

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8681/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning to those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.
- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases without changing the meaning.
- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions, requiring straightforward and specific answers. Candidates need to read the passages carefully and should answer using their own words based on the information given in the passages. No credit can be given for responses if candidates have lifted an entire unit of language unchanged from the original texts, or if they are based on candidates' general knowledge, or personal experience.
- **Question 5 (a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages, which this year dealt with the impact fame might bring on an individual. **Question 5 (b)** requires candidates to give their personal response to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience or opinion of the issues raised. Responses to **Question 5 (b)** should be personal and not a mere repetition of the materials in the given texts. The whole response for **Question 5** is to be kept to a limit of no more than 200 characters.

General comments

The quality of work produced in this year's examination was good. Most candidates showed they had a thorough understanding of the two reading passages and a high percentage of candidates offered complete and accurate answers. In general, candidates answered the questions using full sentences and it was a rarity that candidates lifted from the passages. Answers were presented clearly and, for the most part, handwriting was legible. Most candidates attempted to answer all questions.

It should be noted that marks are also available in **Question 3** and **Question 4** for Quality of Language. Whilst many candidates provided well-written responses, others gave answers in note-form or bullet points, which were fully credited for content, but may not have provided sufficient language to be placed in the higher bands in the Quality of Language category.

Candidates used a wide range of connective words in their answers and most candidates made an effort to use synonyms, or rearrange the word order when answering **Questions 3** and **4**. This ensured they were showing their own competence in writing Chinese, which is necessary to reach the higher marking bands for Quality of Language. A small number of candidates even managed to use a range of sophisticated expressions in their answer, which was impressive.

Performance on **Question 5(a)** show that this continues to be the most challenging task for many candidates. Candidates need to ensure that they read the question carefully to make sure they understand the specific focus of the task, rather than writing a general summary. Candidates can improve by working on the skills to summarise relevant specific details rather than writing on something either too general or irrelevant.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question requires candidates to identify a word from the reading passage that is synonymous with the word given in the question. The two pieces of vocabulary must be interchangeable in the context. A high level of performance was seen on this question, showing that most candidates had understood the vocabulary well and also had a solid knowledge of synonyms.

- (a) Most candidates were able to identify 获胜者 from the passage. The most common incorrect answer was 获胜.
- (b) Most candidates understood the word 逾越 and could locate the correct synonym. Those who did not have a solid understanding of the word answered with 频频, 远远 or 远远超出.
- (c) Candidates who did not gain a mark for this question commonly answered 倾诉, which although is a synonym of 诉说, is not present in passage 1. Candidates need to remember that they must locate an appropriate synonym from the text, rather than trying to generate a word themselves.
- (d) Most candidates were able to correctly find 开发 in the passage; only a few candidates gave incorrect answers such as 拓展 or 打开.
- (e) This was the best answered question with most candidates finding the target vocabulary item.

Question 2

A strong performance was seen on this question. Most candidates were aware that they need to use the structure given in the question to re-write the sentence whilst retaining the same meaning.

- (a) Candidates needed to understand which part of the sentence required emphasis in order to correctly place the structure ‘是……的’. In some cases, candidates placed 是 correctly, but did not complete the structure by writing 的 at the end of sentence, perhaps showing a lack of familiarity with the structure.
- (b) Some candidates seemed to find the 被 structure challenging, using both 把 and 被 in the same sentence, supplying answers such as, 曾有朋友把她的隐私被透露给媒体. Other examples of incorrect usage of the structure included 她的隐私曾有被朋友透露给媒体; 曾有她的隐私被朋友透露给媒体。
- (c) The structure tested in this question is one of the most commonly used structures, and the majority of candidates were able to use it confidently.

Question 3

Most candidates performed well in this question and showed that they had understood the reading passage well. In addition to the correct content, a variety of vocabulary was used in answers alongside a wide range of linking words such, 首先……其次…… 最后…; 第一, 第二…, which contributed to some high scores for Quality of Language as well as Content.

Overall, a high percentage of candidates were able to use the information from the texts to answer questions. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. It is essential that candidates take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

