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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 and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Papers 8680/02 and 9680/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

In general the standard of answers this session was better than the previous session. However, candidates require more practice in the following areas:

- antonyms
- masculine and feminine nouns
- use of 'kaana' and its sister verbs
- use of their own style of writing, particularly in answer to **Questions 3 – 5**
- an increase in their background reading across the full range of literary forms
- summarising what they read in order to develop their own style of writing.

Comments on specific questions

Section One

Question 1

Only a small number of candidates answered this question correctly. Some candidates gave the meaning of the word rather than the antonym which was required. Some candidates gave an antonym which did not appear in the text.

Question 2

This question was answered better than **Question 1**. However, a large number of candidates made a mistake in part **(c)** and wrote:

أمسى أصحاب العربات التي تجرها الحمير واقفون غير أبهين بها

Question 3

Many candidates answered parts **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)** correctly. The following are examples of correct answers to part **(a)**:

شبه الكاتب في النص الأول كثرة البشر في الشارع المزدهم بجيوش النمل أيام جمع الحبوب

The following are examples of correct answers to part **(b)**:

يقبل الناس على شراء الأطعمة المعرضة للذباب بسبب رخص ثمنها

Those candidates who answered less well were those who copied out words and phrases directly from the text, or wrote in their own style but with grammatical and spelling errors.

Section Two

Question 4

This question was answered more successfully than all the other questions. However, part (a) proved the most troublesome. Again, candidates who lost marks were those who copied out words and phrases directly from the text, or wrote in their own style but with grammatical and spelling errors. The following are examples of correct answers to part (d):

السبب الصحي : انتشار مرض جنون البقر على نحو واسع . السبب الاقتصادي: الارتفاع الكبير للأسعار في الأسواق الضخمة على حين ظلت الأسواق الشعبية محتفظة بمستوى أسعارها . السبب الفني: الأسواق الشعبية تؤمن الوجبات السريعة الصحية وبأشكال مختلفة.

Question 5

Many candidates struggled with this question. Answers were copied directly from the two texts, or information that was required was omitted. Weaknesses in candidates' use of language were also evident. The following are examples of good answers to part (a):

من الإيجابيات أن هذه الأسواق تقدم الأطعمة الطازجة التي أصبحنا في أمس الحاجة إليها كما أن لها مميزات اقتصادية، فهي توفر الأطعمة بأسعار مناسبة لكل أسرة، فمع قلة الدخل أصبحت الأسواق الضخمة غير مناسبة بسبب ارتفاع أسعار ما تعرضه للبيع. وتمثل هذه الأسواق عاملاً من عوامل الجذب السياحي وبالتالي فهي تفيد الدولة اقتصادياً. أما السلبيات فبعض هذه الأسواق غير صحي بسبب الازدحام، وبسبب عرض الأطعمة مكشوفة للذباب والحشرات الأخرى.

The following are examples of correct answers to part (b):

يجب على الحكومات الاهتمام بنظافة الأسواق حتى تحقق هدفها في تقديم الطعام الصحي للناس، و يجب تحديد الأسعار لكل سلعة ومراقبة ذلك، وعلى كل بائع أن يلتزم بحسن الخلق حتى تكون هذه الأسواق مظهراً حضارياً لكل دولة.

Papers 8680/03 and 9680/03

Essay

General comments

The question paper gave a choice of six titles, with the overall mark being out of 40: 24 marks for language and 16 for content. The overall performance of the candidates was average. The best essays were both grammatically sound, stylistically elegant, well-structured and had coherent lines of argument. On the other hand, some essays were deficient in some or all of these respects. In a few cases, the essays contained little more than random, general thoughts, which seemed to rely on prepared answers and to pay little attention to the essay topics in the question paper.

One of the most common grammatical errors concerned the use of Arabic adjectives, especially with respect to their being definite or indefinite. Also, as is common in previous examinations, many essays contained errors in verb conjugation.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Very few candidates opted for this topic, about migration from the countryside to cities.

Question 2

This topic was a rather popular choice among candidates. Some essays showed clearly that candidates had relied on prepared answers. Few candidates paid attention to the last part of the question, on the theme of the dichotomy between 'iqdam' and 'hikma', and failed to suggest ways of addressing the tension between the different generations. One the whole, there were quite a few good essays on this topic.

Question 3

Quite a few candidates chose this topic. Most, however, concentrated on the effects of food and drink generally on human life, and paid little attention to the themes of plants, animals and air. Again, many candidates appear to rely on prepared answers, often citing identical examples. Few essays presented good lines of argument.

Question 4

Very few candidates opted for this topic. Those who did tended to write on non-related topics, which fall under the same general rubric.

Question 5

A few essays were written on this topic. Most were able to discuss the link between social culture and the family setting successfully.

Question 6

Very few candidates opted for this topic. Some essays were well-written, whereas others failed to focus on the specific topic, but instead discussed particular conflicts and did not provide recommendations for avoiding war.

Papers 8668/04 and 9680/04
Texts

General comments

The syllabus offers a wide range of texts for candidates to study and the nature of the syllabus allows candidates to choose, if they wish, to concentrate on only three books during their course of study, but which they should be familiar with in depth. The ability of candidates ranged from excellent to very weak. The very weak candidates tended to answer only two questions, which were poorly answered. Candidates need help to focus on understanding the texts and writing answers in their own words rather than reproducing pre-learnt material which does not relate to the question. It would be appreciated if candidates are told to start from right to left when answering the questions and also to number their questions correctly and put them down neatly on the front page as per the instructions.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

This section contained questions on a novel, poems and a biography. Very few candidates answered the questions on poetry.

