



*Let the mind manage the bod  
Que l'esprit gère le corps*

**MAURITIUS  
EXAMINATIONS  
SYNDICATE**

**NCE 2020-2021  
GRADE 9  
Arabic**

Subject code: N660

***EXAMINERS' REPORT***

April 2022

## **Introduction**

2021 saw the introduction of the first National Certificate of Education (NCE) Assessment which is held at the end of the Nine- Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE) cycle. This assessment is in line with the philosophy defined in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) Grades 7,8 and 9 and the learning outcomes spelt out in the Teaching and Learning Syllabus produced by the MIE.

The NCE assessment assessed the proficiency of candidates in reading, writing, grammar & use of Arabic and translation. The different linguistic competencies are divided as follows:

- Reading (25%)
- Writing (25%)
- Grammar and Use of Arabic (40%)
- Translation (10%)

A particular feature of the assessment is that each competency is assessed at different levels, ensuring greater fairness by giving candidates a better chance to show their achievement levels.

## **Key messages**

- Candidates are advised to read widely to build up their vocabulary in Arabic.
- Candidates should read instructions attentively.
- Candidates need to be acquainted with grammatical terms in Arabic.
- In grammar, candidates are still struggling with the following:
  - Verb-Subject Agreement, Subject-Predicate Agreement, Noun-Adjective Agreement
  - Relative pronoun and its agreement in the relative clause
  - Exclamatory sentences and their punctuation
  - Transforming declarative sentences into interrogatives and negatives properly
  - Correct use of the subjunctive mood.
- In Reading comprehension,
  - candidates fare better on questions requiring literal understanding
  - candidates struggle with questions assessing higher-order reading skills like making inferences, offering personal responses and guessing the meaning of words in context.
- In Writing,
  - candidates should pay closer attention to their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
  - Narrative essays require candidates to develop a storyline and use varied sentence structures and a wide range of vocabulary to sustain the reader's interest.

- Descriptive essays require candidates to show a very wide range of vocabulary to create an atmosphere. Far too often narrative essays were produced instead of descriptive ones.
- In translation,
  - candidates generally fared well when finding the appropriate vocabulary for translation
  - applying grammatical rules to the translation proved to be challenging to most.

### **General Comments**

The performance of candidates on the whole was below expectations with a pass rate of 66%. Less than 1% of candidates scored an Aggregate 1, while nearly 25% of them scored an Aggregate 6 and 30% of them scored an Aggregate 5. This suggests that the great majority of candidates were able to acquire only the essential skills in reading, writing and grammar & use of the language.

While these findings are not so encouraging in terms of quantity, it is also worth highlighting that many candidates performed quite well on the basic tasks and at times on the intermediate ones across the competencies being assessed. However, for the higher order skills of extended reading and writing, a lot of improvement is warranted.

In vocabulary, tasks assessing knowledge and application of basic, everyday vocabulary were quite satisfactorily done by a good number of candidates. For an important number of candidates, however, showing understanding of and using less common vocabulary remains a challenge. This was particularly visible in the vocabulary question of the extended reading task (Question 8, Item 13), where the performance of candidates was disappointing.

Writing for its part, continues to be the most challenging skill for most of our students. The writing task highlighted the difficulties candidates often have with writing – the influence of the syntax of other languages; inability to produce a simple sentence structure properly; difficulties with the application of grammar etc... writing compositions creatively, using a rich and varied vocabulary in grammatically accurate Arabic and showing an ability to use a variety of sentence types, continues to be the hallmark of the very best candidates only.

On the whole, candidates wrote narrative essays better than they did descriptive essays. Descriptive essays often quickly turned into narratives and many candidates often did not have the range and depth of vocabulary to offer high quality descriptions.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Question 1 – Basic Grammar

Question 1 tests a range of basic grammatical items. It uses multiple-choice items and open-ended questions to assess candidates' ability to deal with basic but essential grammatical items at this level. In this assessment session, the following grammatical points were assessed through multiple choice: Noun-Adjective agreement, Diacritic mark for Subject, Pronouns (detached and relative), *Idhafa* structure (possessive), Verb-Subject Agreement, *Kana* and its equivalents, *Inna* and its equivalents and exclamatory sentence. Items tested through open ended were Predicate, Preposition, Transformation of sentence into Masculine form, Negative form and Interrogative form, verb tenses (Imperfect).

The best-done items in part A were those dealing with:

Item 1 (Noun-Adjective agreement)

هذه فرصة سعيدة.

Item 2 (Relative Pronoun agreement)

القلم الذي في الحقيبة لأحمد.

Item 3 (Diacritic mark)

دخل المدير مكتبه.

Item 5 (Personal Pronoun)

الولدان المجتهدان، هما في الصف الرابع.

Item 8 (Verb-Subject Agreement)

يفحص الأطباء جميع أهل القرية.

The following items were found challenging by a significant number of candidates:

Item 4

ذهبت إلى طبيب الأسنان

This item tested candidates' ability to deal with the *Idhafa* structure (possessive). Even though this structure is very common. Many candidates could not find the correct diacritic which is here the sound *i* (◌ِ).

Item 6

ليس الجو حارًا

Auxiliary verbs (*Kana* and its equivalents) are frequently used by candidates. However, the challenge remains that the verb *laisa* (ليس) is not often used by candidates compared to *kana* (كان). Candidates should have chosen the predicate of *laisa* (ليس) in the accusative form ending with double vowel *fatha* (◌ًا) here.

