

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE Arabic (5AR03) Paper 01

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Q1: Furnishing a student flat

Some candidates found success in this question whereas others struggled and failed to demonstrate understanding of basic core vocabulary relating to home furnishings. It is imperative that candidates are familiar with the specification's core vocabulary.

Q2: Personal profile

Candidates generally performed well in this question. Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of personal information and basic hobbies and interests.

Q3: At the café

This question was targeted at grade D candidates, and many candidates found it accessible. However, few candidates were successful in answering question 3(iii) as they did not know the term for "bottle" in Arabic. Again, it is crucial that candidates are familiar with Edexcel's minimum core vocabulary list and the vocabulary book. The vocabulary book is available to download from the Edexcel website.

Q4: A city trip

Although many candidates found the question fairly accessible, many of them struggled to answer questions 4(i) and 4(v). This is because they were not familiar with the words for "sea" 4(i) and "lake" 4(v). Again it is crucial that candidates are acquainted with Edexcel's vocabulary book.

Q5: Advance warning of road works

This question was targeted at the higher grade candidates and most of these candidates achieved the marks available.

Q6: Airport signs and notices

Most candidates performed well in this question. However, many candidates struggled with 6(v) because they did not know the term for "passport" in Arabic.

Q7: Holiday activities in school

70% of candidates gained the marks available for this question. The success of candidates reflects their great interest in activities and themes relating to sports.

Q8: Scholarship application

This question was targeted at A* candidates and differentiated well between higher and lower grade candidates. Some high and mid-level A grade candidates found Q8(i) and Q8(ii) difficult. Candidates need to be taught how to read more challenging texts and extracts in Arabic and taught the necessary skills and strategies to retrieve the required information successfully.

Q9: A family problem

Most candidates answered this question successfully. However, both high and mid level candidates found questions 9(e), 9(f) and 9(g) difficult. Some candidates struggled to answer questions in English. To avoid losing marks unnecessarily teachers need to ensure that their students are able to respond to texts in Arabic as well as answer questions in English, at all levels of difficulty.

Summary:

Centers should ensure that all candidates, at all levels and ability, are acquainted with the vocabulary in Edexcel's minimum core vocabulary list and vocabulary book. The core vocabulary book can be downloaded from the Edexcel website and should play a key part in the teaching of Arabic in class.

Candidates, especially native speakers, should be given more opportunities to practice answering the higher level questions in English. They need to possess the necessary English skills to be able to attempt questions such as this year's Q9 successfully.

It is also important that candidates of all abilities have an opportunity to view past papers to ensure they are familiar with the rubric requirements and the type of questions set.

Grade Boundaries

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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