

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3247/01
Reading and Writing

Key messages

All candidates should spend time reading the instructions very carefully before attempting the questions. They need to read and understand the demand of the questions in order to achieve the highest possible marks. There are two parts in this paper: Part One Reading and Part Two Writing. All candidates are required to answer all questions in Part One and select one question from Part Two.

General comments

The question paper was set on the new specification and it was second year of this new format. The majority of candidates performed extremely well and answered the questions after having read the whole passage with care. It has been observed that this year the candidates' responses were very good. It seemed that candidates were fully prepared for their examination. However, there were some candidates who did not read the passage carefully and properly and did not understand what the questions required, and these candidates scored lower marks.

Comments on specific questions

Part One

Question 1

A passage was given about healthy eating and exercise and candidates were asked to answer 8 questions with reference to the given passage. In this part of the exam marks are awarded for content alone, not for language and structure. A large majority of candidates were able to answer these questions correctly and were able to score either full marks or very good marks. The candidates showed a good command of language and structure, as well as content. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to write very detailed and comprehensive response and showed confident use of complex sentences.

There were some questions that proved more challenging for candidates. Some candidates did not understand the question asking them to name three obstacles to a healthy lifestyle, and so lost marks. Also, some candidates were not able to give a clear answer to the question asking about the relationship between diet and exercise.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are advised to read the passage very carefully more than once and underline the main points. They should then read the question and try to answer in the light of the passage but using their own words to get full marks. It should be noted that if the question is worth one mark, the Examiner will be looking for one point to be made, and if it is worth four marks, the Examiner will be looking for four pieces of information in the answer. Candidates should take care to write neatly and use dark blue or black pen.

Part Two

Question 2

Candidates were required to write an essay on one of the four topics provided. This year all of the questions were equally popular.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are advised to spend some time deciding which topic to write on. Once they have decided, they should write down the bullet points and write a plan, then write their response. Candidates need to read carefully and understand the demand of the question to score high marks. Candidates are also advised to write their answers in the booklet in the correct sequence. If a continuation booklet is used, candidates should indicate this clearly on the page.

Argumentative essay

Question 2 (i)

This question asked candidates to talk about the negative impact of pollution. The majority of the candidates who attempted this question were able to describe what the impacts of pollution were. They explained fully with examples, writing very well structured essays and scoring high marks. However, a few candidates did not understand the question properly and they just explained what pollution is and mentioned different types of pollution. These candidates scored low marks.

Discursive essay

Question 2 (ii)

Many candidates answered this question on the effects of increased trends of fashion and its impact on the younger generation. Some candidates were in favour of allowing young people to follow fashion and some of them were against this idea. Those candidates who were able to write a well-structured essay with clear explanations and examples gained the highest marks.

Descriptive essay

Question 2 (iii)

The demand of this question was to describe a scene of "Moon Night". From the writing of the majority of candidates it appeared that they have all went out on Moon Night and they described the scene at the market in detail. On the other hand, some weaker candidates described just few of the important details of the market on Moon Night, for example lights, crowd, different stalls etc. Those candidates who gave detailed descriptions of the scene for example, food stalls, lights, clothes, shoes, bangles, henna, ladies buying things, men looking after children etc. scored full marks in this question.

Narrative essay

Question 2 (iv)

This creative writing question was as popular as the other three questions, and was chosen by a good number of candidates. Many candidates who wrote on this topic did not answer the question fully. For example, many candidates did not begin their narrative from where they were supposed to start; hence a large part of their narrative was irrelevant to the question. Some candidates did not bring their narrative to a suitable ending, losing marks for structure. Some did not describe the jungle and how they were feeling. This year candidates did not score high marks in this particular question.

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3247/02
Texts

Key messages

All candidates should spend time reading the instructions very carefully before attempting the questions. They need to read and understand the demand of the questions in order to achieve the highest possible marks. There are three parts in this paper: Part One Unseen passage, Part Two Poetry and Part Three Prose. All candidates are required to answer Part One and select one question from Part Two and one question from Part Three.

General comments

The question paper was set on prescribed text and was second exam of the new specification. The majority of the candidates performed extremely well and selected questions from both parts one and two. It has been observed that this year the candidates' responses were very good. It seemed that they were well prepared for their examination. However, many candidates were not able to fully answer question 1 (Unseen passage). The best candidates answered all questions very confidently and scored high or full marks.

Comments on specific questions

Part One

Question 1 (Unseen Passage)

This was compulsory question in part one. The candidates were required to read the passage and explain how the poet conveyed the message of Zawaal's decline with the help of language, words and scenery, and to what extent the poet has been successful. Some candidates understood the question very well, but many did not and answered the question by copying a few verses from the text, or writing about scenes that are described in the poem. Those candidates who clearly explained the meaning of Zawaal with reference from the poem using the language, words and scenes scored high or full marks.

Advice to candidates

Candidates need to read the unseen passage very carefully. Read the question and understand the demand of the question. Sometimes the Examiner asks more than one thing in the question and to score high marks candidates have to answer all parts of the question. The bullet points given at the end of the question are there to help candidates, but it is not absolutely necessary to use these in order to score high marks. Higher marks are awarded where candidates are able to use their own words when answering the question.

Part two (Poetry)

Question 2

This question was less popular, but all candidates who wrote on Musadas e Hali showed that they were fully prepared for this question and they wrote excellent answers. Full marks were awarded to those candidates who wrote with the reference to the poem and quoted verses from the poem. Most candidates demonstrated their ability to understand the sentiments expressed in Hali's poetry about the values of religion, culture and equality, and were able to write and analyse in detail.

Question 3

This question on Parveen Shakir was a very popular question and the majority of the candidates wrote on this question. There was a variety of answers to this question. Some candidates answered the question without any reference to her poetry and some wrote mainly about the life history of the poet and not about what the question was asking. Many other candidates answered this question with reference to her poetry and scored full marks.

Some candidates were able to appreciate the poet's use of similes and metaphors in the verses, in her description of sorrow. It was pleasing to read that they demonstrated depth in understanding and interpreting the poet's work.

Part three (Prose)

Question 4

Very few candidates attempted this question, but those who did were able to answer very well and gave descriptive accounts of the author's views. In addition, they provided their own comments in appreciation of his work.

Although this question was not popular, candidates who chose this question gave full details of the text and their answers were full of references from the work of the author and his essay in the syllabus. These candidates scored high or full marks.

Question 5

"Eidgha" was very popular and a well attempted question. The candidates showed that they were very well prepared for this Section and answered with full reference to the text. The candidates who scored full marks described the full story and at the end justified that how the author has very beautifully reflected on the psychology of children.

Advice to candidates

Candidates are strongly advised to read and understand the syllabus. All the set texts listed in the syllabus should be read by all candidates.

Candidates should write answers in a logical sequence and should not mix up one with the other to avoid confusion. They should write clearly at the top of each page which question they are attempting and when they use any extra sheet, they should also write which question they are continuing.