



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

**MAURITIUS  
EXAMINATIONS  
SYNDICATE**

**NCE 2021- 2022  
GRADE 9  
ARABIC**

Subject code: N660

***EXAMINERS' REPORT***

July 2023

## Key Messages

- A good number of candidates have achieved the required levels when it comes to basic vocabulary, basic grammar and basic reading.
- Candidates are advised to read widely to build up their vocabulary in Arabic.
- Candidates should read instructions attentively.
- Candidates should divide their time adequately so that they have enough time to tackle the composition writing task.
- Candidates need to familiarize themselves with grammatical terminologies in Arabic.
  
- In grammar, candidates are still struggling with the following:
  - verb-subject agreement, subject-predicate agreement, noun-adjective agreement
  - quasi verbs (*inna* and its equivalents)
  - auxiliary verbs (*kana* and its equivalents)
  - cardinal numbers
  - *idhafa* structure (possessive)
  - transforming declarative sentences into negatives and interrogatives properly
  
- In Reading comprehension,
  - candidates fare better on questions requiring literal understanding.
  - candidates struggle with questions assessing higher-order reading skills like making inferences, reading between the lines and explaining the meaning of words in context.
  
- In Writing,
  - candidates should pay closer attention to their use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
  - weaker candidates have serious difficulties with their writing tasks.
  - candidates should select the question they consider to be the best suited to their knowledge of Arabic.
  - 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 mostly fared well when finding the appropriate vocabulary for translation.
  - applying grammatical rules to the translation proved to be challenging to many candidates.

## General Comments

The NCE Assessment in Arabic is based on learning outcomes spelt out in the National Curriculum Framework and on the Teaching and Learning syllabus for Arabic produced by the MIE. The tasks set assess reading comprehension, writing skills, grammar and use of Arabic and Translation.

The performance of candidates in this year's examination session saw a slight improvement with a pass rate of 71.8% compared to last year. Based on the performance, it could be observed that many candidates have acquired the fundamentals for further learning. Most of the candidates have displayed the ability to acquire the essential skills in reading, writing and grammar & use of the language, although a disparity can be seen in levels of achievements.

In reading, whether at an elementary or advanced level, candidates perform well when questions are related to location of explicit information. However, as noted last year, many candidates still struggle with tasks requiring higher order skills such as making inferences, reading between the lines or giving the meaning of vocabulary words in context.

Concerning vocabulary, tasks assessing the knowledge and application of basic, everyday vocabulary words were satisfactorily done by most candidates. For a good number of candidates, however, showing understanding of and using varied and precise vocabulary seem more challenging. This was particularly visible in the vocabulary question of the extended reading task (Question 8, Item 12), where the performance of candidates was disappointing.

As far as grammar is concerned, more revision of case endings in the nominative, accusative and genitive are needed to improve on the correct use of the language. Candidates should pay more attention to the correct use of basic case endings while applying the quasi and auxiliary verbs to a nominal sentence. Moreover, more attention should be paid to the difference between human and non-human plurals when conjugating verbs and in the use of pronouns and improve on the conjugation of verbs especially with dual, feminine plural.

Writing, as noted last year, remains the most challenging skill for most of our students. A significant number of candidates have difficulty with writing tasks, be it at a basic level where they have to produce syntactically correct sentences using negative or interrogative structures, positioning adverbs and adjectives; or at a higher level, where they have to write composition creatively using correct grammar, rich and varied vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures.

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 assesses a range of basic but essential grammatical items through multiple-choice items and open-ended questions. This year, the grammatical items tested through multiple choice were the noun-adjective agreement, pronouns (personal, demonstrative and relative), *Idhafa* structure (possessive), the use of tenses (simple past), *Inna* and its equivalents, cardinal number and conjunction. Items tested through open ended were the subject-verb agreement, preposition, transformation of sentence into feminine form, negative form and interrogative form, and use of tenses (simple past).

#### The best-done items in part A were:

##### Item 1 (Personal Pronoun)

تستريح أختي في غرفتها. هي متعبة.

##### Item 2 (Demonstrative Pronoun)

تلك محطة القطار الجديدة.

##### Item 3 (Noun-Adjective agreement)

تناولنا سمكة لذيذة في المطعم.

##### Item 5 (Relative Pronoun)

اشترى سمير الكعك الذي تحبه والدته.

##### Item 7 (Conjunction)

لن يسافر أحمد غدًا لأن ابنه مريض.

It is encouraging to see that candidates can do items testing personal, demonstrative and relative pronouns, noun adjective agreement, and conjunction correctly.

