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Examiners' Report

June 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Chinese (1CN0)

Paper 3H: Reading and understanding in Chinese

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Summer 2023

Publications Code 1CN0_3H_2023_ER

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Introduction

This paper assesses the candidates' understanding of written Chinese across a range of different types of texts.

Students need to:

- identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in texts
- deduce meaning from a variety of written texts
- recognise the relationship between past, present and future events
- understand texts, organise and present relevant details, and where appropriate, draw inferences in context and recognise implicit meaning
- recognise and respond to key information, important themes and ideas in more extended written text, including authentic sources, adapted and abridged as appropriate, by being able to extract information and answer questions.

This paper has a total of 50 marks and consists of 10 questions. It comprises two sections. Candidates must answer all questions from each of the two sections. Section A has nine questions set in English. Question types comprise both multiple-response and short-answer open response questions. The instructions to candidates are in English. Section B contains one translation passage from Chinese into English. The instructions to students are in English.

The assessment is available in traditional and simplified characters. All questions and texts are printed twice, once with texts using traditional/full characters and once with texts in simplified characters. Candidates select the most appropriate version, but not both.

Four of the questions are common to both Foundation and Higher tiers.

The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

The total assessment time is 1 hour 5 minutes in length.

Overall performance

Most candidates responded very well to all questions in Section A and Section B. They were able to identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in texts; they were able to deduce meaning and recognise and respond to key information and important ideas in more extended written texts.

Question 1

This crossover question addressed the theme of Future aspirations, study and work and the topic of Work (jobs) and also appeared in the Foundation Tier paper. In questions of this nature, candidates are required to understand sections of text which may contain distractors and to identify the message as well as key points, details and opinions.

5(a) asked candidates to specify the length of training (两个星期/兩個星期) before taking up a post; 5(b) asked candidates to give one correct reason (比售货员的工作好/比售貨員的工作好 or 可以赚更多的钱/可以賺更多的錢) for applying for the post; and 5(c) asked candidates to recognise John's job plan for the future (打算做记者/打算做記者, 采访演员/採訪演員). While most candidates answered all three questions correctly, some gave a less specific answer for 5(b) and/or did not recognise the single lexical item 记者/記者 or did not correctly identify the phrase 采访演员/採訪演員.

Question 3

This literary text was a crossover question set in the Theme of Future aspirations, study and work and the topic of Ambitions, and it also appeared in the Foundation Tier paper. In this question, candidates had to recognise and respond to key information and ideas in a more extended authentic text, deducing meaning.

The success rate for 8(a), 8(b) and 8(d) were high. However, 8(c) presented some difficulty to many candidates. Some candidates wrote 'learn to speak better Chinese' or 'to improve his Chinese' while the text read "如果想学好语言, 有语言环境很重要/如果想學好語言, 有語言環境很重要". Candidates are reminded to base their answers solely on the text given.

Question 4

This crossover question addressed the theme of School and the topic of School activities (School trips), and it also appeared in the Foundation Tier paper. Candidates had to read some information about four school trips and then had to complete gap fill sentences, deciding which trip each statement applied to.

Candidates were required to identify locations, times and school subjects in order to fill in the gaps correctly. Most candidates were successful in doing so.

Question 5

This question addressed the theme of International and global dimension of Environmental issues (access to natural resources). Candidates had to read an extract from a newspaper article on natural resources, and then to answer the given questions in English. Most candidates attempted to answer all of the questions, and many candidates were successful in doing so. Candidates should be reminded that the responses do not need to be written in full

sentences and that whatever is written should be written with good English and that responses with ambiguous meaning would not be accepted.

Question 7

This question addressed the theme of Future aspirations, study and work and the topic of Work. Candidates were required to read four young people's future plans and identify appropriate names for each part of this question (a)–(d). Most candidates were successful in doing so.

For questions (e) and (f), candidates needed to answer questions on the text in English. While many candidates were able to answer question (e) correctly, many candidates were unable to recognise 旅行社 or were unable to comprehend 组织环保旅游活动/組織環保旅遊活動. With question (f), some candidates were unable to recognise the phrase 更有信心, and some gave answers which lacked in detail. For example, many students wrote 'be confident' rather than 'be more confident'.

Question 8

This question addressed the theme of School and the topic of What school is like. This question was adapted from an online article where a secondary school student talking about their school life. The performance on this question is mixed. Some candidates were more successful than others with this question. Candidates should be reminded that the responses do not need to be written in full sentences and that whatever is written should be written with good English and that responses with ambiguous meaning were not accepted.

Question 8(a) While many candidates were successful at answering this question, some candidates either did not base their responses on the given text or used poor English such as 'topper of the class' which was not awarded any mark.

Question 8(b) Many candidates were successful with this question. However, some candidates were unable to comprehend 必须学习的科目增加了/必須學習的科目增加了, and some candidates' responses lacked the necessary detail, for example, some did not give the comparison as appeared in the text 我的作业也比以前多了/我的作業也比以前多了, instead they wrote 'much homework'.

Question 8(d) Many candidates were successful with this question. However, some candidates failed to read the question carefully. The question asked 'what activity her parents had given up', and many candidates wrote 'not watching TV' – 'to give up not watching TV' has a different meaning from 'to give up watching TV', and some wrote 'TV' – TV is an object, and it is not an activity.

Question 9

This question addressed the theme of Identity and culture and the topic of Cultural life (celebrations and festivals). Candidates were required to read a young person's account of how he celebrated Dragon Boat Festival one year.

In part 9(a), candidates had to read seven statements and to choose three which were correct according to the text. Many candidates were successful in doing so. A few candidates either picked only one or two answers, and a few chose four or even five. When candidates chose more than three statements, marks were deducted accordingly.

In part 9(b) and 9(c), candidates needed to read the same text to answer the given two questions in English. Many candidates were successful with question 9(b) and correctly interpreted 因为过了这个节日就是我的生日/因為過了這個節日就是我的生日. Some candidates did not understand the phrase 过了/過了 and gave a wrong answer such as 'it is my birthday'. Some candidates misread question 9(c) and wrote down 'green'. And some candidates did not recognise the lexical item 爆竹 and wrote down 'bomb' instead.

Question 10

This translation question addressed the theme of Identity and culture. The passage contained sentences which were all set within the same theme, which included a range of tenses, structures and vocabulary assessed at Higher Tier. All the vocabulary in the translation could be found in the vocabulary list. Candidates are expected to demonstrate an ability to transfer meaning accurately into English. Many candidates achieved five or more of the seven marks available for this question.

Summary

Most entrants achieved good success. Some candidates performed significantly better than others. Based on the performance in this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure that you know the words from the vocabulary lists (Foundation and Higher) well, as most of the questions are set based on the vocabulary list included in the specification.
- Some questions require you to process the information and draw inferences, hence it is important to understand each paragraph and the entire text as a whole.
- Read the questions carefully and address the questions asked directly. The responses provided should be based solely on the given text. Meanwhile, you need to ensure that what you write clearly expresses what you intend to say. Ambiguous responses are not accepted. While you can write in full sentences, it is not recommended that you do so,

as such full sentences may contain incorrect details which negate correct answers.

- You should give only one response for a one-mark question, two responses for a two-mark question and so on. You should not use slashes / or brackets ().