Item 7

إنَّ العمالَ حاضرون اليوم

This item tested Quasi-Verbs (*Inna* and its equivalents) which are the opposite of *Kana* and its equivalents in terms of application of its grammar. Candidates weren't able to find the correct diacritic which ends with the word despite the fact that the particle *Inna* (إنَّ) is commonly used.

Item 9

الجملة التعجبية: ما أجمل السماء!

This item was very challenging for a significant number of candidates. Very few were able to understand what an exclamatory sentence is. Had they known the meaning, they would have definitely found the answer since the sentence ended with an exclamation mark. Many candidates wrongly chose the interrogative sentence as an answer.

Candidates fared well in the following items in part B:

Item 10 (Subject-Predicate Agreement)

السيارة جميلة/جديدة/كبيرة/صغيرة/قديمة/حمراء

Item 11 (Preposition)

أذهب إلى المدرسة بالحافلة.

Item 12 (Transformation of sentence into masculine)

المعلم غائب.

Candidates had greater difficulty with the following items:

Item 13

لا يشرب الطفل الحليب

Although there are different ways to transform a sentence into negative form in Arabic, candidates should pay heed to the tense of the verb in order to use the correct negative form. It seems that candidates were not aware of the meaning of negative in Arabic. Among the wrong answers, candidates transformed the sentence into feminine form.

Item 14

يشترى والدي هدية لي

This item tested the imperfect tense (Indicative). Candidates were asked to change the given verb from the past tense to the imperfect tense (Indicative). However, many candidates had difficulty in finding the correct answer, possibly to their lack of familiarity with the Arabic instruction given.

Item 15

هل أخذت القلم من المقلمة؟/ أخذت القلم من المقلمة؟/ متى أخذت القلم من المقلمة؟

Another challenging item where a majority of candidates didn't understand the instruction. It appeared that they were not aware of what an interrogative sentence is. Some students transformed the sentence into either the imperative form or the feminine.

Examiners would like to draw the attention of candidates to the importance of indicating their answers clearly when making corrections to their answers in the MCQs. Very often, when crossing out an answer and choosing another one, they do not indicate their answer clearly enough.

Candidates are therefore encouraged to write out their answers clearly in the space available to them if this happens.

Educators would be well advised to better prepare students for this question which could be multiple choice items, matching, fill in the blanks, ticking the right option and open-ended items. Moreover, students need to be acquainted with instructions and grammatical terms in Arabic so that they may better answer the question. Educators are further advised to consult the Teaching and Learning syllabus to better prepare students on the grammar and sentence structure items found in this question.

### Question 2 – Basic Vocabulary

The basic aim of this question is to assess candidates' knowledge of common basic vocabulary in context in Arabic, through multiple choice items. On the whole, this question was more or less within the range of most candidates.

The best-done items were:

Item 1 لا أستطيع أن أشتري شيئاً. لقد نسيت النقود في البيت.

Item 5 سأل المعلم: "لماذا لم تكتب واجباتك المنزلية؟".

The following items proved to be problematic for many candidates:

Item 2 سيارة أبي وسخة. يجب عليه أن يغسلها.

The word *dirty* might have hindered candidates' understanding of the sentence. Hence, they could not choose the correct answer which was *wash*.

Item 3 سارة بنت هادئة جداً. لا تتكلم أبداً في الفصل.

Candidates wrongly answered this item possibly due to the fact that they could not understand the word *calm*.

Item 4 كانت الأم قلقة لأن أخي كان في المستشفى.

Many candidates find the distractors hard to understand, for instance the words *worried*, *proud* and *shy*.

Educators are advised to encourage the practice of vocabulary-based questions in context and focus on common and day to day vocabulary.

### Question 3 – Basic Reading Comprehension

Question 3 assesses reading comprehension at a basic level, in particular the ability to locate information. Candidates were required to read two short texts; one a letter about a birthday and the second one a poster on sports day and show understanding by locating explicit information from the given texts. The performance was encouraging with most candidates showing that the fundamental reading skill of literal understanding had been acquired.

While most candidates performed well, few who resorted to indiscriminate lifting were penalised. In this kind of task, the importance of brief and accurate answers cannot be over-emphasised.

Most items were generally well answered by candidates. The following items were less well done:

Part A:

Item 2 and 3                      أول مكان الزيارة....                      مكان الغداء....

A few candidates were confused between the first place of visit and the place where they had lunch. They interchanged *Chamarel* and *Blue Bay*.

Part B:

Item 4                      في أي ساعة يبدأ الحدث؟

The expected answer was the time it begins. Candidates who put both the beginning and ending time were penalised.

Item 5                      ما ثمن تذكرة الدخول؟

Some candidates lost marks by the indiscriminate lifting of the sentence *Rs 50 and lunch and a bottle of water will be given to you*.

It is worth reminding Educators that examination technique is an important component in this question. It is important for candidates to provide brief and accurate answers. Resorting to lifting of entire chunks of text is unlikely to be rewarding to candidates.

### Question 4 – Word Formation

This question assessed candidates' knowledge and ability to apply word formation rules in Arabic in context. A short passage was set, with words needing transformation given in brackets. Although the transformations required were from common words, candidates performed poorly on this question. Candidates lost marks for grammatical and spelling mistakes even if they struggled to find the correct word formation.

Item 1 أرادت زينب مشاهدة التليفزيون قبل النوم.

This item tested the transformation of a verb to its verbal noun which is a very common transformation. However, a big proportion of candidates' answers was spoiled by over correcting and giving المشاهدة/تشاهد as an answer.

Item 2 وفجأة سمعت صوتا في المطبخ/ مطبخ.