#### The following items were found challenging:

##### Item 4 (Quasi-Verbs)

علمت أن الطالب ذكي.

Quasi-Verbs (*Inna* and its equivalents) tested the ability to find the correct diacritic mark when the word is placed after the Quasi-Verbs. In this item, the word is in singular form and should take the *fatha* mark.

##### Item 6 (Cardinal number)

في الحديقة ثلاث أشجار قديم.

This item tested the cardinal number which does present its difficulties, but in essence is not too difficult. The number is masculine whenever the singular of the counted noun is feminine. In this item, the singular of the word 'trees' is a feminine word; thus, the number needs to be masculine.

**Item 8 (Use of tenses: simple past)**

أمس ذهب التاجر إلى السوق.

A common wrong answer was (يذهب) which suggests that candidates did not pay heed to the word yesterday or didn't understand the meaning of the word. Candidates are advised to learn common vocabulary used to denote tenses.

**Item 9 (Idhafa structure)**

حقيبة المعلم جديدة.

This item tested candidates' ability to deal with the *Idhafa* structure (possessive). Even though this structure is very common, many candidates were not able to know that the *Mudaaf* (things being owned) should not contain the article 'ال'. And since the adjective (جديدة) is singular, the *Mudaaf* has to be as well.

Candidates fared well in the following items in part B:

**Item 10 (Subject-Verb Agreement)**

الولد/أخي/هو/عمر/الكلب يشرب الماء البارد.

**Item 11 (Preposition)**

وضع البائع اللحم في/على السلة.

**Item 12 (Transformation of sentence into feminine)**

البنيت حاضرة.

The following items posed some difficulty:

**Item 13**

لا يدخل المدير الفصل.

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. As mentioned last year, candidates were not aware of the meaning of negative in Arabic. Educators are advised to use the Arabic terminology in class so that students become acquainted with it.

**Item 14**

يجلس الركاب في الحافلة بأدب.

This item tested the simple past tense. Candidates were asked to change the given verb from the present tense to the past tense. Some candidates were able to transform the verb into the past tense but failed to keep it in the singular form. It is essential that candidates pay close attention to the verb-subject agreement. Among the wrong answers there has (يجلسون/جلسوا). A number of candidates didn't understand the key word in the question which is the past tense. Educators are reminded to use Arabic terminologies in class so that students familiarize themselves.

**Item 15**

هل الواجبات سهلة جدا؟ لماذا الواجبات سهلة جدا؟

This was another challenging item where candidates didn't grasp the key word. A number of candidates didn't understand what was meant by the interrogative sentence in Arabic. However,

candidates who were able to understand it, omitted to end their sentence with a question mark. Educators are reminded that punctuation is very important in this type of question.

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 terminologies 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

This question assesses candidates' knowledge of common basic vocabulary used in common daily life and their ability to deal with vocabulary in context. The fundamental objective of this question is to encourage the teaching of common vocabulary items in Arabic. On the whole, this question was satisfactorily done by most candidates.

The best-done items were:

- Item 1 الجو حار. أريد أن أسبح في البحر.
- Item 2 أعطانا المعلم واجبات كثيرة هذا الأسبوع.
- Item 3 بعد أن تغسل يديك، امسحهما بمنشفة.

The following items posed some difficulty:

- Item 4 أنا فقدت هاتفي. أريد أن أشتري هاتفا جديدا.

The words *lost* and *mobile* might have hindered candidates' understanding of the sentence. Hence, they could not choose the correct answer which was *new*. A common wrong answer was *big*.

- Item 5 انتهيت من قراءة هذا الكتاب، سوف أعيده إلى المكتبة.

Many candidates mistakenly considered 'post office' as an answer possibly due to the fact that they got confused with the word *library*.

Educators are advised to encourage the practice of vocabulary-based questions in context and focus on common and day to day vocabulary for instance vocabulary related to topics such as daily activities, sports, occupations, hobbies, house and home, feelings etc.

### Question 3 – Basic Reading Comprehension

Question 3 assesses the ability to read and comprehend at a basic level, focusing specifically on the skill of location of information. This year, candidates were required to read two short texts; one a letter about the injury of Ahmad and the second one a poster on a poem competition. On the whole, performance was encouraging with most candidates showing that the basic reading skill of literal understanding has been acquired.

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

Though most items were generally well answered by candidates, the following items were less well done:

#### Part A:

**Item 3** إلى أي مستشفى ذهب؟

Some candidates lost marks by the indiscriminate lifting of the sentence:

لما ذهبت إلى المستشفى فكتوريا قال لي الطبيب إن ساقى مكسورة.

