

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2013

International GCSE Bengali (4BE0)
Paper 01

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Introduction

About 1027 candidates were entered for the IGCSE Bengali examination in January 2013 mostly from existing centres. The majority of candidates found the paper accessible. A good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is generally comparable with January 2012 paper.

Question 1

It is quite pleasing to see that almost all candidates were able to translate all five sentences though at varied levels where they were tested on specific grammar points. The less able candidates often struggled to transmit fully and appropriately. A little confusion occurred in some questions; they were, in 1a, some candidates translated 'stared' as 'angrily' or wide-eyes. In 1b many candidates translated, 'congratulate' as 'welcome' or 'praise' and for 'brilliant' a few only wrote, 'chomotkar', others tried to communicate in many different ways. In 1c most candidates wrote, 'bati', for light but not, 'alo'. 1d was a bit problematic, the word, 'rung' was misunderstood with, 'run' or 'bell' etc. For 1e the 'play' was translated as 'game' by many candidates. Problems also occurred with tense, spelling and punctuation.

Question 2

This was an English passage to translate into Bengali. It was a text about 'watching birds' and a morning scenario of a spring morning. Only a few able candidates could grasp most of the details. Many candidates translated 'eighth floor' as 'eighteen', 'nine' and six. The season 'spring' was translated in many terminologies/seasons. Only a handful could translate, 'jay' as 'nilkonto'. The 'lotus' was written as 'Shapla', 'Kochuripana' and 'ful'. This was misunderstood by many. A very few could transmit 'swamp'. The usage of transliteration was frequent and thus resulted in lower marks.

Question 3

This question required candidates to translate the passage into English. The theme of the text was, 'working opportunities for women in rural areas of Bangladesh'. Only some candidates could transmit the clauses like, 'The International Labour Organisation', 'Employment for Rural Women' and 'Bangladesh Agricultural Institute' correctly. Many candidates used similar words or transliteration and thus scored lower marks. The vocabulary and structure of the sentence impeded the theme of the sentences. Some candidates were not familiar with some basic food terminology like fruit juice, pop corn etc.

Question 4

All the essays are well answered. Good responses were made by most of the candidates. The majority chose the essay, 'Bengali New Year's Fair' (4c). Many candidates narrated the New Year event accurately with excellent use of complex language.

4a was attempted by fewer candidates. Factual examples with clear language were demonstrated by those candidates who chose this question.

4b indicated that candidates have a clear concept of healthy and unhealthy food.

4d was very pleasant to read. The candidates' imaginative ideas/concept with a wide range of vocabulary well structured essays which is relevant to the task.

Some responses were too ambitious but justified their opinions appropriately to the task. Overall, all the essays were good, well structured a coherent piece of writing which is pleasant to read.

Popularity of essays:

Option 4c was the most popular question and responded by the majority of the candidates. The option 4b was the least popular.

General remarks

There was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis and opinion. Unfortunately it was not evident amongst average candidates. On average, the responses were mainly descriptive. Few candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. On the other hand, candidates who fulfilled these criteria and displayed a coherent piece of writing obviously scored the top range marks.

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