The transformation of المطبخ was expected here, although مطبخ was also an acceptable answer. This item did not really pose difficulty to candidates.

Item 3 وكانت النافذة مفتوحة.

For item 3, candidates were required to transform the verb into the past participle. Among the wrong answers were فاتحة/مفتاح/فتح. While some candidates struggled to find the correct answer, the latter were not given credit due to lack of agreement of the feminine form for instance مفتوح/ مفتوحا.

Item 4 ثم أخذت المكنسة/مكنسة.

The noun of instrument was required here. Many candidates wrote مكنس/كنيس/أكنسة as answers. Educators would be well advised to give due attention to the different types of noun formation in Arabic in their teaching.

Item 5 أنت فتاة مهذبة وأنا أحبك كثيرا.

In item 5, the transformation of the verb (كثر) into the substitute of absolute object (كثيرا) was required. Many candidates wrote كثر/ كثيرن. They were not awarded marks due to spelling mistakes.

Educators are reminded that despite the fact that candidates have to apply transformational rules to words in context, it remains that those words should be grammatically correct and free from spelling mistakes. Usually words which are tested are common and known to students' immediate environment.

### Question 5 – Error Hunt

Question 5 assesses candidates' ability to deal with grammar and spelling in context. A short text containing grammatical and spelling mistakes was set. The mistakes were already identified (through underlining) and candidates were required to correct them.

The overall performance was not very encouraging although the grammatical items tested were relatively basic.

Item 1 ليزورَ حديقة الحيوانات

This item assessed whether candidates would be able to identify which tense is required in the given context and what would be the correct verb form for this tense. The knowledge of the moods of the



Imperfect (the subjunctive) with the subject-verb agreement (يزوروا) was required here. Candidates could not spot the mistake properly since some of them change the mood of the imperfect to the jussive form.

Item 2 الأسد والحمل والحصان

This item tested the knowledge of the spelling of the word (حمل). Although a relatively common work in Arabic, the majority of candidates had trouble finding the correct spelling. This highlights another common difficulty for many candidates – familiarity with common vocabulary items.

Item 3 والبيغاء والبلبل والطاؤس

This was the worst done item in the question, with many candidates failing to find the correct spelling of the word الطاؤس. Educators are advised to explain to students that this exercise does not only deal with grammatical mistakes but with spelling mistakes as well.

Item 4 أنا نحب الأسد

Item 4 assessed knowledge of subject -verb agreement, a basic but essential rule of Arabic grammar. The expected answer was أحب. On the whole, this was satisfactorily attempted.

Item 5 الصديق الثالثة

The masculine form of the adjective الثالث was required for item 5 and it was satisfactorily done.

Educators are well advised to give sufficient practice to candidates in terms of application of grammatical rules in context. This will also help them in their writing skill.

### Question 6 – Cloze Text

This question is a higher order reading task assessing the use of language which requires the ability to rely on the context to guess the suitable word to fill in the gaps. Thus, to be able to work out this question, candidates need to have a substantial grasp of receptive and productive vocabulary.

This year, the passage set was on a greedy dog who doesn't want to share his piece of meat.

In **Part A**, words had been given from which candidates had to choose the appropriate word to complete the text. This part was satisfactorily tackled by the candidates. However, a small number of candidates got confused with item 1 and 4. It seemed that they didn't grasp the gist of the story. Educators are advised to draw the attention of the candidates to the fact that there is one extra word given.

The best-done items were:

Item 2 ما أراد الكلاب الأخرى أن تسرق قطعة اللحم

Item 3 وصل إلى الجسر

Item 4 نظر إلى النهر

Some candidates found these items challenging:

Item 1 فأخذها سريعا

It seemed that candidates could not fill in the gap with the adverb required due to their lack of understanding of the sentence.

Item 5 رأى كلبا آخر ينظر إليه

In this item, candidates were not able to find the proper word although it was clear that آخر was the only plausible answer.

**Part B** is a higher order reading task which assesses candidates' overall knowledge of language (grammar, syntax and vocabulary). It requires candidates to use the given context and draw on their linguistic knowledge to make educated guesses of what word might be suitable in the given gaps. Several candidates struggled to find the missing words. Many did not have the required vocabulary to provide plausible answers to the gaps provided. Others provided answers which did not do justice to the overall context of the passage. The overall performance on this part was very poor.

Item 1 لم يكن يعرف/يعلم/يدرك أنه لا يوجد

This item was found to be difficult, maybe due to the sentence structure which was not within the grasp of the candidates. A verb in the imperfect was required here. Candidates who were able to find the correct verb but put it in the past tense were not awarded marks. Acceptable answers included:

يدري/يفهم/يصدق

Item 2 فقفز/نزل في الماء

More answers which were given credit were, inter alia دخل/سبح/وثب. Some candidates were penalised by using the present tense instead of the past tense.

Common wrong answers were ذهب / لعب/ رأى/ أين, which did not fit in the structure.

Item 3 وتعجب الكلب عندما لم ير كلبا آخر

Candidates had to draw on their own knowledge to provide a plausible answer.

Frequent wrong answers included: هناك/ هذا/ أين which were implausible in the given context.

Item 4 سقطت/وقعت قطعة اللحم من فمه

Due to candidates' lack of understanding, they were not able to find the appropriate word to fill in the gap. As for those who tried to find the word, they were not able to score marks due to grammatical mistakes. Among the wrong answer were: وصل/ حدث which did not fit in.

Item 5      والكلب خرج من الماء

A wide array of words was accepted هو/ أخيرًا/ سريعًا.