**Item 4** ما اسم الشارع الذي يسكن فيه أحمد؟

A few candidates were confused with the name of the street. Among the wrong answers were the name of the town.

Credit was given to the following answers:

1. عشرة
2. بينما كان يلعب
3. فكتوريا
4. ليلاس
5. سبايدرمان

#### Part B:

**Item 3** أي مستوى من الطلاب يستطيعون أن يشاركوا في المسابقة؟

Some candidates wrongly gave *'The ministry of Education invites all students of grade 9 to participate in the poem competition'*, which could not be given credit since it is an indiscriminate lifting of the first sentence.

Credit was given to the following answers:

1. القصيدة
2. التعليم
3. التاسع

4. بلادي

5. ٢١٢٧٦١٨

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

Question 4 assesses candidates' knowledge and application of word transformation rules in Arabic in context. A short text was set with words requiring transformation given within brackets. A small number of candidates scored full marks in this question, showing that a vast majority still find it challenging to tackle items assessing word formation rules. Candidates lost marks for grammatical and spelling mistakes even if they managed to find the correct word formation.

**Item 1** أسكن في قرية صغيرة ومشهورة بـ ... (منظر) خلابة.

This item tested whether candidates could transform the singular noun (منظر) into the plural noun (مناظر), given the adjective 'خلابة' is in feminine singular. Candidates should remember that non-human plurals are always treated as feminine singular.

An important number of candidates carried out the wrong transformation from noun to noun for example 'منظور' while others offered incorrect spelling such as 'مناظير'.

**Item 2** ويمر بها أيضا نهر... (كبر).

For this item, the transformation of the verb (كبر) into the adjective (كبير) was required.

This was well done on the whole, although some candidates offered (الكبير) as an answer which was grammatically incorrect.

**Item 3** ... وإلى البحر لـ ... (صاد) السمك.

For item 3, the transformation of the verb (صاد) into the present tense (يصيدوا) was required. The verbal noun (صيد) was also an acceptable answer.

This item proved to be the most challenging to candidates. Several candidates offered options like 'يصاد', 'اصطاد', 'يصود' which did not fit the structure as a verb in the present tense. Candidates who were able to put the verb in the correct tense, failed to make the agreement in the plural for instance 'يصيد' while others who were able to know that the verb needs to be in the plural, omit to remove the *noon* at the end and add an *alif* because it is in the subjunctive mood for example 'يصيدون'. On the other hand, candidates who transformed the verb into its verbal noun, could not score any marks since they did not pay attention to the grammatical rules of *Idhafa* such as 'الصيد'



**Item 4** وفيها أيضا ... (العب) واسع.

This item required candidates to transform the verbal noun into the noun of place.

This item was well attempted by a vast number of candidates.

**Item 5** في الصباح يقوم الناس بـ ... (مارس) رياضة المشي.

Item 5 tested whether candidates could transform the verb (مارس) into the verbal noun (ممارسة).

An important number of candidates managed to know which transformation was required but struggled, offering incorrect spelling like 'ممارس'.

Educators are reminded that despite the fact that candidates have to apply transformational rules to words in context, 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 with grammatical and spelling mistakes which had been underlined was set and those mistakes had to be corrected.

This question was satisfactorily done by most candidates. It was encouraging to see that candidates managed to identify most of the mistakes and correct them.

**Item 1** ليس به بيت ينام في الرصيف.

This item tested the knowledge of preposition. The expected answer was (على). On the whole it was satisfactorily done.

**Item 2** فيوما كان الرجل جائع.

This item assessed whether candidates clearly understood the Auxiliary verbs.

Only about half of the number of candidates managed to do so, suggesting that many have not yet mastered the correct use of *Kana* and its equivalents or are still unsure about how to write a masculine word ending with double *fatha*.

**Item 3** وقال لِنفسهما بصوت مرتفع.

This item tested whether candidates would be able to identify the mistake in the personal pronoun. The answer required was (لِنفسه). The answer was easily found by a majority of candidates.

**Item 4** في هذا اللحظة سمعت امرأة صوته.

This item assessed the knowledge of demonstrative pronoun, a basic but essential rule of Arabic grammar. The expected answer was هذه. On the whole, this was satisfactorily attempted.

**Item 5** وكان سحنا ملينا بالمأكولات.

This item assessed the knowledge of the spelling of the word. A significant number of candidates had trouble finding the correct spelling, giving 'سحن' as answer.

