opinion of the rich. Candidates who answered this question wrote instead about their own ideas about money and rich people rather than referring to the poet's own ideas and poems.
- (b) Very few candidates answered this part of the question.

Question 3

Verses from the Diwan of Ma'roof al-Russafi

- (a) Most candidates answered this question very well. Candidates' answers were well organised and comprehensible and demonstrated an ability to interpret the verses well. A few candidates misunderstood the questions as comprehension questions and answered very briefly with no expansion on the main ideas that they were giving.
- (b) Some candidates who answered this question illustrated their understanding of the poem with further examples, but some candidates failed to quote other relevant poems.

Question 4

Taha Hussein, *Stream of Days*

- (a) Candidates who answered this question were able to answer the first question well, but did not effectively answer the following two questions.
- (b) Candidates who answered this question only briefly mentioned two experiences that affected the poet's rise to glory and were unable to elaborate on their points, resulting in far too short an essay.

Question 5

Ihsan Abdul Qadoos, *For Whom Shall I Leave This?*

- (a) Candidates who answered this question wrote a summary and cited different stories from the book but did not relate what they wrote to the question, i.e. how does politics impose itself on human behaviour and culture?
- (b) Most candidates who attempted this question demonstrated that they had read the book, but some candidates wrote about only one story and thus their essays were far too short being about 120 words in length.

Question 6

Selections from the works of Al-Jahiz

- (a) Very few candidates attempted this question and those who did were only able to write a very short paragraph explaining the incident.
- (b) Very few candidates attempted this question.

Question 7

Khalil Gibran Khalil, *The Prophet*

- (a)(b) In this book the author's philosophies are expressed without concrete incidents or characters. Of the few candidates who attempted this question, weakness in their linguistic ability prevented them from elaborating on those philosophies. They tended instead to write only one or two paragraphs copying the philosophies word for word from the book with no elaboration or analysis.

Question 8

Tawfiq Al-Hakim, *The Diary of a Legal Officer in Rural Areas*

- (a)(b) Most candidates answered part (b). Some showed a good level of textual knowledge and supported their ideas with relevant incidents and quotations from the text. Some however copied out the critical analysis written by different authors which is found at the end of the book. They achieved low marks by doing this as they did not attempt to relate the critical analysis to incidents from the book. In some answers there was evidence that candidates may have memorised material and used it to answer the question, which meant that most of the material written was irrelevant.

Paper 9680/05

Prose

General comments

Candidates need practice in constructing grammatically correct Arabic sentences which read well. Many candidates followed the word order and style of the English text, which had a detrimental effect on the style and flow of their Arabic translations. Many words appeared as "dictionary translations" bearing no relation to the context and subject of the passage. Many candidates also made a large number of spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

In general, the standard of candidate's work this session was higher than last year. Nevertheless, there were some very poor answers. One candidate transliterated the whole of the English text into Arabic letters.

Among the phrases which candidates appeared to have difficulty with were the following: "Help, help, I need help!"

One candidate translated this as:

أساعد أساعد أحتاج الساعد

whereas a more acceptable translation would have been:

المساعدة المساعدة ، أحتاج إلى مساعدة - أو : النجدة النجدة ، أحتاج إلى مساعدة

"Somebody help me!"

One candidate translated this as:

بعض شخص ساعدي

whereas a more acceptable translation would have been:

فليساعدي أي شخص - أو أي واحد

"and it is"

One candidate translated this as:

وكان كده

whereas a more acceptable translation would have been:

وإنه كذلك

"In the plaster room each has a finger put in a cast"

One candidate translated this as:

داخل غرفة المرهين كل واحد يده مقطوعة بسبب الحوادث المؤلمة والمؤسفة

whereas a more acceptable translation would have been:

وفي غرفة / حجرة التضميد ، توضع إصبع لكل طالب في حمام. أو : في جبيرة

one example of a good answer to the final part of the passage was the following:

السيدة نكسون تعرف من عملها كمرهنة مدى أهمية تعليم الأطفال طريقة منع الحوادث وكيف يتصرفون في حالة الطوارئ ، وهي شهدت منافع ومصالح هذا البرنامج.