- (a) This question was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to include the point 自学成才 in their answer. In saying that she won the first prize, candidates needed to say 第一名 rather than 获胜 to convey the precise meaning. Some candidates mentioned 是真人秀节目的获胜者 but needed to include the key concept 第一位 to be credited with the mark. Candidates had worked hard to rephrase the wording of the text in their answers, but in doing so need to ensure that they do not lose the original meaning. The word 不寻常 was frequently rephrased, but vocabulary such as 不可思议, 奇怪 or 特殊 changed the meaning sufficiently to render answers uncreditworthy. It is important that candidates choose synonyms which fit in the context.
- (b) The majority of candidates tackled this question confidently. A small number of candidates missed the signposts in the text 意料之外, 居然 and 更没有想到的是, which cued correct answers.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Once again, a small number of candidates changed the meaning of their answers when substituting vocabulary from the text, e.g. rephrasing 沮丧 as 悲伤 or 难过 and 害怕 as 恐慌. Candidates frequently formatted their answers as bullet points for this question rather than giving a full sentence.
- (d) This question was very well answered. Correct answers clearly mentioned 有心事不敢和朋友倾诉 and 失去了交朋友的机会 to secure both marks. Others needed to include the key concept 有心事时 or 和朋友 to be credited. Some common incorrect answers were 不敢向朋友倾诉 or 不敢诉说心事.
- (e) Performance for this question was very good, with many candidates including the essential details in their answers and therefore receiving all three marks. Those who did not gain all available marks usually presented incomplete responses. Candidates should be reminded to look at the number of marks available for a question to ensure they mention the correct number of points.
- (f) In answer to this question, a few candidates gave their own interpretation of the changes, making inferences beyond what was stated in the text. Some included 米雪不再这么幼稚, which is not the same as 疯疯癫癫.

Question 4

The overall performance for this question was similar to **Question 3**. Most candidates were able to understand the information provided, demonstrating this by locating the paragraph/section in the text where the answers were found. Some candidates carefully selected the correct parts from the text to show their understanding of the questions, whilst more able candidates could show that they had fully understood larger units of meaning by producing answers using their own words.

- (a) This question required candidates to manipulate the language given in the text to provide an appropriate response, and the most able candidates handled this confidently. There was a wide range of answers and in a few cases, candidates used their own knowledge or personal experience to answer; candidates should be reminded that answers must be rooted in the information given in the text to be credited.
- (b) This was the highest performing sub-question of **Question 4**, with the majority of the candidates securing all available marks.
- (c) This question was generally well-answered. A few candidates wrote 电视节目 or 访谈节目, which was slightly ambiguous and could relate to any TV programme or even be an interview on the radio. 电视访谈节目 was needed to be credited.
- (d) This was the least well-answered question, mainly because key pieces of information were frequently omitted from responses. For example, some candidates needed to include 看演唱会 rather than just saying 花光了零花钱; others missed out 经常在 the 经常通宵达旦在粉丝圈聊天, or only wrote 逃学. Many candidates now fully understand that they should rephrase or manipulate the text when possible, and improvements in this have been evident. However, candidates also need to be careful that in their efforts to use their own words they don't stray too far from the original

meaning of the text and actually change the information, thus no longer answering the question asked. This happened a few times in response to this question, examples of which were candidates who paraphrased 花光零用钱 as 散尽家财 which changed the original meaning.

- (e) The majority of candidates performed well in this question. Those who did not secure all available marks frequently only gave two or three points in their answer, or lifted the whole sentences ‘通过了解明星, 追求更好的生活’. Candidates must remember they must not lift a whole sentence from the text, even if the answer appears in a relatively short sentence.

Please note that in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, candidates are not required to rephrase every word they take from the passages to use in their answers. Candidates may use the passages as support to retrieve some vocabulary but should not lift material from the passages indiscriminately or at length, as this does not show that they have fully understood either the passages or the questions. Although the mark scheme is presented in bullet point format, this is to show the key concepts required for each mark-bearing content point only. It is expected that candidates try to use full sentences when answering questions, as they need to show they can use more complex structures accurately to reach the highest marking band for Quality of Language.

Question 5

Many candidates were able to successfully and skilfully summarise the relevant points from both passages. The strongest candidates were able to seamlessly integrate the information from the passages into their own writing, articulating their ideas clearly and creating a natural flow. In a few cases, very able candidates did not score highly in **Question 5(a)** because they did not address the question. It is important to read the question carefully to ensure answers are focussed and relevant in order to be credited with content points.

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Candidates need to be aware that they must provide 10 distinct points from both passages according to the question asked for **part (a)** and talk about their opinions or ideas in **part (b)**, all within the word limit of 200 characters.

Question 5(b) provides candidates with the opportunity to develop their personal ideas and viewpoints on the topic covered in the texts. Many candidates showed competence in forming and delivering well thought out ideas in **part (b)**. Several candidates also successfully related their own experience either as a ‘celebrity’ or ‘fan’, which made their opinions and arguments more interesting and convincing.

In terms of Quality of Language, the majority of candidates showed they had a high level of written Chinese and were able to communicate clearly and effectively throughout. Very few exceeded the word limit this year.

All candidates would benefit from taking more care when reading the question given on the paper for **5(a)** and checking that their answers are fully focussed on that question. One useful technique is for candidates to highlight the key words from the question to ensure they are writing relevantly. For **5(b)**, candidates should try to keep their experience or opinions concise in order to allow them to express different views relating to the points from the texts. It does not matter if the opinions are positive or negative, it is more important that the candidate demonstrates their understanding of the topic discussed in the texts to give relevant responses to the question.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8681/32
Essay

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- structure the essay to ensure it is focussed and follows a logical argument
- demonstrate knowledge of advanced vocabulary relating to the topic and write grammatically accurate Chinese
- write a response that is clearly relevant and relates to the specific question as set out in the paper.