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, a factual passage was set on how to look for happiness and be in good health.

In **Part A**, candidates had to fill in the gaps with appropriate words from the list of given words. A fair performance, with a vast majority scoring 3 marks or close, was noted in this part of the question. It seemed that they didn't grasp the idea of the passage.

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 1** أحيانا نحن نقلق.

**Item 3** هناك طرق كثيرة لنجد السعادة.

Some candidates found these items challenging:

**Item 2** ونستطيع أيضا أن نغضب على أصدقائنا.

It seemed that candidates could not fill in the gap with the proper noun required due to their lack of understanding of the sentence. Many wrote 'النصائح' as answer which does not do justice to the meaning of the sentence.

**Item 3** عندما نفقد شيئا مهما نشعر بأننا نريد أن نيكى.

In this item, candidates were not able to fill in the blank with the adjective although it was clear that 'مهما' was the only plausible answer since the noun before it was in the accusative form.

**Item 5** أنت تستطيع أن تتبع هذه النصائح الآتية لتكون سعيدا.

Candidates interchanged between 'أصدقائنا' and 'النصائح'. Had they read the sentence properly they would have noticed the demonstrative pronoun before it which is in the feminine singular.

**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 below average.

**Item 1** عليك أن تمارس الرياضة لمدة ١٥ دقيقة كل يوم/صباح/أسبوع.

This item was one which was done satisfactorily. Some candidates lost marks due to wrong answers provided: يوم الأحد/ شهر/ سنة.

**Item 2** تناول كثيرا/ الكثير من الفواكه والخضراوات.

This item was found to be difficult. Several candidates were penalised due to grammatical mistakes such as كثيرا/كثيرة. Common wrong answers included: الطعام/الغداء/الفطور/الكعكة/العشاء/الوجبات, which did not fit in the structure of the sentence.

**Item 3** اشرب على الأقل لترين من الماء/العصير يوميا

Candidates had to draw on their own knowledge to provide a plausible answer. Other options were acceptable here: الحليب/اللبن. Frequent wrong answers included: ملعقة/ كل which were implausible in the given context.

**Item 4** لا تدخن لأنه يضر/مضر الصحة.

Due to candidates' lack of understanding, they were not able to find the appropriate word to fill in the gap. Candidates who answered ليس صحيح/شر/ خطير/مريض/خطا lost marks since these were contextually inappropriate.

**Item 5** تنفس الهواء النقي/البارد

A number of options were acceptable here: الصافي/ التنظيف. Common wrong answers included: بردًا/قليلا/كثيرا/مبكرا/حار/حميل/طبية/ على الوقت/القوي/إذا. These answers were not acceptable since they were inappropriate.

## 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.

In this session, candidates were asked to write about a neighbour playing loud music at night and disturbing the locality. They had to write a letter to their friend telling him/her about the problem they are facing. The purpose and situation proved to be challenging for the majority of candidates. They lacked the appropriate vocabulary to address the four prompts given.

A successful answer had to address the following prompts:

- How was the locality disturbed by the loud music?
- What is the consequence of the loud music on your study/sleep...?
- What did you do to solve the problem?
- Seek help from your friend.

For bullet point 1, it was necessary to mention how the locality was disturbed by the loud noise. This was achieved by a number of candidates. They mentioned that their neighbour plays very loud music at night and that disturbed the neighbourhood.

For bullet point 2, candidates were asked about the effects of loud music on their study and their sleep. Some of the ideas that were elaborated by candidates were that they were not able to sleep and they could not concentrate in class since they were tired of not being able to sleep last night. Others wrote about not being able to wake up before sunrise to pray the morning prayer. The latter reached school late and was ashamed of being late. Among the ideas were the fact that they failed their exams or were not able to complete their homework or read a book.

For bullet point 3, candidates had to mention what they did to find a solution to their problem. Among the ideas developed were that they went to the library to study or went to stay with their grandparents or they cry at night because their ears were aching. Other candidates chose to talk about going to the police station to inform them about the problem or simply to go and talk to the neighbour about the problem.

For bullet point 4, candidates had to seek help from their friend. Some wrote about asking their friend to talk to their neighbour or seeking any advice from their friend or ask their friend to write a letter to the police. However, a large majority didn't mention in what ways their friend helped them.

To obtain better results, candidates should be encouraged to write their answer bearing in mind to add enough details to each bullet point to cover all communication points. In addition to this, candidates should respond to these bullet points using the correct tense required.

