

GCSE CHINESE

Unit 2 Reading
Report on the Examination

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Foundation Tier

General

The paper was accessible to the majority of students, but a minority confused similar words, such as 面包 (bread) and 面条 (noodles). The greatest challenge to students was reading longer texts carefully enough then selecting the correct answer. This year the most demanding questions were Q5, where the candidates had to choose T/F/? and the last part of Q8, where they had to understand the difference between 中国音乐 (Chinese music) and 中国 (China as a country).

Students performed well on matching the Chinese characters with the images, the sports and hobby topic, short multiple choice questions, the home and environment topic.

Students found the following more challenging: travel and jobs, longer sentences in the target language, texts with distractors.

Question 1

Free-time activities was a familiar topic to most students and they coped very well indeed with this opening question.

Question 2

This question was also designed to be accessible and most students chose the correct answers. The only exception was 2(c); quite a few students incorrectly chose the globe to match 'PE lesson'.

Question 3

Most students correctly answered this question. They appear to be well taught in the area of home/environment and sport/hobbies, as the majority recognised words on these topics.

Question 4

Many students chose the wrong answer. For 4(a), though 饭店 (restaurant) and 商店 (shop) are similar, the former is a commonly used word in Mandarin and it was surprising that many students answered this question incorrectly. Again, for (d) more students chose noodle over the correct answer, bread

Question 5

This question proved to be the most challenging on the paper. Many students did not read the text carefully enough. The text clearly states that twelve friends come to the 16 year-old's party, therefore '12 years old' is clearly a incorrect answer. For question (c) again, many students chose the wrong answer because they did not read the text carefully.

Question 6

Many students gave correct answers, other than for (b) – nurse. 医院 (hospital) is in the text to give students a strong clue. Also, many students gave the wrong answer for (d) – chef.

Question 7

This question was designed to be mildly challenging but most students answered correctly. The only exception was question (e). A few students chose A, having a picnic, as they had spotted the word 公园 (park).

Question 8

This question was intended to be demanding, but students answered the first two questions really well. For the final question most students simply picked the word 中国 (China) to match the question. If they had read all the answers carefully, they should have been able to work out 北京 (BJ) and 上海 (Shanghai).

Higher Tier**General**

Students performed very well on this year's Higher Tier Reading Paper and their teachers are to be congratulated.

Students responded well to questions with icons (short sentences), multiple choice questions, topics on Chinese culture, festivals, etc, text with distractors, longer texts.

Students found the topic of environment and more extended phrases and texts to be more challenging.

Question 1

Most students answered this opening question successfully, demonstrating their ability to deal with sentences of a reasonable length. The only exception was for question (d); quite a few students confused 跑步 and 散步 (jogging & casual walking) so failed to score a mark.

Question 2

Higher Tier students, as expected, performed better than Foundation Tier students on this question. The challenge was realising the answer to question (c) was '?'.

Question 3

Students performed well on this question. The only unexpected mistake was to question (c); a few students did not read the answer carefully enough and simply matched 'China' to the question.

Question 4

In previous years, this kind of question proved to be demanding and lots of students made unnecessary errors. This year, however, student performance was greatly improved, perhaps due to more effective training of students in examination technique

Question 5

This question was designed as a medium level challenge, but student performance was lower than on question 4, a high level question. Question (e) for example, 大衣 (overcoat) is an accessible word, but many students gave incorrect answers. Training students to spot the key words would help them to do better in this type of task and, of course, a good knowledge of vocabulary is one of the keys to success.

Question 6

Most students answered this accessible question successfully.

Question 7

For 7(a), the success rate was reasonably high; most students read the text carefully but quite a large number only saw 8am and missed the important character 半 (half); 7(b) posed hardly any problem for students to give the correct answer '7'; 7(c) proved to be the most challenging question; many students did not spot the character 差(short), so instead of the correct answer 10:55 they wrote 11:05; 7(d) was successfully answered, though some students wrote 'tomorrow' instead of the required 'Saturday' as their answer.

Question 8

This question is not an A* question but appeared to be to be the most challenging one on the paper. The text itself was not an issue and the required answers were also very straightforward, therefore the challenge appeared to be lack of vocabulary. 空气污染、空调和窗 (air pollution, air conditioning & window) caused problems, with many wild guesses from students.

Question 9

This A* question proved reasonably demanding but many students gave correct answers which was very pleasing.

9(a), was a relatively accessible question and most students answered correctly.

(b)(i), Quite a number of students failed to spot the sentence with 很多老师 (many teachers) so they tended to guess eg 'always late', 'extremely strict', etc.

(b)(ii), Most students answered this question successfully.

(c), Students who spotted 压力 (pressure) gave a correct answer. Incorrect answers included 'bad students', 'bad discipline' etc.

(d), This question was answered well with most of the answers focussing on有趣 (fun) and 功课 (homework) Quite a few students chose to answer 'good results in exams'.

(e), Many students achieved all three marks for this set of questions.

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