Common wrong answers included: بعد ذلك/ بعد قليل/ في النهاية. These answers were not acceptable due to the fact that they were two words. Candidates should pay heed to the instruction given in the question.

### Question 7 – Functional Writing

Question 7 is the basic writing task, with candidates required to write a short text of 50 -75 words on a functional task. They are essentially assessed on their ability to write using accurate G/S/P and showing good awareness of the audience and purpose. Given the word limit, candidates were not expected to elaborate on the given points but simply to address them clearly.

This year's topic was about an interesting place you visited. Four points were given to guide candidates through their writing.

The overall performance on this question was below average. Many candidates tried to write something while others chose not to attempt the question at all. However, a handful of candidates produced very good piece of writing which is encouraging.

It is worth highlighting that candidates are not expected to use sophisticated vocabulary nor complex sentence structures. Candidates are assessed on their ability to complete the task properly in a clear and simple Arabic with an accurate use of grammatical and spelling.

Educators are reminded that examiners will be looking at the following criteria when assessing functional writing:

- Awareness of audience and purpose
- Points addressed correctly
- Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation and Syntax accurate
- Accurate and appropriate vocabulary
- Organisation and coherence

The linguistic challenges that remain are:

- The coherence of tenses
- Subject-verb agreement
- Spelling and punctuation
- The use of attached pronouns, verbs and adjectives
- Application of the definite article with 'idhafa phrases'
- The use of incorrect prepositions after verbs

Another pertinent issue noted was the unnecessary use of lengthy introductory forms of greeting and pleasantries

The following samples of the letter illustrate the range of answers obtained this year. They are provided to give Educators an idea of standards and of examiners' expectations. Each letter is provided with comments to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the writing.

### Functional Writing 1

السلام عليكم وهمتلاه و بركلت. كيف حالك؟ أنا بحير والحمد لله. انا أذهبت إلى مكان في العطلة زواج. لأن وجدت ممتعا عن ذلك المكان. فعلت لأن المكان جميلا جدا. تظن أن صديقك الحلوا سأحب هذا المكان.

It is clear from this writing that it is irrelevant and meaningless. This piece of writing could not score any marks.

### Functional Writing 2

أسلام عليكم وردة  
كيف هالك، اليوم، اليوم أنا أقرر أن تكتب الرسالة لأقل أن أذهب إلى السوق مع الأب ليشتري الخضر والفاكهة.  
أوجد كثير الناس أن فعل "shopping" والتجار يبيع الخضر. هناك أكل "دال بري" وأشرب "ألودة" ولعب في  
الحديقة الذي يطع أمام السوق "بوت لويس". أعرف أن تحب لتذهب هناك ليوجد الخضر الذي أخضر. أسلام  
عليك!

This writing is relevant, with some attempt at addressing the points briefly. However, there are numerous linguistic weaknesses in it. There are countless grammatical mistakes with verbs wrongly conjugated most of the time. The linguistic weakness mean that this writing can only score very low marks.

### Functional Writing 3

أتمنى لك صحة مفيدة وأهلك أن أخبرك أن زرت حديقة بلميموس التي تقع في الشمال موريشيوس. هي مكانا ممتعا وهي جميلة وواسعة أيضا. وجدت حيوانات ألونها مختلفة والحديقة هي أماكن مشهورة لسياح في هماكن. تناول الغداء مثل البرياني والمشارب العزيزة. لعبنا وشاهدنا من كل أماكن مختلفة وهي حديقة واسعة جدا. هناك تركنا الحديقة نحو الساعة السادسة مساء لنرجع إلى بيتنا. أنا أظنك أن تزور أيضا الحديقة لأنها كل من الممكن المفضلة.

In this piece of writing most of the points have been addressed. The linguistic aspects, are accurate enough but errors are noticeable. The vocabulary is almost accurate and simple. Some coherence is noted in the flow of ideas. This writing, despite the effort of being relevant can only stay in the mid-table range, although the potential to score higher was present.

### Functional Writing 4

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته. أتمنى أن تكون بخير وعافية وأن كل شي على ما يرام. أما أنا فأتمتع بصحة جيدة ووالدي أيضا في أتم الصحة. أكتب هذه الرسالة لأخبرك عن مكان ممتع الذي زرت وامن المكان هو حديقة بلميموس. هناك رأيت أسماك ألوان مختلفة وأزهارا أيضا. فوجئ هذا المكان. كان هناك النهور جميلة أيضا. زرنا كل القسم من الأول إلى الآخر. رأيت أيضا بعض الطيور مثل البيغاء ورأيت الملك الغابة الأسد. أنصح أن تزور هذا المكان. سأراك جمال الحديقة. انتهى أن أكتب الآن.

Functional writing 4 is a good piece of writing. The candidate showed an awareness of audience and purpose. Most of the points were developed. The linguistic aspects were essentially accurate but occasional slips are apparent. As far as the vocabulary is concerned, it is accurate. This piece of writing is organized but did not deserve a very high mark.

## Functional writing 5

عزيري محمد

السلام عليكم. أتمنى أن تكون في أتم الصحة. اكتب هذه الرسالة لأخبرك عن مكان ممتع زرتة في يوم السبت الماضي. ذهبت إلى حديقة الحيوانات والطيور في جنوب الجزيرة، اسمها "كيوكيو". وجدت هذه الحديقة ممتعة جدا لأن فيها حيوانات كثيرة ومختلفة، مثل الأسد والحصان والطيور مثل الببغاء والطاؤوس. استمعت إلى البلبل يغرد بصوت جميل. ثم زرت الأسد ومشيت معه. كنت خائفة جدا. أظن أنك ستحب هذا المكان لأنك تحب الحيوانات وأنت ستعلم أشياء كثيرة عن الحيوانات لتكتب كتابك عنها. أتمنى ان تزور هذه الحديقة في العطلة الصيفية. عليّ أن أنتهي هذه الرسالة هنا. فإلى اللقاء.