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 a very good piece of writing which was 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 clear and simple Arabic with an accurate use of grammar and spelling.

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
- Applying the feminine adjective to refer to non-human plural

It has been observed that several candidates used lengthy introduction of learnt cliches of greetings and wishes at the expense of the main topic. This should be discouraged.

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

### Functional Writing 1

عزيزى البنيت

لن أحضر إلى موسيقى عالياً جداً في الليل. ويزعج الحي. قررت أن تكتب خطاباً إلى صديقك لتخبره عن المشكلة التي ثاؤها. نزعج الحي من صوت الموسيقى العالي فرح. ٢٤ يوليو ٢٠٢٢ نتيجة صوت الموسيقى على دراستك. إلى روزهيل فعلت ليحل هذه المشكلة. أطلب المساعدة من صديقك.

It is clear from this writing that it is irrelevant and meaningless. The candidate has repeated what was mentioned in the question. There is neither clear awareness of audience nor purpose. This piece of writing could not score any marks and remains in Band 5.

## Functional Writing 2

عزيزتي فاطمة

هل أنت بخير؟ كان الجارُ جديدِ يسكنُ في قريتي. وكان أشغَلَ الموسيقىَ عاليًا جدًا في الليل ويزعج الحي. كان بعض جاري غاضبًا. كانت أدرسُ الوجبات البيت. وكان دراستي عسيرة ليكتب. كانت اذهبُ اليتكلم وهو لاكنَّ سَمِعَة. من فضلك سعدني. انصحني ماذا افعل. اتصل الشرطة. أنا تزور قريب.

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 and stays in Band 4.

## Functional Writing 3

عزيزي أحمد

السلام عليكم ورحمه الله وبركاته

أتمنى أن تكون بخير وعافية وأن كل شي ما يرام أنا أكتب هذه الرسالة لأخبرك أن جاري يشغَلَ الموسيقىَ عاليًا جدا في الليل ويزعج الحي.

كان انزعج الحي من صوت الموسيقى العالي وصوت الموسيقى استيقظني ولا أنام. أتحدت مع جاري لتحلّ هذه المشكلة وهو لم يستمع إلي. اتصل أصدقائي وطلبتهم أن يساعدي لتحلّ هذه المشكلة. أرجو أن تكتني لأخبرني على حياتك وإلى اللقاء.

صديقك بلال

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 but 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 in Band 3, although the potential to score higher was present.

#### Functional Writing 4

عزيزي عمر،

أتمنى أنك بخير. أكتب إليك هذه الرسالة لأخبرك عن جاري الذي يشغل الموسيقى عاليًا جدًا في الليل. هو يُزعج جميع الحيّ. الناس الذي يسكنون بجواره غاضبًا جدًا لأنهم لم يستطيعوا أن ينام جيدًا. لا يستطيع ان ادرس ايضًا ولهذا سبب، كانت نتائجي سيئة. كلّمْتُ مع جاري وطلبتهُ أن يُطفئ الموسيقى لكنه لا يستمع. من فضلك، اعطيني مساعدتك وقدمني نصائح عن هذا الامر. أتمنى أننا سنراى قريبًا لتكلم على هذا الأمر.

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 lacks the overall fluency of a Band I script and did not deserve the best marks.

#### Functional writing 5

عزيزي أحمد

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،

أتمنى أنك في صحة جيدة وعافية وكذلك أسرته. أما أن فأكتب إليك هذه الرسالة لأخبرك عن المشكلة التي أواجهها. يشغل جاري الموسيقى عاليًا جدًا وسط الليل ويزعج الحيّ. لم أستطع أن أنام وأستيقظ متأخرًا في الصباح وأصلي صلاة الفجر بعد طلوع الشمس. أذهب إلى المدرسة متأخرًا كل يوم وأشعر بالخجل الشديد. لأحل هذه المشكلة، في الأسبوع الماضي، ذهبتُ إلى مكان جدي الذي يسكن في بورت لويس. أريد المساعدة منك يا صديقي المخلص. جاري ولد مشاكس. أرجو أنك ستكتب إليّ وتخبرني بما عليّ أن أفعله. إلى اللقاء، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

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 develop 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 and is in Band 1.

## Question 8 – Extended Reading Comprehension

This year, a narrative text was set assessing candidates' ability in reading comprehension. The purpose of this Extended Reading Comprehension task is to assess comprehension skills in diverse ways and at different levels than the basic reading tasks.

