

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/01
Reading

Key messages

To do well in this paper, candidates should:

- take care to read the question carefully in Part 1, taking into account the number of marks available
- use their own words as far as possible in order to gain higher marks for Language
- produce a structured response in Part 2, making each point briefly, rather than expand on each point.

General comments

Most candidates appeared to be well prepared. The texts in this year's exam, both on the topic of food waste, were understood well by the majority of the candidates. All candidates attempted **Question 1** and **Question 2**.

The language used by most candidates was of a high quality. Many candidates put in the effort of rephrasing their answer in their own words instead of lifting straight from the text. This is good practice as candidates are usually unable to demonstrate they have actually fully comprehended the texts and the tasks when they lift. Candidates who lift risk not being awarded the marks for a question. Lifting will also adversely affect the number of marks obtained for Language (5 marks in **Question 1**, 10 marks in **Question 2**). It is therefore essential that candidates practise rephrasing what has been said in the text as much as possible. Candidates will, as a result, acquire a varied vocabulary and stylistic range, which will enable them to answer questions in their own words.

Some candidates drafted a plan for their response to **Question 2**, which often proved to be helpful. The linguistic quality of the summaries was generally high.

As always, it is strongly recommended that candidates read the questions carefully to ensure their answers are fully relevant.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This part of the exam was generally done very well.

- (a) Most candidates scored full marks for this question.
- (b) Four marks were available for this question. The second instruction (*'Let daarbij op de rapers en hun doel'*) gave further information on what had to be covered in the answer. Candidates needed to distinguish between two types of *rapers* and their different goals in order gain full marks.
- (c) Candidates were asked to explain what made food gatherers in towns different from those in the fields in the countryside. To obtain the two marks on offer, two differences needed to be pointed out. Many candidates did well.
- (d) There were two causes of food waste in the past: the fact that most fruit ripened at the same time and the lack of means to conserve surplus produce. Most candidates managed score at least one of the two marks available.

- (e) This question was answered well by the better candidates.
- (f) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (g) Candidates were asked to elucidate a statement made by food activist Tristram Stuart. Some candidates copied what he had said in the text without offering an explanation and could not obtain any marks.
- (h) This two-mark question asked for an explanation of the difference between food waste in poorer and richer countries. Most candidates answered this question well.
- (i) This question was answered well by most candidates.
- (j) Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the writer's opinion.
- (k) Only answers that were sufficiently supported by arguments based on the text received full credit.

Question 2

In general, the quality of the summaries this year was high. Candidates demonstrated a thorough understanding of the two texts and the topic area. Many candidates found enough differences and similarities to obtain full or high marks for the content.

Candidates who systematically compared both texts did very well. Discussing differences and similarities in authorial perspective, text type and prospective audience for the texts often helps candidates to structure their response. The best candidates discussed the style and language used in both texts to good effect.

As in previous sessions, it was good to see that many candidates were able to sustain the quality of their summaries by using appropriate conjunctions and other linking devices and by devising a logical structure for their answer. This, combined with an effective use of paragraphs and a clear conclusion, helps candidates achieve good marks for style and organisation.

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/02
Writing

Key message

To do well on this paper, candidates should:

- write accurately
- use a wide range of vocabulary and structures
- provide a range of well-developed ideas
- ensure their essays are relevant to the chosen topic, well organised and coherent.

General comments

Most candidates knew how to write an effective and relevant essay on two different topics. Some candidates might have benefited from planning their response first to ensure they would not run out of time or go off topic. Both compositions should be at least 350 words and planning and practice will help to ensure essays are produced to the required length.

Candidates receive marks for style and accuracy and for content. Most candidates wrote effective and linguistically accurate compositions.

Some candidates made spelling mistakes which might have been edited out had candidates proofread their essays before handing them in as some of the stronger candidates had. *Wordt* in third person without a *t* at the end continues to be a frequently made mistake, as is the mixing up *ei* and *ij* in the spelling of words such as *bijvoorbeeld* and *zei*. Compound words were sometimes written as two separate words instead of one word, perhaps as a result of the influence of English.

Candidates are reminded of the need to write their essays in an appropriate style. The argumentative and discursive essays in *Deel 1* require an introduction and a conclusion. After writing a short and purposeful introduction candidates should elaborate on the points raised therein and come to an appropriate conclusion at the end. Colloquial language should not be used and candidates should aim at a more formal tone in both style and word choice. The essay should develop logically and each stage in the argument should be properly linked to the following. Sentences within paragraphs should also be appropriately sequenced.

Different linguistic skills are tested in *Deel 2*. Candidates are here given the choice between writing a descriptive and a narrative essay. Each task type demands a different approach. For the descriptive task the candidate is required to present well-developed ideas and images and evoke a detailed sense of atmosphere. A successful response to the narrative task will be a complex and sophisticated composition in which sub-texts, flashbacks and time lapses are effectively handled. The different sections of the story should be carefully balanced and the climax appropriately managed. Sentences should be effectively arranged in order to produce narrative effects, such as the building up of tension or a sudden turn of events. Relying too much on linking words and phrases, such as *(en) toen*, and *(en) daarna*, can detract from the quality the story. An essay plan will help candidates to introduce the narrative climax at the right time in their story.

Discussie en betoog

The most popular topics in this part of the paper were on the issue of weight in the fashion industry and on when is the right time to choose subjects at school. In both cases, some candidate came with good solutions to the problems posed in the essay questions, which made the reading of their essays particularly engaging. While these questions asked candidates to express their own views, there were a number of good responses in which contrasting views were very effectively outlined and discussed. In response to the last question in

this section, some candidates demonstrated an in-depth knowledge about electric cars and argued in detail about why it was important to invest in electric cars. A smaller number of candidates chose to discuss the earnings of professional athletes. Most of them were able to argue successfully whether they thought professional athletes earned too much or deserved to earn as much as they did.

Beschrijving en verhaal

This year there were more candidates who chose to write descriptive essays, some of which were exceptionally well written. Only a few candidates showed insufficient awareness of what was expected in a descriptive essay. The feeling you have after winning a match or after a successful performance, for instance, can be experienced and expressed in various ways, and there is never a 'right' answer in terms of the content of a descriptive essay. When handled well, the descriptive essays on this topic were very enjoyable to read, as were a number of essays describing impressions of a beach.

Both narrative topics proved to be equally popular. There were some intriguing stories about the items found in the garden and about what happened after the church bell rang at night. Some candidates made good use of plot twists and flash backs, and it was impressive to see how well most candidates were able to use their Dutch in response to all the essay tasks in the Writing examination.