صديقك زينب

This functional writing scored very highly. From the outset, it is obvious that the candidate has a clear awareness of audience and purpose. The candidate was able to developed all required points bringing a lot of details to the writing. The grammar and spelling are very accurate and the vocabulary is appropriate. This organized and coherent piece of writing deserved a very high mark.

### Question 8 – Extended Reading Comprehension

The main purpose of an Extended Reading Comprehension task is to assess comprehension skills in a more varied way and at different levels. Candidates were assessed, inter alia, on their ability to locate explicit information, make inferences, synthesise information, explain the meaning of words as used in the given context, follow the chronology of events, identify main ideas and offer personal response.

This year, a short narrative passage about the danger of elephants directing themselves towards a village was set.

The overall performance of candidates on this question was below average. A good proportion of candidates didn't understand the gist of the story and hence they didn't tackle this question while others answered the question partly. A very small number of candidates satisfactorily answered this question. It is worth highlighting that a vast majority of candidates was not able to answer the question that dealt with vocabulary in context.

Candidates are reminded of the following:

- Lifting is acceptable if the question does not ask candidates to answer in their own words, but must not contain excess information.
- Excess information in an otherwise correct answer is not given credit.
- Grammatical and spelling mistakes are not penalised if evidence of understanding is clearly shown.

The best-done items were:

- Item 1: ليبحث عن الخشب  
Item 5: لأنهم مشوا في الغابة لوقت طويل  
Item 7: ليرى هل الأفيال تأتي  
Item 8: حتى تنصرف الحيوانات  
Item 11: لأن أحمد لم يضر الفيل الصغير

The following items were found challenging:

- Item 2: أن هناك خطرا

Candidates couldn't locate the answer in the passage though the answer was direct. Among the wrong answers were أصبح الصوت يرتفع أعلى فأعلى.

- Item 3: مجموعة من الأفيال تأتي إلى جهة القرية

Among the unacceptable answers were رأى رجالا يجرون في كل الاتجاهات ومع كل واحد منهم عصا. This shows that candidates were not able to understand what problem villagers faced.

- Item 4: ليدافع عن نفسه/ ليدفع الأفيال بعيدا عن القرية

This item required a personal response which candidates might not have being trained to answer. Educators are advised to give students more practice on this type of questions.

- Item 6: أن يرجع إلى البيت

Among the wrong answers were الرجال رفضوا واستمروا في المشي. This question was preceded by a statement from the passage. It appeared that candidates didn't understand it. Hence, they were not able to find the correct answer.

- Item 9: أن الفيل الصغير يهاجم على أحمد

This item started by a sentence which was followed by a question. Candidates had to understand the sentence and at the same time to say why the father of Ahmad was worried. Candidates struggled to find the suitable answer.

Item 10: أنه صفر صغيرا قويا

Although this question was quite direct, candidates were not able to answer it properly. Among the wrong answers were خاف الفيل الصغير من الضجة العالية.

Item 12: لأنه استطاع أن يمنع الأفيال من الدخول في القرية

This was one of the most challenging items where candidates had to make an inference. The performance on this item was poor. Many candidates lifted the whole last sentence of the passage as answer رفعه الرجال وحملوه على أكتافهم طول الطريق إلى القرية وهم يهتفون ويغنون أحمد بطبنا. This was not awarded any marks.

Item 13:

This was another challenging item in this question. Candidates were not able to figure out the meaning of vocabulary in context. This clearly indicates that candidates should read more and need greater practice with vocabulary in context.

Candidates had the choice of choosing 3 vocabulary items out of the five given. Below are the expected answers for each item.

- i أدرك: علم/ عرف/ فهم
- ii عالية: مرتفعة
- iii صرخ: صاح/ نادى
- iv متجهة: ذاهبة إلى
- v انصرفت: غادرت/ تركت

## Question 9 - Translation

### Part A

This question assesses candidates' ability to translate common English words into Arabic. The overall performance was quite satisfactory on this question.

Among the best-done items were:

- Item 1 ساعة
- Item 4 لذيذ

Candidates however, struggled with the following items:

Item 2 مكتبة

Among the wrong answers were مكتبة / غرفة المكتب/ مكاتب. Candidates should be made aware that there is a difference between مكتبة which is a library and مكتب , a desk.



Item 3 رقص

This was one of the most challenging items in this question. Among answers that were not given any credits were نشد/ دانس/ قفز. However, يرقص was an acceptable answer.

Item 5 أحياناً/ بعض الأحيان

This item was poorly done. Although being a common adverb, candidates couldn't figure out its translation. Among answers that were not given credits are في وقت/ كعادة/ من حين إلى آخر.

The attention of educators is drawn to the fact that spelling mistakes are penalised, for instance wrong spelling of words ساع/سعة/لزيز/شحي.

### Part B

This question assesses candidates' ability to translate a short paragraph from English into Arabic. Candidates performed averagely on this question although the text was within the range of all the candidates.

Item 1 ذات يوم ذهب سمير ليصيد/يصطاد الأسماك

A good number of candidates were able to find the translation of the words for this item. However, they lost marks due to grammatical mistakes or spelling mistakes such as لصياد/ أن يصيد. While on the other hand, a few were not able to find the correct translation for *went fishing*. Among the wrong answers were ليبحث عن السمك.