The passage was about a new girl who joined a new school where in the beginning she didn't have any friends. Cases where candidates failed to understand the passage completely were rare. On the whole, performance was average. As usual, questions requiring literal understanding of explicitly stated information were well-tackled by most. However, a good number of candidates struggled with questions requiring higher order reading skills. Only candidates from the higher ability groups could demonstrate their ability of making inferences, reading between the lines and explaining the meaning of words as used in the given context.

It is encouraging to note down that many candidates were able to spot the answers since they were clearly indicated in the questions from which paragraph.

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 following items are worthy of comment:

**Item 1:** أين شاهدت فاطمة التلميذة الجديدة لأول مرة؟

The expected answer was: عند موقف الحافلات

Common wrong answers included:

عندما ذهبت فاطمة إلى موقف الحافلات/ في حافلة المدرسة

Since this task assesses candidates' ability to read with understanding, it is important for candidates to be able to pick up only specific information. Excess information will not be given credit.

**Item 2:** هات دليلين يدلان على أن الطلاب ما أحبوا البنت الجديدة أولاً.

Candidates could lift the two pieces of evidence from the passage and did not need to write in their own words. However, candidates who mentioned only one piece of evidence scored only 1 mark.

**Item 3:** ما الخبر السار الذي تريد السيدة سلمى أن تخبره للفصل؟

The expected answer was: في الفصل صديقة جديدة

Many candidates had difficulty mentioning only the good news. Excess information was given by a large number of candidates eg واسمها زينب في فصلنا صديقة جديدة. Indiscriminate lifting containing excess information cannot be given credit.



**Item 4:** لماذا كانت فاطمة طيبة للطالبة الجديدة؟

The expected answer was: لأنها كانت مثلها جديدة في يوم ما ولك يتحدث معها أحد/ مرت فاطمة بما تمر بها زينب عندما دخلت المدرسة لأول مرة.

The lift: was also given credit. تذكرت فاطمة أنها قد كانت طالبة جديدة أيضا ولم يتحدث معها أحد في ذلك الوقت.

**Item 5:** لماذا كان بعض الطلاب يسخرون من زينب في المدرسة؟

The expected answer was: لأنها مختلفة

The lift: was not given credit. A common wrong answer was ولكن بعض الطلاب ما زالوا يسخرون من زينب.

**Item 7:** كيف شعرت زينب من واجبات الأستاذة سلمى؟

This was a challenging item. Candidates had to infer the meaning.

The expected answer was:

لم تفرح/ حزنت/ خافت/ قلقت

Common wrong answers were: فرح كل واحد إلا زينب/ أعطت السيدة سلمى الواجبات المنزلية للطلاب.

**Item 10:** لماذا لم يتعرف الطلاب على زينب أولا؟

The expected answer was لأن زينب كانت تلبس ملابسها التقليدية من بلدها.

The following lift was not awarded marks: اللباس الذي ألبسه هو اللباس التقليدي تلبسه البنات في بلدي

**Item 13:**

Item 13 was found to be challenging by many 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 were required to explain the meaning of the given words in the given context.

Popular answers are shown below:

i متنوعة/ A common wrong answer was مختلفة: ليست مثلهم/ لا تشبههم.

ii لا حزينة/ عكس مسرورة / ضد فرح Answers such as حزينة: كئيبة/ ليست سعيدة.

iii مشهورة: معروفة/ يعرفها كل واحد

## Question 9 - Translation

### Part A

This question assesses candidates' ability to translate common English words into Arabic.

The overall performance was satisfactory on this question.

Among the best-done items were:

**Item 1** bed

**Item 2** kitchen

**Item 4** intelligent

Candidates, however, struggled with the following items:

**Item 3** to fly

Among the wrong answers were *سافر/طير/توفلي/طائرة/طائر*. Candidates should be made aware that there is a difference between *طار* and *سافر*. Candidates who gave 'bird' as answer were not awarded any marks even if the word comes from the same root word.

**Item 5** always

This item was poorly done. Although being a common adverb, candidates couldn't figure out its translation. Among answers that were not given credit are *عندما/هميشا/كل*.

The attention of educators is drawn to the fact that spelling mistakes are penalised, for instance wrong spelling of words *دائم/زكي/سري/كل وقت*.

**Part B**

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

**Item 1** Samira is a 15-year-old girl.

A good number of candidates were not able to translate the sentence structure '15-year-old girl'. Some candidates translated 15 into 25 or 55. While others missed out the word 'year' while translating.

