



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Chinese (6CN0) Paper 2
Understanding and Written Response in
Chinese

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Paper overview

The GCE Chinese 6CN02 unit was set as per the GCE 2008 Specification and is consistent with the format of all previous 6CN02 papers. This unit rewards candidates for their abilities to extract and communicate information from both recorded and written sources in Chinese, to transfer meaning from Chinese into English and to produce a continuous piece of writing in Chinese.

All the passages are taken from the following four published General Topic Areas (GTAs):

- Food, diet and health
- Transport, travel and tourism
- Education and employment
- Leisure, youth interests and Chinese festivals

This paper consists of three sections namely Listening, Reading and Writing and there are a variety of task-types, some require non-verbal answers and others require written answers. It begins with four recordings, which are available in Cantonese and Mandarin, followed by three reading passages and a stimulus for the written response. All the passages and questions are printed twice in the Questions Booklet, once in traditional/full characters and once in simplified characters. Candidates may write in traditional or simplified characters in the Answer Booklet, except for the Reading section where candidates are required to answer in English.

A total of two hours and thirty minutes were available for the completion of the paper, with the recording being taken away after 45 minutes. Candidates are required to attempt all questions. The paper is worth 70 marks in total, of which 20 marks are for Listening, 20 marks are for Reading and 30 marks are for Writing. This paper is marked following principles consistent with the previous sessions.

Most of the teachers and candidates seemed well attuned in many cases to the demands of the paper and there is little evidence that candidates did not have sufficient time to complete all the questions.

The following sections will discuss the candidates' performances in further details:

Candidates' Performances

The paper's structure remains the same as the previous exam series with a total of eight questions testing listening, reading and writing skills.

This paper consists of three sections.

Section A Listening (20 marks)

Section A is a listening assessment with a maximum of 20 marks. It requires candidates to listen to a range of recorded Chinese-language materials and to retrieve and convey information given by responding to Chinese-language questions. Candidates will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses or short answers in Chinese.

In this section, candidates will have individual control of the recordings and they may listen to the recording of each passage, in Mandarin or in Cantonese, as many times as they like. However, this section of assessment must be undertaken within the first 45 minutes allocated to this unit. Candidates are advised to make good use of the allotted time to listen, stop, revisit and replay sections of the recordings at will to complete the four relevant listening questions, and to make more certain that the answers they have written down are correct.

In this paper, Passage 1 of Section A is a multiple-choice question on Qinming Festival and is worth four marks. Passage 2 is on Marathon and four correct statements from a possible eight had to be selected, each worth one mark. Passage 3 on Advertisement carries four marks. Passage 4 on a Radio Interview requires written answers in Chinese, worth 8 marks.

A vast majority of the candidates were able to understand the content of the passages and gave some good quality performances. Candidates who scored high are likely to be those who responded after listening to the whole passages carefully.

Question 1

A majority of candidates responded very well and a small percentage made mistakes in Q1(iii).

Question 2

The performance in this question was good and most candidates scored 3 marks or more. C and D were the least successful items and H was sometimes chosen in error.

Question 3

Most candidates showed good understanding of this passage and they were able to choose and write all four correct answers with some occasional errors in (c) and (d). The small number of candidates who responded with “好吃” instead of the

correct answer of “好奇”and/or“做飯 / 做饭” in place of “飲食 / 饮食” for (c) and (d) respectively indicated that they may have failed to listen to the recording carefully.

Question 4

This passage is the longest recording amongst the four passages and the question carries the largest number of marks out of the four questions as candidates are required to give a short-written response in Chinese based on the information provided in the passage. No credit could be given for answers written in English or pinyin. It is evident that the question is still very accessible as the written characters in this question are basic and daily used. Most candidates showed good understanding of the extract, though some candidates were not able to give two correct answers in (d) and others responded with “說自己在英國的生活 / 说自己在英国的生活” in place of “她的课非常有意思/ 她的课非常有意思”. Those struggled to write Chinese characters lost marks in (e) and (f).

Section B Reading (20 marks)

Section B is a reading assessment with a maximum of 20 marks. It requires candidates to comprehend Chinese language printed materials and to retrieve and convey information given by responding to English-language questions. Candidates will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. All answers must be based exclusively on the information in the passages and the questions will elicit English answers that require a transfer of meaning from Chinese. No credit will be given for answers written in Chinese or for candidates' own interpretation with no basis in the original passages.

In this paper, the three reading comprehension passages are related to School life, a Book Fair and Teacher Li. The first two questions carry 5 marks each and the last one carries 10 marks, giving a total of 20 marks.

Majority of candidates were able to understand the content of the passages but not always able to express themselves in clear English. Misspelling, inaccurate choice of words/phrases and grammatical mistakes were very common whilst details appeared to be masked over. Candidates are to be reminded that precise understanding and accurate English are essential to score high marks. There are still rooms to improve in this section.