Item 2 وجد مكاناً جميلاً قريباً من البحر

In this item many candidates were not able to apply the grammatical rule of the accusative. A small number had difficulty with the agreement of noun and adjective.

Item 3 بدأ يصيد

Candidates were not given credit for بدأ أن يصيد. However, on the whole this item was satisfactorily done as the word fishing had already been mentioned earlier.

Item 4 بعد مدة، اصطاد سمكة كبيرة

Among the wrong translations were السمكة الكبيرة/ السمكة كبيرة. The verb '*caught*' was wrongly translated by a vast number of candidates. Among the wrong answers were قدم/ضرب.

Item 5 رجع إلى البيت مسروراً

This item was satisfactorily done by a large number of candidates.

Educators are well advised to train students to apply grammatical rules in translation. This will also help them with their writing skills.

### **Question 10 – Extended Writing**

This question assesses candidates' ability to produce an extended piece of writing around 150 words. They were required to write one composition out of a choice of a narrative or a descriptive topic.

In this year's session, candidates were given the choice to either describe a specific event in their school or to write a narrative essay which comprised the following sentence *"they looked at each other but they didn't talk"*.

Performance on this question was, on the whole, below average. Many candidates did not attempt the question while others tried to write something. A small number of candidates, from the higher ability groups lacked ambition and they seemed content with writing the minimum required. In addition, they lacked the use of varied and sophisticated vocabulary, accurate grammar and spelling and a lack of variety of sentence structures.

Educators are reminded that examiners will be looking at the following criteria when assessing extended writing:

- Elaboration of content
- Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation and Syntax accurate
- Accurate and wide vocabulary
- Varied sentence structures
- Reader's interest

On the whole, candidates opted to write on the descriptive essays rather than the narrative one. It might be because they could have encountered an event like this before and it was easier to relate to it.

The following sample of essays illustrates the range of answers obtained this year. They are provided to give Educators an insight of the standards and of examiners' expectations. Each essay is provided with comments to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the writing.

#### **Descriptive Writing**

A good number of candidates who attempted the descriptive essay were not able to develop their essay well and create the required atmosphere. They had a lot of narrative inserted in their essays. They generally gave a narrative account of what they did in the event instead of focusing on a description of the event.

Some candidates misunderstood the word *رحلة* by *حفلة*. Thus, these essays were mostly irrelevant.

The following responses illustrate examiners' expectations in descriptive essays.

### Essay 1

في يوم الخامس الماضي خفز مدرستي بحفل تكريم الأنواع كلك تلاميذ فيها. وعند ما دق الجرس ذهبنا إلى قاع المدرسة لنسمع إلى كلمات المدير. ثم بدأ الحفل رأيت كثير من التلاميذ مع آبائهم. أكلت كعكا لذيذا وأشرب عصير التفاحة. أحب الحفل كثيرة لأن فرحت الأفعال جدا. وبعد الحفل رجعت إلى بيتي وبدأ أن أكتب قصة على ورقة جميلة التي قفرت هذا يوم. أحب اليوم كل عام كثير.

This essay has little relevant content. The descriptions are unclear. There are many serious errors which make meaning unclear too. The candidate used simple vocabulary with many inaccuracies and made use of mostly simple sentences. While there is no interest for the reader., this writing can only score very low marks.

### Essay 2

في يوم الجمعة الماضي كان الجو جميل والسماء صافية ونسيم عليل وفي مدرستي حفلى خاصة. ذهبت إلى حفلة خاصة في مدرستي. فرحت فرحا شديدا. الحفلة كانت حفل تكريم المتفوقين تصف أن رأيتي الانسان وسمعت نشيد وفي الحفلة أشخاص المشاركين والأجواء المحيطة بالحفلة ولعبنا كرة القدم وكرة الطائرة وكرة يد وتينس. شرح بسرور خاص في قلبي. كانت الحفلة مزدحمة وبعد قليلا أكلت الطعام اللذيذ وعندما كانت في حالة التعب والعطش شربت الماء وبعد نصف ساعة ألقى المدير قلال ووصل وزير وبعد ساعة يعطي الهدايا لطلاب. نجح الطلاب في الامتحان جدا. وفي النهاية انتهى الحفل. لسوء الحظ سقط المطر على مدرستي ورجعت إلى البيت حزينا.

In essay 2, the candidate has tried to write some relevant content but the descriptions lack detail. As far as grammar, spelling and syntax are concerned, errors are frequent. The essay comprises simple sentence structure and simple vocabulary which is not always accurate. With little interest for the reader, this essay can only score below mid-range mark.

### Essay 3

في يوم الثالث، نظمت مدرستي حفل تكريم المتفوقين. كان الجو في هذا اليوم مشمساً. جاء التلاميذ إلى المدرسة مبكراً من كعادته. لبس التلاميذ ملابس الجميلة. كانت المدرسة نظيفة وكبيرة. رأيت هدية كبيرة وكثيرة على مكتب كبير قريب من الباب الفصل. في الفناء، كان التلاميذ كثير ووالدهم. كان التلاميذ لعبوا وضحكوا بعضهم مع بعض. كان التلاميذ مسروراً. في الساعة الثامنة والنصف قدم المعلمون والمدير هداية لتلاميذ المتفوقون الصف الرابع والخامس والسادس والسابع. كان التلاميذ ضحكوا بصوت عال وهم سعيد جداً. في وقت الغداء، قدم المعلمون بعض الكعك والشكولات اللذيذة والمشروبات والعصير. وبعد ذلك، سمعت مدير المدرسة تكلم كلمة موجزة. سمعت التلاميذ تكلم مع بعضهم مع بعض. كان التلاميذ مسروراً ومتعباً. كان يوم سعيد ومتعب في مدرستي.