Among the wrong answers were *سميرة هي عشرة خمس عشرين بنت/سميرة هي بنت خمستان من عمر/كان سامعة*.  
*عشرة خامس بنت.*

**Item 2** She lives in Moka.

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

**Item 3** Her favourite subject at school is English.

This was another challenging part. Candidates could not find the translation of favourite and subject. Candidates were not given credit for *هي تحب اللغة الإنجليزية الأكثر/اللغة المشهورة في المدرسة هي عنليش/درسها*.  
*المفضل في المدرسة الانجليزية/*. Transliteration of the word 'English' was not accepted.

**Item 4** She is a very hardworking girl.

This item was rather well done by many candidates. However, some candidates didn't pay heed to the noun-adjective agreement such as *بنت مجتهد*.

Among the wrong translations for the word 'hardworking' were *عاملة/نظيفة/ذكية/مهذب*.

**Item 5** She also likes doing sports.

A large majority of candidates omitted to translate the word 'also'. Some candidates wrongly translated 'sports' by 'mathematics' since both words are very similar. Grammatical and spelling mistakes such as *تحب أن يمارس الرياضة* were not given credit.

Educators are advised to train students to apply grammatical rules and to pay attention to correct spelling of words in translation tasks. This will also help them with their writing skills.

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

Question 10 assessed candidates' ability to write a coherent piece of continuous prose of around 150 words. This question normally assesses higher order writing skills. They were required to write one composition out of a choice of a narrative or a descriptive topic.

This year, candidates were given the choice to either describe the scene of their town or village or nearby place after a heavy rainfall or to write a narrative essay which comprised the following sentence *"on that day we left home early morning..."*.

As was noted last year, there is room for improvement in this task. Being able to write a continuous piece of prose in accurate Arabic remains a skill which has not been mastered by a vast majority. It is noteworthy that this skill offers candidates the foundation to be able to continue their upper secondary education successfully.

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

The following general advice should be helpful to candidates:

- Candidates should identify the key words in the essay titles so as to satisfy the requirements of the question.
- Candidates are advised to stay within the word limit and to check their work thoroughly.
- The use of appropriate and varied vocabulary is strongly encouraged.
- Candidates should be precise in the use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Varied sentence structures should be used in their writing.
- Candidates are recommended to write in a logical and coherent manner.

Based on feedback from Examiners, Educators are strongly advised to address spelling more directly in class, as many candidates who otherwise expressed themselves quite clearly unfortunately struggled to write words as they ought to appear in writing, including basic words.

Educators are urged to ensure their candidates understand the significance of dots on and under letters as these are crucial in conveying meaning.

The majority of candidates chose the narrative essay over the descriptive 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

The descriptive essay, **Describe the scene of your town or village or nearby place after a heavy rainfall**, was attempted by a small number of candidates. They 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. They relied more heavily on narrating a raining day rather than describing the scene.

The following responses illustrate examiners' expectations in descriptive essays.

#### Essay 1

في الصباح يوم الاثنين الجو مشمس. استمعوا كل الطلاب إلى المعلم بعناية. الناظر يمشي ويدخل كل الفصول ليعلم أنكل ناس طيب. عندم وصل المدير في صف السادسة فجائتاً تنزل المطر عزيرة. التلاميذ يخافون لما توجدوا البرق وبدء التلاميذ في صف الأول أن يجي. لم تعرف المعلمون على ما يفعلوا.

يجري المدير إلى غرفته ليستمع على الراديو عن المطر. قال الراديو "فجائتاً بداء المطر ان نزل. املنت الشعوع بالماء والشاطي وسخ. لا ذهبوا إلى الشاطي. قال الوزيرة التعليم والوزير الصحة ان غلق كل مدارس الآن وغداً. شكرًا."

اسرع الناظر في كل فصول ليخبرها للمعلمين. بعد خمسة دقائق قال الوالدان على هاتف ان لم يستطيعوا ان وصل إلى المدرسة لأن املنت الشوارع بالماء.

التلاميذ يجلسوا في مدرسة لساعة ووصلوا الوالدان ببطء. شكروا الناظر شكرا جزيلا لأنه نشيط وذكي وامين.

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. There is little interest for the reader. This writing can only score very low marks and remains in Band 5.

