

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

GCSE Arabic (5AR01)
Paper 1 Listening and Understanding
in Arabic

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GCSE Arabic

Paper 1 Listening and Understanding in Arabic

Examiner Report

The topics which the Arabic GCSE Listening paper comprises are highly relevant and suitable to the purposes and levels of this test. The themes provide a wide spectrum of interests and like which young people in the Arab world and learners of Arabic all over the world try to master as a first step to comprehending and speaking/writing the Arabic language. The themes and the questions based on them in the paper provide a range of oral activities that appeal to native Arab speakers, as well as to foreign learners from around the world.

In answering the question paper, the students of all levels did as generally expected with some successes and discrepancies highlighted. These will be mentioned below. Here are some comments on each of the questions.

Q1

A considerable number of students did not achieve the marks for parts Q1(iv) and Q1(v). The reason may have been that they could not distinguish between the two names of 'Muna' and 'Marwan'.

Q2

The name 'Muna' is used again in Q2(iv). This question was fit for purpose and students scored consistently well.

Q3

It seems that a lot of students found 3(c) rather difficult, especially the higher ability groups. (***Where was he before the pain started?***) Other students managed this question quite well. This is probably due to the fact that higher ability pupils (native speakers of Arabic), whose English might not be as good as their Arabic, might have expressed the answer in wrong terms of English language.

Q4

A great number of students across levels got Q4(iv) wrong. This might be to do with a possible wrong order of question (Q4 and Q5) and the fact that the answer to the two questions come from the same sentence in the Arabic text.

Q5

Which is targeted at grade B was accessible to many of the students in the lower grade ranges (C and F).

Q6

The data shows consistency with this question across all levels, and it was accessible across all levels including the F grade students at whom it was targeted.

Q7

The items concerning the weather in English (as opposed to their meanings in Arabic) might have caused confusion in the answer given to this question. As stated above, many students failed to score any (or few) points for this question.

Q8

Quite good consistency across levels and expectations.

Q9

This is an interesting question to comment on. Many of the sub-questions within this question were accessible to students across the ability range. However, there were some questions, particularly Q9(c) Q9(d), Q9(e)(ii) and Q9(f), generated a large number of possible correct answers.

Q9(c)

In this question most of the students who attempted this question were able to score well and write the exact answers and have been awarded two marks. Some students used some words like *thugs* and some did not understand the question and answered referee, goalkeeper, coach and team A, B. In general, the performance of the students was very good.

Q9 (d)

Although the instructions were clear that the students should answer in English some of the students wrote their answer in Arabic using the word *حكم* instead of referee and some of them used the word *hakam*. Some of the students used the word *judge* and *match leader* instead of referee. Many students were confused between this question and Q9e(ii) and wrote that the referee was drunk.

Many students managed to achieve at least one mark out of the two available for this question.

Q9e (ii)

In general the performance of this question was not as good as the previous questions. This question was challenging for some students. Instead of writing about how referees should be healthy and fit for their job, lots of student wrote about how referees are professionals and have high standards and expectations.

Some of the students' answers were irrelevant to the question such as: *seems silly and stupid*. Some of the students used the word *judge* instead of *referee*. Very few wrote their answer in Arabic instead of English. Some of the students left this question blank and some their answer was "I don't know".

Finally, it is often difficult for Arab students whose English is not so good to answer Q9 in English. Students translate words into English that have a different meaning to that intended in the question, so might be taken as wrong (e.g. the use of the word 'judge' for 'referee' or 'fans' for audience, or 'bag' for 'back' and so on).

Q9 (f)

There was a very common mistake in this question as lots of students wrote 'watch a programme or football' which did not specify the programme that Lubna watched. Some of the students wrote to 'watch the match live', which indicates that they did not understand the question.

In general the performance of the students was good on this question and many students achieved at least one mark out of two available.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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