

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

<p>Paper 0503/01 Reading</p>

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

The texts were on the time pressures of modern life and on whether we are really as busy and as under pressure as we perceive ourselves to be. The first text was an article which focused on how best to manage our free time. The author of the second text tried to persuade the reader to look afresh at times when we have to wait, e.g. for an appointment, and aren't in a position to do anything other than wait. Both texts were understood well by the majority of the candidates, although only a few candidates picked up on the use of irony of the second text. All candidates completed both exercises and most seemed well prepared for the examination.

The language used by most candidates was of a high quality. Many candidates ensured they rephrased the language used in the texts in their answer, instead of lifting phrases and sentences wholesale. Candidates who rely on lifting are unable to demonstrate comprehension of the tasks and the relevant part(s) of the texts and cannot receive credit for any affected questions. Lifting also has a negative effect on the number of marks a candidate can score for Language (5 marks in the first exercise and 10 marks in the second). It is therefore essential that candidates practise rephrasing regularly. In doing so, they will acquire a varied vocabulary and stylistic range which will enable them to answer questions effectively in their own words.

Some candidates started their response to **Question 2** by writing a plan which often proved to be helpful to them. Language usage was generally accurate.

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 well. Nearly all candidates answered all the questions.

- (a) This question did not cause many problems for most candidates. They had to understand the word '*verstoord*' in order to answer the question correctly.
- (b) It was important to read the text carefully here. '*Haar antwoord op mijn vraag verbaasde me dus niet*' indicated that the answer was to be found before the sentence. Some candidates did not recognise this and took the answer out of the second part of the paragraph.
- (c) Many candidates answered well.
- (d) The question asked about the difference between '*vroeger*' and '*nu*'. It was important to refer to the situation then and now for full marks.

- (e) In this question candidates had to explain the outcome of the research. Simply stating the results was not enough to merit full marks here.
- (f) Most candidates answered correctly.
- (g) Most candidates managed to answer both parts of the question well.
- (h) This two-mark question was done well by most candidates.
- (i) The explanation for what was wrong with our Saturdays proved difficult for some candidates. The stronger candidates were able to express that we have got into the habit of even planning our free time to good effect.
- (j) Candidates had to explain the word '*statussymbol*' to obtain full marks. This question did not cause many problems.
- (k) Most candidates answered this question well.
- (l) The two words describing the subconscious process of looking at your phone were correctly identified by the better candidates. Some candidates gave a whole sentence for which they could not gain credit.
- (m) The key to this question was to paraphrase the relevant part of the text. Stronger candidates experience few problems with questions of this type. It is a skill that can be trained in class by asking candidates to rephrase what they have just heard or read.
- (n) The last question was answered correctly by most candidates.

Question 2

The summaries were done well this year. Candidates had ample material and some managed to obtain full marks for Content. The important thing for candidates to remember here is to go through the texts systematically while keeping in mind the pointers provided in the question.

Candidates who introduced their essay with a summary of the shared topic of both texts and then continued by systematically comparing the two texts, did very well. Discussing the differences or similarities in perspective, text type and the audiences for whom the texts are written in direct relation to the question set usually helps candidates to structure their response. Some candidates discussed the style and language used in both texts successfully. A number of candidates, however, made comparisons – often arbitrary – which did not relate to the specifics of the set task and which could therefore not be credited.

As in previous years, 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 the effective use of paragraphs and a clear conclusion, helped candidates achieve good marks for Style and Organisation.

FIRST LANGUAGE DUTCH

Paper 0503/02
Writing

Key messages

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 wrote good essays this year. Nevertheless, some candidates might have benefited from planning their response first to ensure they would not run out of time or not deviate from the topic. Both compositions should be at least 350 words. Planning and practice can help produce well-structured essays to the required length.

Candidates are awarded two sets of marks for each essay; the first mark is for style and accuracy and the second, depending on the type of essay, for the argumentative, descriptive or narrative content. Most candidates wrote effective and grammatically sound compositions. However, there were some who encountered problems implementing simple Dutch spelling rules. Although this did not always impede communication, such problems could easily have been avoided had the essays been checked for errors by the candidates before handing them in. Examples included *wordt* in the third person written without a *t* at the end, and, conversely, past tenses incorrectly written with a *t* after a *d*; errors in the conjugation of simple irregular verbs; mixing up *ei* and *ij* in the spelling of words, such as *bijvoorbeeld* and *zei*; and words with *oe* being written with *ui*, and vice versa. Another stumbling block was Dutch compound words. These were often written as two separate words instead of one word.

Candidates are reminded to write their essays in an appropriate style. The argumentative and discursive essays in *Deel 1* require an introduction and a conclusion. After a short and purposeful introduction they should move on to discuss the points in turn and arrive at an appropriate conclusion. The argumentative/discursive essay should develop logically and each stage in the argument should be properly linked to the next. Sentences within paragraphs should also be appropriately sequenced. Colloquial language should be avoided.

Different linguistic skills are tested in *Deel 2*. Candidates are given the choice between writing a descriptive or a narrative essay, each demanding a different approach. A descriptive essay calls for well-developed ideas and images and the purposeful evocation of a detailed sense of atmosphere. A strong response to the narrative task should present an effective handling of a sequence of events using a range of narrative devices. The best stories carefully balance the different narrative elements – the building up of tension, a well-chosen flashback, a carefully placed sudden turn of events – appropriately. Relying too much on linking words and phrases, such as *toen*, *en toen* and *en daarna*, usually takes away from the quality the story. As with any other type of essay, a plan will help candidates to manage the structure of their piece optimally.

Comments on specific questions

Deel 1: Discussie en betoog

The topics proved equally popular. There were many good and interesting argumentative and discursive essays. Candidates presented interesting ideas and relevant knowledge on wind farms and the future of our planet and on the potential future safety (or increased hazard) of our roads when self-driving cars are widely introduced. Many essays on cyber bullying were very thought provoking. The last topic posited that doing homework was a useless activity and that school children should engage more in sports-related activities instead. Most candidates who chose to write on this subject disagreed and thought that homework was far more important than sport.

Deel 2: Beschrijving en verhaal

There were more candidates who chose a descriptive topic this year than last year. Some of these essays were exceptionally well written and only a few showed little awareness of what was expected. The frenzied atmosphere of a shop sale was described so vividly by some that it was almost impossible for the reader to imagine that anyone would want to visit a shop when a sale is on. There was a wide variety of favourite places – from the remotest of areas to places very close to home. When handled well, descriptions on this topic were wonderful to read. Many candidates opted for a spot that gave them the rest they needed, far away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The best descriptions managed to convey why the candidates had specifically chosen their place, not by explicitly stating the reasons but through the detailed way in which they described these places.

There were a number of intriguing stories about tree carvings and a lot of cellars and attics in the house to which the tree belonged held secrets worth revealing. Candidates who chose to write on events that took place during a sudden solar eclipse often used plot twists and flash backs to good effect, and it was impressive to see how well most candidates displayed their knowledge and usage of the Dutch language.

It was a joy to read the interesting and inventive essays the candidates produced. The teachers are to be thanked for helping the candidates to produce work of such high calibre.