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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0) Paper 3H: Reading and
Understanding in Arabic

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Introduction

This exam series paper is a return to pre-pandemic- since 2019 summer series- with the exception of providing a glossary for the non-vocabulary words to help students with their understanding of the stimulus text and their respective questions.

This Higher Tier Reading and Understanding in Arabic exam paper is made up of 10 questions with a total of 50 marks.

The time allowed for this Higher Tier is 50 minutes.

Candidates will respond to multiple choice response and open response questions and translate a short text from Arabic into English. All questions are based on various stimulus texts that cover the following five themes: (1) Identity and Culture (2) Local area, holiday and travel (3) School (4) Future aspirations, study and work (5) International and global dimension.

All themes and topics must be studied in the context of both the students' home country and that of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken

This paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all the themes and topics covered in this qualification specification. Candidates are assessed on their understanding of standard written Arabic texts based on the aforementioned topics/themes. There are two literary texts (Q02 and Q04) from a variety of sources mainly novels and stories, and a short text in Arabic for candidates to translate into English.

The paper is divided into **three sections**:

- Section A consists of six questions with instructions and texts set in Arabic **and candidates in this section are required to respond in English**.
- Section B consists of 3 questions set in Arabic and candidates are **required to answer in Arabic**.
- Section C consists of 1 translation question. Candidates should allow enough time for the translation question (10 minutes are recommended).

Note for Section C: it consists of 1 translation of a short text from Arabic into English. Candidates should allow enough time for the translation question (15 minutes are recommended).

The vocabulary list -at both Foundation and Higher level- must be studied extensively to enable candidates to understand and express themselves with themes, reading and understanding authentic material. Teachers should present and exploit a range of vocabulary relevant to the themes and topics in the specification.

Note: a glossary of non-vocabulary words to help students with their understanding the stimulus text was provided.

Grades for each question:

In this Higher Tier paper, each question a grade from 9 to 4. This will determine level of each stimulus text and its respective questions. The questions and their respective grades are distributed as follows:

- question 1: targets grade 4; (crossover with foundation)
- question 2: targets grade 5; (crossover with foundation)
- question 3 and 4: target grades 6 and 7;
- question 5 targets grades 7 and 8;
- questions 6: targets grade 9;
- question 7: targets grades 4; (crossover with foundation)
- question 8: targets grade 5; (crossover with foundation)
- question 9: targets grades 8 and 9;
- question 10: targets grades 6 to 9.

Questions 1, 2, 7 and 8 are crossover questions with the Foundation Tier question paper.

Important note:

- The stimulus texts and their respective questions vary in level based on the grade.
 - The length of the stimulus text per question is also related to the grade the question is targeting.
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Cohort performance per each question:

Section A

Q01- crossover with 3F (3 marks- Grade 4): This is an 'open response question', which has some excellent responses by candidates with full mark scores.

The challenging part for some candidates was (c), it did prove to be challenging to some candidates, however, a noticeable number of candidates managed to get it right. Many candidates focused on their answer on the أجواء الأصيلة/الفوضى المغربية while the key word in the question 'feel' and the expected answer is: 'feeling like going back in time/going back to the old days.'

Q02- crossover with 3F (4 marks-Grade 5): Some excellent candidates' performance in this question, a large number scoring either the full 4 available marks or 3 out the 4 marks.

Here are some observations regarding candidates responses to this question:

- Part (a), some candidates have answered: 'clothes shopping' instead of one of the two options: 'cut his hair - bought a tie (red tie).'
- Part (b): The majority of the candidates answered this question correctly, with very small number giving a random answer such as: 'awful' instead of: 'looked like a different (another) person/looking like someone else/looking nice.'
- Part (c): The majority of the candidates answered this question correctly, with small number giving a random answer such as: 'impressed' instead of: 'surprised', (اندهش) which is a word in the vocaburlay list.
- Part (d): This was a challenging part of this question for a noticeable number of candidates, who gave random answers such as: 'the father will accept', 'he will marry Layla', 'the father will refuse.' Instead of: 'he had forgotten all what he had prepared to say.' The key word is 'forgotten- ضاعت'.

Q03 (Total: 5 marks-Grade 6-7): This is an open response question. This type of question requires certain level of processing skills in order to match the statement to the name. This skill requires a good practice to develop.

Overall, we could say that the candidates' performance was good in this question and the mode score was 3. However, it is worth mentioning that some candidates managed to get the full 5 marks or 4 marks.

Here are some observations regarding candidates response in this question:

- Part (a): Very good performance by most candidates.
- Part (b): the key word 'families- الأسرة' was missed by a noticeable number of candidates, which led to not being awarded the one mark for this part. The expected answeris: 'families encouraging/motivate their children to join in environmental activities.'
- Part (c): There was significant number of candidates who got the correct answer: 'head teachers/teachers'. However, some candidates misinterpreted the word 'people' in the question as 'population or countries' and many answers were: 'Arab countries'.
- Part (e): was well answered by a good number of candidates and they gave one –in certain cases the two expected options for the answer-: 'it became part of secondary school education OR it is included in secondary school exams'. Few candidates gave answers such as: 'because it is important' only. This didn't give the one mark available.

Q04 (5 marks-Grade 6-7): This multiple choice 'literary text' question, has seen some excellent candidates' performance with a noticeable number of candidates scoring the full available 5 marks or 4 of the available marks. It is typical that a small minority of candidates would face some difficulty in fully understanding the stimulus text which resulted in candidates resort to 'guess work' in some of their answers. However, the overall candidates' performance in this question was very good.

