

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE Chinese (5CN03) Paper 3H

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June 2011

Publications Code UG027600

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Reading and Understanding in Chinese

This is the new syllabus paper to test candidates' reading comprehension through a variety of texts which included an invitation, description of different careers, short passages on everyday events, description of different methods of transport, questions on a CV, matching problems experienced with possible solutions and questions on a short passage.

The paper is targeted at candidates with a higher level of understanding of the Chinese language and takes the form of selecting the right answers to multiple choice questions, matching texts to pictures, filling in blanks and, for the last question, answering comprehension on a passage in English.

Q1 required candidates to respond to question on an invitation. Candidates generally performed well on this question.

Q2, where candidates were asked to match activities to a description, was more challenging. Recognition of the roles of a "journalist" and "teacher" proved the most challenging component of this question which served to differentiate the stronger performing candidates.

Q3 and Q4 were well handled by most candidates.

Q5 proved to be one of the more challenging questions in the paper for all candidates particularly part (i) and part (v).

Strong candidates generally performed well in Q6, where the ability to determine "aeroplane" and "bus" from the descriptions provided served to differentiate candidates with a basic ability.

Q7 was again well handled by most candidates.

Performance in Q8 was varied. While parts (d), (e) and (f) generally elicited good response from candidates – particularly the more able candidates – parts (b), (c) and (g) were more challenging. Part (a) was also managed well by the majority of candidates, but a number of candidates appeared to be confused by the year in Chinese and responded with dates such as 1856. In relation to part (c) many candidates failed to include "more than" in their answer, so changing the meaning from that written in the passage. In response to part (g) a range of answers were given, some quite creative. It is also worth noting that the question asked candidates explicitly for two details however the majority of candidates provided three responses. It is important to actually answer in line with the rubric. Some candidates also translated the whole paragraph rather than provide "details" as requested.

Overall candidates performed well, exhibiting a good level of reading comprehension.

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The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

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Order Code UG027600 June 2011

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