Question 1

Naguib Mahfouz: *The Whisper of Madness*

- (a) Candidates seemed to find this question more accessible because of the springboard questions given. However some candidates answered the questions too briefly without identifying the characters or expanding on the plot and therefore did not write a substantial enough answer for this level of exam, which is indicated by the 500 – 600 word requirement.
- (b) Candidates who chose this question wrote insightful answers to the first part, i.e. hunger and tyranny can lead mankind either to immorality or death, but failed to relate the beautiful ideas given, to the incidents and characters in the story. It is important that candidates focus more on the question as a whole, rather than address only parts of it.

Question 2

Diwan Illiya Abu Madi

- (a) Candidates were able to connect aspects of the given poem to the 'uncertainties and doubts' presented and depicted in the suffering of human beings. They were also able to paraphrase the poem and add their own points of view.
- (b) Candidates tended to answer this question only in general terms by explaining the existentialist's philosophy and view of life, but they did not relate these ideas to the ideas and philosophies expressed in the poems of the *Illiya Abu Madi*. Unless this connection is made, which demonstrates that candidates have a good understanding of the poems, high marks cannot be achieved.

Question 3

Anees Almaqdissy: *Umarat Al-Shi'r Al-Abbasi*

- (a) Few candidates chose to answer this question, and those who did merely summarised the poem without explaining its particular features, for example the use of repetition as a poetic device which emphasises the poet's philosophy of life and death. Candidates also need to refer to other poems to illustrate their ideas.
- (b) Very few candidates answered this question. Those who did simply summarised the poem, rather than using the poem to illustrate the points they wanted to make in their answers.

Question 4

Taha Hussein: *Stream of Days*

- (a) This text was the most popular choice. Most candidates wrote about Taha Hussein's disability and how it compelled him into success in life. Unfortunately, some candidates did not know the text in any depth and wrote pre-learnt irrelevant material that did not answer the question. The mark for these candidates was consequently very low.
- (b) The same comments for (a) apply here. Again, some candidates ignored the question and wrote what they had learnt about Taha Hussein without analysing the ideas or referring to the question asked.

Section 2

This section contained essay questions based on four different texts. Candidates are asked to choose at least one question from this section.

Question 5

Ihsan Abdul Qadoos: *For whom shall I leave all this?*

- (a) Many candidates chose this question and in general were able to identify the characters in the story and relate them to the theme of the book and the events that happen. Only a few candidates produced pre-learnt passages rather than writing in their own words and those who did lost marks for doing so.
- (b) Some of the answers to this question were delightfully written. Most candidates used the story to lead them on to reveal their feelings about the relationship between parents and children, describing how many children are brought up to act like their parents. Unfortunately, some candidates did not manage to convey their ideas clearly because of their weakness in writing.

Question 6

Selections from the Works of Al-Jahiz

Very few candidates attempted either of these options.

Question 7

Gibran Khalil Gibran: *The Prophet*

- (a) A significant number of candidates answered this question. Some candidates wrote interesting ideas and responses to the question of 'freedom' and what it means. Some candidates, however, merely wrote about their own experiences without using or even referring to Gibran's philosophy.
- (b) This was one of the more popular questions and many candidates showed a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of Gibran. There were a few outstanding answers about the importance of work, with some candidates referring to the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad about the importance of work. Again there were some candidates who produced pre-learnt material without relating what they have learnt to the question.

Question 8

Taufiq Al-Hakim: *The Diary of a Legal Officer in Rural Areas*

- (a) Many candidates attempted this question. Good candidates were able to relate the ideas and incidents in the book to their own perceptions of 'judges and courts' and they defended the principle of 'not guilty until proven otherwise'. The weakness of some candidate's in expressing themselves in good Arabic affected their mark.
- (b) The weaker candidates tended to choose this question. There were many pieces of work that bore no relation to the question asked, indicating that they lacked any close knowledge of the book.

Conclusion

Candidates' performance this session shows an overall improvement on previous years, the result of hard work done by teachers and pupils in preparing for the exam.

It is important that candidates understand what is required in answering questions at this level. This information is available to teachers in the aims of the syllabus and the detail that is given in the mark scheme can help to fill out what level of knowledge and understanding is required. The aims of the syllabus and the mark scheme can be found in the syllabus booklet.

It is also important that the candidates read the instructions written on the exam paper very carefully to make ensure that they know what is required and to prevent them losing unnecessary marks.

Papers 9680/05

Prose

General comments

Candidates were required to translate a text from English into Arabic. There were some answers of a very high standard which combined accuracy in translation with correct use of language. However, there were also some poor answers which displayed inaccuracies in meaning, spelling mistakes and weak grammatical structure. In general, the overall standard was better than last session.

Candidates require more practice in the following:

- constructing different types of Arabic sentences
- translating a word within the context of the sentence and not as a direct dictionary definition.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Among the more common errors in translation were the following:

I think I grew up

أسمع أنا أكبر، أظن أنني أكبر

I have never spoken about this before

أنا ليس أن قلت إليها قبل

but my father was involved in a strike

كان أبي مشاركاً في ضرب

so he broke the strike

فانكسر الإضراب

Some candidates translated the word strike as 'thawra' (revolution) and strikers as 'thawriyoon' (revolutionaries).