Essay 3 is relevant but its content is elementary. The descriptions are simple. As far as grammar, spelling and syntax are concerned, errors occur when complexity is attempted. There are instances of sentence variety but simple sentences dominate overall. The vocabulary used is accurate but simple. With some interest for the reader, this piece of writing can only stay in the mid-table range, although the potential to score higher was present.

#### Essay 4

في يوم الإثنين الماضي، احتفلت مدرستي الثانوية بحفل تكريم المتوفين. كانت الحفلة في فناء المدرسة في هذا اليوم، وصل التلاميذ مبكرين إلى المدرسة وهم كانوا مسرورين جدا. أولا، ذهب الطلاب إلى فصولهم مع أساتذتهم. في الساعة التاسعة صباحا، اتجه تلاميذ المدرسة إلى الصالة الواسعة حيث رأى الجميع الآباء والأمهات جالسين على الكراسي. جلس الطلاب في مكانهم وهم يستمعون إلى شرح المعلمين بنشاط وبأدب وبعد نصف ساعة وصل مدير المدرسة إلى الصالة، ومعه ضيف الشرف. كان وزير التعليم. استقبله الطلاب استقبالا حارا وفرحوا فرحا شديدا لأنهم يحبون الوزير كثيرا. افتتحت الحفلة بالنشيد الوطني. ثم ألقى مدير المدرسة كلمة موجزة. تكلم عن أهمية الدراسة في العالم وقال إن الدراسة هي مفتاح النجاح وشكر المدير الأساتذة أيضا لمساعدتهم. وبعد ذلك ألقى ضيف الشرف كلمته وتكلم عن أهمية العلم واللغات واستمع الجميع إلى كلامه ثم نادى نائب مدير المدرسة أسماء الطلاب المتفوقين وذكر المواد التي أجادوا فيها وطلب منهم أن يأتوا إلى المنصة واحدا بعد الآخر ثم قدم وزير التعليم الجوائز عليهم.

وفي نهاية اليوم، وزع العمال الكعك والعصير لكل من الطلاب وآبائهم انتهت الحفلة في الساعة الواحدة والنصف ورجع الطلاب إلى بيوتهم متعبين ولكنهم مسرورين. ما أجمل هذا اليوم!

Essay 4 has been well developed. The grammar, spelling and syntax are highly accurate with only very occasional slips. This piece of writing contains varied sentence structures which are used consistently. As far as the vocabulary is concerned, it is wide and precise. With the reader's interest sustained throughout, this essay deserves high marks.

## Narrative Writing

Candidates who attempted the narrative essay had some difficulty understanding what they had to do with the sentence given to them. The few who understood what the sentence meant, weren't able to elaborate on the content. Candidates struggled with developing a plot and used very insecure language throughout.

The following candidate responses illustrate examiners' expectations in narrative essays.

### Essay 1

ينظم أُمي حفلة لأنه نجاحه الامتحان. أساعد أُمي في المطبخ لجهزة الكعكة. يشتري إبي اللحم والشراب. في المساء جاء أسرتي. قدمتها الهدايا ألعاب الكرة القدم والتينيس الريشة مع ابن عمي ونشاهد التلفاز وتكلموا عن المدرسة. بعد ساعة لعبوا في الحديقة مسرورًا. فجأة سمعنا صوت أفكار القط الجران لكن الصوب لم انتهى ذهبوا أمام البيت. ونظروا إلى بعضهم البعض ولكنهم يتكلموا لأنه هذا طيور جميلة جدًا. أدرك هذا ببغاء جميلة. نحن مسرورا جدًا ليشاهد هذا حيوان أمام البيت. هذا رائح. هذا ببغاء ملونه مع أحمر وأصفر هو جميلًا جدًا. هو يأكل الخبز على الأرض. قدموا الطعام وبعد لعبوا معهم. كل أسرتي مسرورًا أن يشاهد هذا الهيوان. وهو صادق جدًا. أحبه كثيرًا. وأريد عن هو يسكن معهم. لكن لم في القصص. كان في القصص لم صالحة جدًا لحيوانات. كان هذه الببغاء هو مفيدًا جدًا وفي صحة صالحة. وأجمل طيور أي يراى. لعبوا معه. قدمته ماء ليشرب. وكان هو يمشي في الحديقة مسرورًا. كان جميع أحبه كثيرًا. نقدمه في البيت. ولعبوا وتكلموا في سرور. وأقرر أن اسم أحمر للبيبغاء.

This essay is barely relevant and there is a lack of focus on the topic. As for the language, it is very clumsy and uncertain throughout, making it difficult for readers to understand what the candidate wished to express. Sentence separation is particularly flawed, with hardly any punctuation at all. In addition, the essay is replete with numerous grammatical and spelling mistakes which implies that it can only score low marks.

## Essay 2

عمر وبلال وسليمان أولاد مشاكسون في الصف التاسع. سلوكياتهم سيئ جدًا لأنهم كانوا يدخنون. في الصباح لم يركب الحافلة للمدرسة لأنهم يدخنون. يصل إلى المدرسة متأخرًا يحتم بدراستهم.

