



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Arabic (5AR03)

Paper 3: Reading and understanding
in Arabic.

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GCSE Arabic

Unit 3: Reading

Examiners Report

Question 1: Shopping list.

This is one of the easiest questions in the exam paper and the question was accessible to the majority of candidates. In line with our expectations, around 90% of candidates achieved at least five marks out of five in this question.

Question 2: Job application.

A nice question that worked well for candidates. As expected many have been successful in the question and performed well in all parts of the question.

Question 3: Hobbies and interests.

This question was targeted at grade D candidates. Candidates achieved well in most parts of the question.

However, nearly half the candidates failed to answer questions 3ii as they did not know the word for 'skiing' in Arabic. Students also found difficulties in attempting 3v as they didn't know the word 'healthy' in Arabic.

There is a need for consistency in the instruction of Arabic and in the use of the Core Vocabulary Book. Teachers need to ensure that their students are taught all topics highlighted in Edexcel Pearson's Core Vocabulary Book. Teachers should also ensure that their learners are familiar with Arabic countries and some of the main cities in these countries.

Question 4: lost property.

This question was intended for C candidates and it worked well for most of them. Many candidates performed as expected and achieved marks in line with their ability. However, many C candidates as well as other candidates found issues with 4iii because they were not familiar with '1000' in Arabic.

Numbers are a core element in the teaching of foreign languages and Arabic, and they should be covered and taught in lessons to ensure students achieve marks and grades that truly reflect their ability.

Question 5: An invitation.

Question five was targeted at B grade candidates, and the question differentiated well between candidates of different abilities. The events in the question are nicely laid out and the complexities in the question are adequate to the targeted ability. I am quite pleased with how the question worked out.

Question 6: On holiday.

Holiday is a popular topic of study and it is well taught. As a result most candidates performed well in all parts of this question. Our overall data showed that over 92% of students achieved five out of five in this question.

In order for candidates to achieve similar successes in other topics teachers need to make sure that all other themes and topics relating to GCSE Arabic are covered and taught well. This will make sure that candidates are better prepared for the exam paper.

Question 7: Accommodation to rent.

Question 7 is aimed at D candidates and as expected they performed well in all parts of the question. The overall success in this question is good and in line with our expectations. This success is probably due to the popularity of the topic (House and area). This topic is well taught in schools and it is recommended that similar interest is duly given to other GCSE topics.

Question 8: Khalid Halim.

This question was targeted at grade A* candidates and it differentiated well between higher and lower abilities. Most students met our expectations in this question.

Question 9: A family situation.

Question 9 was aimed at A candidates, however some A and A* candidates did not perform as well as expected.

According to our data, many candidates had issues with questions 9d, 9e and 9g. Only 3% of our overall candidates managed to answer question 9e. Students who failed to answer the question were not familiar with the words 'wide' and 'far' in Arabic. In Question 9g students struggled with demonstrating their understanding of information relating to 'changing jobs' in the text.

It is also worth noting that many A/A* candidates find question 9 fairly challenging because of a lack of fluency in English, and this impedes their achievement in this question. It is important that students practice past exam papers to familiarise themselves with the layout and expectations of the paper and better prepare them for the final exam.

Students must also have basic English language skills to attempt question 9 successfully as well as other questions where the use of English in answering questions is needed. Please remember that any answers in Arabic in question 9 or

other questions, apart from question 8, will not be valid and candidates will not be awarded any marks.

Summary

This paper differentiated well between students of different abilities. Our expectations and predications of student's performance, in all questions at all levels, have been met and these assertions are supported by our data. The paper was fair to all candidates across all abilities.

Centre's should ensure that all candidates are familiar with the content of the minimum core vocabulary. The core vocabulary book can be downloaded from the Edexcel website and should play an important part in the teaching of Arabic in the classroom. Candidates should also be fairly familiar with key aspects of Arab culture, as we believe it strengthens and consolidates the teaching and learning of Arabic.

Candidates, especially native speakers, should be given further opportunities to practice answering higher level questions in English. They need to have the necessary English language skills to attempt questions such as question 9.

It is highly recommended that students, across abilities, have an opportunity to practice past papers to ensure they are familiar with the requirements and the layout of the paper.

Some topics are more popular than others and are consequently taught better than other topics with better candidate results. Teachers need to make sure that all topics are covered and taught well. This will guarantee fairness to candidates in the exam, and better consistency and reliability of results where candidates are able to achieve grades that truly reflect their ability.

