

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE Arabic (4AR0)
Paper 01

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General Introduction

As in previous years, this year's exam paper consisted of three sections which were to be attempted in 2 hours and 15 minutes. The three sections were designed to assess candidates' reading comprehension, writing ability and knowledge of grammar respectively. The total mark for this paper is 70.

Section 1

Section one was a passage extracted from an article titled '*What Benefits Youth*' by Ghaida Darwish, which was published in *Al Raii Magazin* in 2011. The text looked at the benefits youth and children receive at school and discussed whether ipads would one day replace the use of books in the classroom. This section was designed to test candidates' reading comprehension through five questions which covered a variety of bullet points. The length of the passage was adequate for candidates with different reading speeds and understanding abilities. The text was followed by five questions which required candidates to respond with answers based on information found in the text.

Most candidates showed a good understanding of the text and managed to respond well to questions. However, there were still some candidates who resorted to copying directly from the text, and therefore were not able to score highly. This was particularly apparent in question 1e.

Section 2

This section was made up of a short passage titled '*Dealing with difficulties in life*' and dealt with a girl who seeks advice from her father.

Candidates were required to answer two questions about the text, question 1a and question 1b. The questions were designed to test candidates' level of reading ability as well as their writing skill. Question 1a was a straight forward test of candidates' reading comprehension and ability to summarise in good language and style. Those who missed out on highlighting characters of the story or who retold the story scored lower marks.

Question 1b required a much deeper understanding of the text as candidates had to write a short story based on the theme and the message of the text. The most successful candidates were those who managed to write a short story in line with the spirit of the given text. In this case any story that dealt with life difficulties, seeking advice and finding a solution was accepted. Many of the less able candidates understood the question but were only able to copy words and phrases in the given text and therefore were not able to secure the 10 marks allocated to the question.

In general candidates showed good understanding of the text and the majority gave a reasonable summary and managed to score well in question 2a. However, some candidates were unable to reproduce a story following the theme set in write a story based text 2b.

Section 3

This section was designed to test candidates' knowledge of Arabic grammar. All four grammar questions in this year's paper were chosen from the Edexcel syllabus covering a wide range of grammatical areas. Candidates who had been well trained for the syllabus were able to provide good responses and therefore obtained high marks.

Other candidates who did not fulfill the grammar requirements did not score high marks, this was especially seen in question 3 and question. Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with grammar and strengthening their ability by reading the grammar syllabus found in the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE Arabic-First Language book. Centres are advised to ensure that candidates have a thorough understanding of the grammar also found in the same Edexcel text book.

Grade Boundaries

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