

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in Chinese (5CN04/01)
Paper 1: Writing in Chinese

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Publications Code UG038399*

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GCSE Chinese
Unit 4 Writing in Chinese
Examiner Report

Candidates are required to produce 2 essays of 100-150 characters each under supervised exam conditions in two 45 min to 1-hr sessions. They are given a choice of 4 themes and topics. Candidates and their teacher can negotiate and choose from the tasks suggested by Edexcel on the four prescribed themes. Centres can also devise their own task and/or theme as well. Candidates can have up to two weeks preparation time and 6 hours of guidance from the teacher before the assessment takes place.

Most centres used or adapted the Edexcel-set tasks. The most popular task/topic across all levels of ability is "Travel and tourism – task 1 : Write an email about your holidays to your Chinese friend."

Other more popular tasks/titles include:

- Sport and leisure
Task 3: My hero
Task 5: Sports day

- Travel and tourism
Task 2: About your area

- Media and culture
Task 1: live concert
Task 3: reading
Task 4: technology
Task 5: an evening of Chinese Culture

Popular topics/titles devised by Centre include

1. My family
2. My school
3. My dream job
4. My hobbies

Examiners were delighted with the evidence that an increased number of candidates attempted challenging topics such as "Write to a magazine about what young people like to read (media and culture)" and did well in general.

However, examiners also noted the following issues:

- Some essays, when attempting a familiar topic such as 'write about your holiday', tended to be pedestrian and stereotyped regarding 'communication & content'. More able candidates must learn to show some creativity and individuality in their ideas and opinions. They need to go beyond dutifully responding to the bullets as if they are answering questions without making attempts to link the piece into a whole.
- A noticeable number of candidates tended to apply the particle 'le' whenever a past action and event was mentioned regardless if it was necessary or appropriate or not.
- The excessive use of 'erization' (adding 'r' sound to syllables in spoken Chinese)

- Some candidates continued to have the problem of rote learning. Some centres were found to present similar or virtually identical essays according to a template or writing frame. Students should be advised that works that lack originality would not be awarded marks in the top band.

Word count

The majority of candidates were able to produce two pieces of essays of between 100-150 characters each. The following marking principles are applied to shorter essay :

- between 76-95 characters – mark is capped at 12 for Communication and Content
- fewer than 75 characters – mark is capped at 6 for Communication and Content

Students are also reminded that no extra marks would be awarded to the additional effort of writing over 150 characters.

The CA4 Notes Form

This is generally well used. It can include up to 30 words/50 characters. Details of guidance can be found in the Administrative Guidance.

Administration

Examiners are grateful to those centres who carried out administrative matters satisfactorily. Centres are advised regarding the following:

- Use the administrative support guide to check that all procedures are carried out correctly.
- Make sure each candidate's work is secured separately. Please use staples or paper-clips to fasten each candidate's work (putting together the CM4 duly signed by the teacher and the candidate, the task and stimuli, the CA4 notes if used, the 2 pieces of essays)
- Both the teacher and the candidate must sign the front sheet to authenticate the work; without the two signatures the marking process cannot be completed.
- Where all candidates have been given the same stimulus task, it is necessary to include this only once.
- Teachers should not mark the work in any way.

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>

