



Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2024

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
In Arabic (WAA02)
Paper 01: Writing and Research

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Introduction

Students are required to draw on and apply their knowledge of Arabic language, grammar, and lexis by selecting appropriate forms of words to complete sentences, as well as demonstrate an ability to manipulate Arabic language in continuous writing.

Students will be expected to recognise and use Arabic in a variety of contexts and in relation to the following general topic areas: Youth culture and concerns, lifestyle, health and fitness, environment and travel, education and employment, technology in the Arabic-speaking world, society in the Arabic-speaking world, and ethics in the Arabic-speaking world.

Section A

Question 1

Question 1 contains a passage of 200 words in English to translate into Arabic, and most students were successful and achieved a good grade. Students generally performed well in response to the stimulus. Most learners provided an accurate translation of meaning. However typically, the more challenging words targeting higher ability learners were often mistranslated or transliterated into Arabic from the English stimulus, "The scientist who helped humans visit the moon". Generally, the English text was clear and straightforward with the standard range of challenge with the vocabulary to test the candidates' different abilities to produce a well-structured translation from the English text. Some of the challenging phrases were: (young شاب, United States of America الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية, 'sources of underground water مصادر المياه الجوفية', fiction خيالي). While many students translated the name of the subject of the piece, Dr Farouk El-Baz, incorrectly by using short and long vowels interchangeably. The handwriting was mostly clear, and some candidates used very good sentence structure and grammar. Even poor translation was sometimes able to transfer the general meaning which could be understood by a native speaker.

Section B

In the Discursive essay, students were required to write a story based on the events described in the given text which describes actions to support equality for people with disabilities in the Middle East.

This series revealed an improved balance between those who chose (a) or (b) and this was a successful question for most learners; lower ability students lost marks due to the quality of the discursive essays produced which often largely copied the stimulus (even events and names). A key skill is to be able to produce discursive essays inspired by the given text but from the learner's imagination.

Lower ability responses typically are overly reliant on the stimulus to produce their answers. Higher ability responses use the guidance to develop a creative or discursive answer targeted at the required audience or as a relevant and thoughtful story.

Question 2 (a)

Many candidates demonstrated good writing ability with imaginative content relevant to the question.

Question 2 (b)

The topic was an article type that went with the same theme of equality for people with disabilities, however, some candidates missed some points, such as mentioning clearly that the article is for a school magazine.

Section C**Question 3 (a)**

For the first of two questions on Arab science, the students were instructed to discuss the Achievements of Muhammed Al-Idrisi, together with some biographical details of the scientist's life and background.

Few students answered this question, therefore it would be beneficial to the development and progress of students to be given the opportunity to study about specific Arab scientists, instead of limiting the scope of options for candidates to just Q5 and Q6 films.

Question 3 (b)

The second question on Arab science which gives students the flexibility to write an account about the life of the first Arab aviation scientist.

One response, very well written with accuracy and showed depth of knowledge in the field up to modern era.

Question 4 (a)

The first of two essays Arab architecture and art, learners were asked to discuss Arab architecture of bridges and reflect on its cultural significance. Only a small number of candidates chose this question, and these were candidates with excellent knowledge of their heritage and how the design features contribute to this.

Question 4 (b)

The second essay question on Arab art and architecture requires students to discuss satire cartoons and their cultural significance. One response, very well written with accuracy and showed depth of knowledge and interest in the topic. There is a lack of range taught by teachers, this type of question is an excellent opportunity for cross-curricular research and inspiration for learners to explore their other interests through the medium of Arabic.

Question 5 (a)

In this section, Comedy in Arab Cinema: Candidates enjoyed answering this question in a and b. In 5(a) candidates responded in length and with depth, but only a were able to analyse the characters or to write their own opinion directly on the question for the Arabic Comedy film 'The three Work It.

Higher ability learners produced balanced essays that directly address the question, and lower ability learners almost always start the produced essays that generally summarise the film but do not answer the question. This is the most common difference between learners.

Question 5 (b)

In (5b), "A husband on demand", few candidates chose this question, and those that did failed to answer the question on the impact of poverty on the human will in the film, instead writing an irrelevant summary of the film.

Question 6 (a)

In this section, Tragedy in Arabic Cinema, students were required to evaluate the main issue raised in the film 'Wadjida".

A popular question, with a good range of writing ability and high-level analysis. It was accurate when answered directly by students. The theme about the film's challenge against oppressive behaviour to women proved of interest and with reflective use of the film in the answers.

Lower ability students typically only managed as usual to narrate the film by summarising and did not apply any critical analysis which still the lacking point in every marking series. Higher ability students responded to the focus of the question to form their essays.

Question 6 (b)

Good level of writing in the responses. Most candidates wrote about the film's story of 'Captain Abu Raed". Lower ability candidates typically only managed as usual to narrate the film by summarising and did not apply any critical analysis which still the lacking point in every marking series. Higher ability students responded to the focus of the loneliness, question to form their essays.

Question 7 (a)

Arabic poetry Nazik Al-Malaika entitled "And the sea remains for us". No learners answered this question. Each series, including this series, Q7a and Q7b are the least popular questions to be chosen. This series no learner chose the question.

Question 7 (b)

A Letter from Under Water. No students answered this question. It is a teacher's responsibility to expose students to literature and poetry as part of their Arabic International A level, they should understand the influence of 1500 years of poetry on Arabic as a language and shared culture of 22 nations.

Question 8 (a)

The Wedding of Zein: 10 students chose question 8a, Question 8a was less popular than Q8b. This is common for most learners favouring one novel over another. Higher ability learners answered the literature question with the best approaches, making references to the text and substantiating their opinion with authentic evidence.

Question 8 (b)

Arabic literature "Bamboo Stalk": It was more popular for 22 students who chose this option. Though the literature in question changes each year from the required reading list, this question elicited good quality responses from those who referenced the text accurately.

Paper Summary

General student performance was good, with similar translation skills and creativity as the last series.

Long standing errors still occur, which are due to a lack of exam techniques. Some learners still answer questions on films and novels with generalised summaries of the storylines and completely bypass the actual questions, which results in scoring low to no marks. Learners need to be given plenty of opportunity to gain experience with essay questions, and practise techniques to understand the question's requirements and plan responses.

Questions on films, especially comedy and tragedy, continue to prove popular year on year. Few students choose to answer questions on poetry, which suggests some students may not be covering the full specification.

Examiner's Advice

- Candidates should practise writing different types of essays. They should be able to differentiate between story and article writing.
- Candidates are encouraged to write a plan on the blank page.
- Candidates are encouraged to underline the keywords in the question to focus on what they were asked to write about, instead of producing a random piece of writing.
- Candidates are to be encouraged to widen their reading scope to include different topics to acquire a wealth of new Arabic vocabulary and knowledge of different styles and sentence structure.
- Candidates are encouraged to practice grammar, to use the correct tense.
- Candidates are encouraged to read the novels rather than watch the film adaptations, as they could have different details or endings which may limit their awareness and opportunities.