في الفصل لم يستمع الأولاد الثلاثة إلى المعلم ولم يكتبون الواجبات. في الفناء المدرسة، ينادي الأصغر منهم الأسماء القبيحة ويضربون الآخرين. قال لهم مدير المدرسة أن سلوكهم يجب أن يتغير. لكن لا يحتم الأولاد بكلامه واستمر في سلوكياتهم السيئة.

في يوم من الأيام غاب عمر وبلال وسليمان من المدرسة وفر إلى حديقة حيث يدخنون ويلعبون كرة القدم. لكن، شاهدتهم رجال الشرطة وحملوهم إلى المدرسة. أخبر المدير والداهم بما فعل الأولاد. قرر المدير أن يخرجهم من المدرسة لأن سلوكياتهم سيئة.

سليمان وعمر وبلال فكروا على ماذا فعلوا. نظروا إلى بعضهم البعض ولكنهم لم يتكلموا لأنهم شعروا بالخجل. ثم قالوا إلى المدير وإلى آبائهم أنهم آسفون. وقالوا أنهم لا سيفعلوا هذا أبدًا وسيتغيرون سلوكياتهم.

While there is a developed storyline in this response, the language used remains the main issue. Errors are frequent – wrong use of tenses and spelling mistakes. The vocabulary is satisfactory. For this reason, this response gets a mid-range score.

### Essay 3

يوم السبت الماضي، جاء ابن عمي، ابنتان عمي وعمي إلى بيتي لاحتفال عيد ميلاد أبي. كان أبي في العمل. ساعدت أمي لتطبخ البرياني بالسمك وكعكا.

وضعنا أزهارا كثيرة في البيت وفي الساعة العاشرة، ذهبت مع عمي وأمي إلى دكانا لشراء هدية جميلة لأبي. عندما رجعنا إلى بيت، رأينا أن البيت في حالة سيئة والكعك الذي استعدنا قد سقط على الأرض. قالت أمي بصوت عالية: "يا الله! ماذا حدث هنا؟" سألت ابن وابنتان عمي لشرح. نظروا إلى بعضهم البعض ولكنهم لم يتكلموا. بدأ ابن عمي أن يبكي وقال لأمي: "أنا آسف يا عمتي، لعبنا كرة القدم في البيت وبحادثة، سقط الكعك. غضبت أمي كثيرة لكنها لم ضربتهم لأن الضرب بدون فائدة بسرعة، نظفنا كل مكان في البيت مرة أخرى وذهب عمي ليشتري كعكا من دكان قريب. بعد وقت طويل، كان البيت نظيفة وجميلة. نحن شعرنا بالسرور جدًا. عندما جاء أبي، احتفلنا بعيد ميلاده وكان هو سعيد جدًا.

في نهاية اليوم، لعبنا قليلا وبعد ذلك شاهدنا التلفاز. بعد قليل نام أمي وعمي، ابنتان وابن عمي. ضحك أبي وقال: "ذهبت إلى العمل ولا شعرت بالتعب لكنهم يشعرون بالتعب كثيرًا. فقص لأبي ماذا حدث عندما ذهبنا إلى الدكان وجئ وقال: "هؤلاء أطفال مشاكسون!" لم أنسى هذا اليوم الجميل بل المتعب أبدًا.

Essay 3 scores quite highly. It can be seen that the storyline has been elaborately developed. The use of a variety of sentence types can be seen. The vocabulary used is mainly correct. Yet, the grammatical mistakes cannot be overlooked. With fewer mistakes, this essay could have scored very highly.



#### Essay 4

يوما ما بعد الرجوع من المدرسة مساء، قررت الذهاب مع أصدقائي إلى مكان مهجور لاكتشاف هل يوجد حقا أشياء اسمها الأشباح أو الأشياء المهجورة.

أولا أخذنا أمتعتنا مثل الكاميرا لأن المكان قد يكون مظلمًا. وجدنا مقبرة وكان هناك منزل بداخلها. لم يتركنا الحارس لندخل فقررنا أن نرجع في الليل لوحدها. ها نحن دخلنا المقبرة. كان كل شيء قديما ومكسورا. كان المكان حقا مهجورا. أغلق الباب الذي دخلنا منه ثم اختفى.

خاف أصدقائي فنظروا إلى بعضهم البعض ولكنهم لم يتكلموا. كاد قلبي أن يقف في تلك اللحظة ولم نعرف كيف نجد المخرج. وجد صديقي خريطة تدل على باب في الجانب الآخر من المنزل. ولكن كنا ندور في مكاننا كأنها متحف ليس منزل. بعد ساعتين من المشي سمعنا صوتا مرعبا من غرفة كأنه طفل يبكي. ذهبنا لاكتشاف هل هناك أحد.

لم يكن هناك أحد كانت الغرفة فارغة وجدنا خريطة أخرى تدل على باب آخر. تعب أصدقائي وأيضا الخوف لم ينته. اتبعنا ما تقوله الخريطة ولكن لم نستطع حل لغز كيف لمنزل صغير أن يكون كبيرا من الداخل لهذه الدرجة الأكثر رعبا هو الدور الموجودة على الحائط. وأخيرا وجدنا الباب الذي يدل على المخرج. فرحنا ولكن عند الباب كان الحارس ينتظرنا وقال لنا: " ألم أقل لكم لا تدخلوا" بصوت عال. خرجنا بسرعة ولم ننتبه أن المنزل قد اختفى بكامله.

This is a clear Band 1 essay. The candidate has an elaborate storyline and the language is essentially very accurate throughout. There is a variety of sentence structures and the story flows naturally. An essay that satisfies these criteria will score highly.