Question 5

A good number of candidates attempted very well for this question. They demonstrated good understanding of the passages and were able to produce accurate responses. For those who did not score well, the common mistakes were in questions (c) and (d). Some responded to (c)(i) with “have opportunity to meet friends”, which failed to convey the meaning of “making new friends”, and quite a

few candidates misspelt “hobbies” as “habits” in (c)(ii). It is evident that some candidates failed to read Question (d) carefully and they responded with what Wu Shan “would do” during his school holiday rather than what he “would like to do”.

Question 6

This is another very well attempted question and most of the candidates showed good understanding of the passage and scored at least 4 marks. The common errors were in (a) where candidates mixed up the meaning of “travelling” and “tourism”, and in (c) where only limited detail was provided.

Question 7

This question required precise understanding of the passage to score and the candidates’ performances were rather mixed. Many were not able to provide precise English translation of “戲劇 / 戏剧” and “京劇 / 京剧” and there were some detail glossed over in transfer of the meaning of “熱愛 / 热爱”, “認真 / 认真” and/or “推廣 / 推广” in (g) and (h).

Section C Writing (30 marks)

Section C is a writing assessment with a maximum of 30 marks. There is only one continuous writing task in this section which required candidates to write an essay of 180-200 Chinese characters in respond to the stimulus, demonstrating their abilities to communicate accurately in Chinese using correct grammar and syntax.

Candidates should read the rubrics carefully, then organise their ideas into paragraphs. It is important to cover all the bullet points given in the question and write within the specified word limit. A good plan and well-balanced writing could help to score higher marks. Candidates are encouraged to use a variety of expressions and structures.

The continuous writing task this year was on tourism, giving candidates the opportunity to express their views and opinions based on the given four bullet points. Content and Response and Quality of Language carried 15 marks each. The whole question was worth a total of 30 marks.

Question 8

Most candidates gave good quality performances, covering all bullet points and adhered to the word limit. Their discussions were relevant and well developed with successful uses of sentence structures, key phrases and word orders. These essays were awarded the top two band marks for both Content and Language. It was evident that candidates used the bullet points given in constructing their answers.

Assessment: Content and understanding

It is evident that this is a very accessible topic and candidates performed well as a whole. There were some creative answers with a justification of how tourism can be beneficial. Some were able to make sensible arguments on the impact of tourism on them, by giving examples from daily life and personal experiences. For example, some candidates discussed the importance of maintaining a balance between leisure and study. They presented views on how tourism helped them to relax and refocus on their studies whilst improve their relationships with their friends and families when they were able to go for holidays together. Examiners also found logical and sensible arguments in candidates' responses relating to how visiting places improved their own understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

However, it is disappointing to see some candidates understood the task and developed some of the points successfully but failed to respond to all the bullet points. Similarly, some of the candidates did not pay close attention to the word limit and wrote too much on the first two points leaving very little room for the development of remaining points which are equally, if not, more important than the first two. Although those essays were well-written, the remaining part of the essay cannot be taken into consideration when the word limit of 200 characters is reached. As such, the essay failed to meet the requirement of responding to all the bullet points and did not score high. A good time management plan and well-balanced writing is vital in responding to this question.

Candidate who did not do well in this question were those who did not respond to all the four bullet points; or, those who failed to structure their writings coherently, showing no logical development from one point to another. A small number of candidates produced very short essays with irrelevant information.

Assessment: Quality of Language

Marks for the quality of Language were awarded based on the accuracy of grammar, the range of lexical items, the variety of structures and expressions. Majority of candidates showed competency in mastering the language and received good marks for their quality of language.

Many candidates were proficient and able to write fluently, but some suffered from their simplicity of language expressions and structures, or, limited vocabulary. It is disappointing that these essays could not reach to top mark band.

There were some candidates who used homonyms due to their confusion over the writing of certain characters and a small number of candidates still wrote some pinyin in place of the Chinese characters which are not acceptable in writing and they should have used synonyms or rephrased the sentences.

Writing characters is an acquired skill in learning Chinese and candidates should have practised writing better when preparing for this paper, and, to the least, familiarising themselves with some minimum vocabulary as in the GCSE syllabus as a starting point.

Paper Summary

This is the last series this specification and the candidates demonstrated improvements in the exam performance. Majority of the candidates were able to do the followings.

- Followed instructions provided in the rubric of the exam paper (e.g. whether the answers should be in English or in Chinese)
- Answered Sections A and B based on the information given in the passages
- Paid attention to the descriptive terms associated with the numbers
- Ensured correct spellings and grammar
- Wrote the essay with a clear and coherent structure with logical connections between the paragraphs
- Produced a well-balanced writing covering all the bullet points given in the question within the specified word limit
- Used a wide range of vocabulary and a variety of expressions and structures
- Provided well developed ideas and supported opinions with suitable examples