Q05- (6 marks-Grade 7-8): This question is a mixture of 'fill in the blanks' (Q05a-d) and open response (Q05e-f) question.

Although the stimulus text appears to be challenging but we have seen excellent performance by many candidates.

Here are some observations regarding candidates responses in this question:

- Part (a): Only a small minority seems to have not understood the requirement of the questions about the source of Najm's fortune, i.e 'the prize', however the rest did understand it and gave the correct answer.
- Part (b): The majority of candidates understood and answered this question correctly. A small number of candidates got the information in the stimulus text mixed up or didn't get the key word (biggest) in the question and their answers varied to include: Najm's daughters (answer for Q05c), the taxi driver or the guard, when the answer should be: 'a children's hospital or hospital.'
- Part (c): Also, this part has seen excellent performance, with small number confusing the expected answer: 'his daughters' with the taxi driver, or the bank guard.
- Part (f): Many candidates gave 'Egypt' as their answer instead of 'amongst poor people - in a poor area.'

Q06 (5 marks-Grade 9): This question is divided into two parts: Part (a) is made up a multiple choice table and it is for 3 marks and Parts (b) & (c) are open response for 1 mark each.

The candidates' performance in the multiple choice was good and many candidates were awarded 2 marks with less number of candidates scoring the full 3 available marks.

- Part (a): The most common incorrect candidates' answer was in crossing (A), which is an incorrect answers as no 'foreign film producers' took part in the event.

Regarding this part of the question, it is worth noting that a small number of candidates submitted blank responses or crossed one or two boxes only.

It is advisable to make candidates aware of the value of this part, which is 3 marks and to look into selecting (crossing) 3 options.

- Parts (b & c): These two parts has seen a very good number of candidates scoring the two available marks. Only a small number of candidates struggled with understanding the question for part (b), and gave random answers or left it blank.

Section B **Target Language Section**

Q07- crossover with 3F (5 marks-Grade 4):

This a multiple choice question. It was clear that this cohort candidates performed very well in this **target language** multiple choice question.

A good number of candidates scored the full 5 available marks and many others scored 4 marks.

There was a variety of responses for Q07iii. This question was based on the two key words (part of vocabulary list): female-فتاة and male-شاب. The correct answer is D: رجل وثلاث شابات (one man and three young women). Some candidates didn't match this and crossed various different options.

Q08- crossover with 3F (5 marks-Grade 5): In this question 'fill in the blanks' target language question, a noticeable number of candidates managed to score the full 5 available marks or 4 marks. However, on the other hand, there was a number of candidates who didn't perform as well, with scores of 1 or 0.

It is important for candidates to be given the opportunities to practise this type of questions, where a matching of the statement to a name is a skill which can be developed through practising. **It is important for candidates not to randomly select the name which usually results in a 0 score. Also, to understand that they need to select one of the names and not fill the blank with random words from the text.**

Q09 (5 marks- Grade 8-9): This is an open response target language question. There is an impressive candidates' performance in this question with very good attempts by candidates.

A significant number of candidates struggled with reaching the right decision on what is the answer for Q09(b).

Two important points to flag for the future benefit to the candidates regarding this type of question: the first point is related to Q09(b); candidates need to read the question: ما هو الفرق بين بناء كل من نوعي المخيمات. The key word is بناء this gets the candidate to focus on the 'difference in the structure between the two camps'. Many candidates answer was about the 'air conditioning-مكيف هواء' which is not the targeted part of the text. The correct answer is: واحد مبني من القش والثاني من الحجر/الطوب

Regarding Q09 (d), which is worth 2 marks, the vast majority of candidates scored the full 2 marks or 1 mark.

Section C

Q10- translation (7marks):

Some good performance by many candidates, with a noticeable number of candidates scoring the full 7 available marks, 6 marks or 5 marks. However, there was a number of candidates who struggled with the translation of the Arabic text into English and had their responses either incomplete, full of gaps, contained response irrelevant to the stimulus or blank.

Conclusion and advice:

- As mentioned in the introduction, the exam paper will cover all themes and topics and this means that **candidates should be familiar with these themes/topics**.
- Candidates should be **very familiar with the vocabulary list** available in the specification. Candidates at Higher Tier should be

familiar with both foundation and higher tiers vocabulary, as all questions will contain these words, sometimes act as the 'key word' in the question or the answer, which becomes critical to giving the correct answer.

- As expected, candidates performed better in multiple choice questions compared to open response questions. More emphasis should be put on practising and familiarising candidates with techniques on how to answer an open response type of questions.
- To avoid losing marks, candidates should be made aware of the techniques of answering the multiple choice questions, i.e. cross only the number of answers they were asked in the rubric. For example Q06a, candidates need to look for 3 options for the answer and not to cross less or more than the required.
- Candidates need to have structured tuition on translating short Arabic texts into English. Candidates have 7 marks available for the translation question.
- **It is very important for candidates to be very familiar with the structure of the question paper, this can be achieved through practising past papers.**
- **Candidates need to be sitting mock tests well ahead of the formal exam. This is strongly advisable to establish strengths and weaknesses/gaps and work on those with their teacher.**
- **Candidates should be made aware that there are literary text based questions (Q02 and Q04). These literary texts are from published literary sources, such as novels, stories etc.**