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was positive and showed they were adequately prepared to deal with material at this level. Responses were seen at both ends of the spectrum; some candidates displayed a high degree of excellence and others struggled to produce relevant and coherent responses.

It is crucial that candidates are reminded of the need to read questions with great care and fully analyse what is being asked of them. Candidates must also be encouraged to construct their answers on the specific question rather than default into a general topic area.

Good performance was characterised by strict adherence to the rubric; clear knowledge of the subject area; and the ability to articulate comprehensive responses using appropriate language. This would typically be achieved by using a logical essay structure, which flowed from start to end, showing balance and containing relevant examples culminating in a forceful conclusion. Candidates used logical structures to link the points in their argument with relevant examples and ensured that any given sentence had a purpose and was there to support a particular point. Many candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary in order to write using complex sentence structures.

Weaker responses came from candidates who seemed to misunderstand the paper's requirements or, generally, deviated from the task in hand. This sometimes occurred despite the candidate having a reasonable grip of the subject. In some cases, candidates needed to demonstrate their own views without recourse to simple anecdotal experience.

It was noticeable again this year that where candidates had gaps in their vocabulary, they frequently resorted to using a hybrid of Chinese characters with pinyin or even English. In such situations, candidates should be encouraged to modify what they want to say and use alternative vocabulary which they are confident in using and that they know how to write correctly in Chinese. Some candidates also needed a greater awareness of basic grammar, like the use of 的, 地, 得. Others combined two sentences without checking the accuracy of the grammar.

Improvements could be made by addressing the below areas:

- Punctuation: some candidates used minimal or no punctuation, which led to some unwieldy chunks of text. It is important that candidates do not neglect this fundamental area while attempting to formulate their exam responses.
- Taking adequate time to understand the exam requirements: candidates can be prone to misreading and/or misunderstanding questions set out in papers. Taking time to absorb the requirements as set out in the rubric will counter this and ensure time isn't wasted writing something that is not relevant.
- Formatting: some candidates still need to adhere to a basic essay structure, which includes an introduction, main body and conclusion.

- Subjectivity: some candidates relied heavily on personal experience rather than setting out more complex social issues and showing a deep understanding of the topic. Answers need to be detailed, relevant and well illustrated, containing well-structured arguments to reach the highest marking bands. In order to achieve this, candidates need to include detailed explanations and logical structures to link the points into a valid argument using relevant examples.

Question 1 人与人之间

你怎样理解“良药苦口利于病；忠言逆耳利于行”？

This was one of the more popular questions this year. Most students were able to articulate an understanding of the famous Chinese proverb, ‘A bitter medicine cures the disease and unpalatable advice benefits behaviour’. Stronger candidates were not only able to show a clear opinion with detailed explanations and coherent argument, but also provided relevant examples to support their stance. Some candidates only talked about the definition of the proverb at a superficial level, and needed to include more detailed and in-depth discussion to achieve the highest band.

Question 2 法制

服刑的犯人是否应该拥有政治权利？请讨论。

Fewer candidates chose to answer this question. However, those that did were generally able to provide a strong argument about whether prisoners serving a sentence have a political right or not – which included relevant examples to bolster the point. Weaker responses tended to lack the latter.

Question 3 工作和休闲

收入的高低决定我们就业的选择。你怎么看？

A large number of candidates opted for this question. The majority of those agreed that the pay scale determined the employment options. Strong candidates were able to analyse and explain the reasons why the pay scale plays, or does not play, the prime part in choosing a job, e.g. for a better future and/or quality of life; or genuine interest/ability should be the first consideration, and so on. This included detailed, clearly relevant and well-illustrated examples as well as coherently argued and structured prose. Weaker responses tended to merely focus on the topic of work and leisure rather than examine the question in any great depth, or offer any real insight.

Question 4 战争与和平

如果我们没有国界，就不会有矛盾与战争。请讨论。

This was another well-tackled question, in spite of the fact it was chosen by a small number of candidates. The best responses showed careful analysis of the question coupled with strong arguments on why if there were no state borders there would be no conflicts or wars. A small number of responses were not supported by good examples, or simply lost focus on the key theme meaning no coherent argument was formed.

Question 5 污染

对改善空气质量来说，禁止燃放烟花爆竹并不是个有效的办法。你怎么看？

This proved to be the most popular question this year. Most candidates were able to show good knowledge around the topic of banning fireworks and firecrackers as a non-effective way to improve air quality, e.g. by using comparisons to automobile exhaust fumes and general industrial pollution. On the other hand, some candidates still managed to handle the task competently using a counter argument, e.g. fireworks and firecrackers cause a sudden increase in PM2.5 concentration and/or produce toxic and harmful gases such as sulphur dioxide, nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide, etc. Other responses showed good knowledge about the

impact of air pollution on the environment, but then lacked sufficient detail or complexity when it came to setting out arguments for banning fireworks.