## Essay 2

في الصباح أمس نزلت الأمطار غزيرة في مدينتي. كانت المكار طوولا جداً. أصبحت انشط وانشط. نزلت المكار لأربعة ساعات ولا تتنحي. كانت الرياح رأيت الماء على الشارع من نافذتي ووالدون مع ابنوهم يجرون لرجع إلى بيتهم رأيت الأشجار سقطت على الأرض وعلى الطريق. كنت شعرت بالبرد جدا في البيت. سمعت صوت كبير من السماء. سمعت الحروف والصت بالمطار عندما نزلت السماء لا زرقاء والشمس ما هناك. شعرت بالخاف. المدرسة مغلقة لأن المطار. لا عرفت ماذا أفعل. أصبحت البيت أسود لان الشمس غائبة. هاتفي مكسورا. وما لعبت معه. لعب الكرة القدم مع أخي في البيت. نمت في غرفتي لأول ساعة. ما كانت الأنترنت لمشاهد التلفاز. كانت الشاعر واسخ الماء والقمامة التي حملها. وصل الماء قريب من باب الغرفة لجلوس. شعرت إنك في عاصفة. بعد أربعة ساعات انتهى المطار ورأيت الشمس والطيور يغنون. شعرت بالحرارة. خرجت من البيت ورأى شجرة كبيرة على الأرض أمام بيتي. أنا أكره عندما كان المطار تنزل.

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 structures and simple vocabulary which is not always accurate. With little interest for the reader, this essay can only score below mid-range mark and stays in Band 3.

## Narrative Writing

On the whole, performance in the narrative task was average. This year, candidates were asked to write a story which includes the line *“on that day we left home early morning...”* and this was the most popular option among candidates.

Candidates who attempted the narrative essay were able to insert the sentence given to them properly in their essay. While a few of them, inserted the given sentence at the end of their essay as a conclusion. Very few candidates were able to produced detailed storylines, using very accurate G/S/P and wide vocabulary. They were able to use varied sentence types to sustain the reader’s interest throughout. However, the weaker candidates struggled with developing a plot and used very insecure language throughout.

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

### Essay 1

في ذلك اليوم، غادرنا البيت في الصباح الباكر. رأينا أن باب مكسرة مع النافذة. عندما ذهبنا أسرة إلى غرفة رأيت أن التلفزيون والتلفون أخي ما في الغرفة. في الغرفة أمي وأبي سرورهم وملابسهم ما في الغرفة أيضا. اتصل بمركز الشرطة بهذه ووصلوا الشرطة إلى بيتنا. قال الشرطة: "كان لص". كان أمي، أبي وأخي حزين جدا. أخي تلقون كثيرا. بدأ أن يبكي. بعد ذلك رجع الشرطي إلى المركز وذهبا معه. رجعنا إلى بيتنا بعد ثلاثة ساعة. ورأينا رجل. هو يذهب في بيتنا. اتصل أم المركز الشرطة وصله في ١٥ ساعة. هو اللص. شكر أبي الشرطي شكرا جزيلا.

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 grammatical and spelling mistakes which means that it can only score low marks.

### Essay 2

في ذلك اليوم، غادرنا البيت في الصباح الباكر. قرر أبي لأذهب الى شاطئ البحر. في هذا يوم نستيقظ مبكرا في الصباح. ثم ناكل الخبر مع زبد. نشرب الشاي. وبعد ذلك، تجهز أمي الطعام عندما أنا و أخي نلبس الملابس السباح. وبعد ذلك، يركب أبي الى شاطئ البحر بساعة. هناك/ الجو جميل. وبعد فتر فضير، تجلس أنا و أسرتي تحت الأشجار كبيرة. ثم أنا وأخي نلعب كرة قدم. وبعد نصف الساعة، نقرر لناكل الطعام لذيذاً. نتناول سمكة لذيذة في المطعم. ثم نسبح في الماء. وبعد نصف الساعة، يحول الملابس السباح. ثم في الساعة السادس نركب إلى بيت بساعة.

This essay is relevant although there has been little attempt at developing the storyline. However, on linguistic aspects, it is problematic. The vocabulary is elementary. In grammar, the incoherence of tenses is glaring as is the poor control over agreement and punctuation. Therefore, while deserving some marks for being relevant, this work can only stay in Band 4, particularly due to the insecurity shown in the use of language.

### Essay 3

في يوم السبت الماضي، كان الجو مشمساً ولطيفاً ونحيفاً. فجأة قرر أبي أن نذهب إلى الشاطئ البحر "مون شوازي". كان الأسرة مسرور جداً واستعد من السفر إلى البحر. خذنا الملابس السباحة وذهب إلى المكان مناسباً.

بعد ربع الساعة من السير، وصلنا إلى الشاطئ وجدنا المكان جميل تحت الشجرة "فلاو". بعد ذلك، لبسنا الملابس السباحة وسبحنا منذ وقت طويل. كان على الرمال، بناء الأولاد القصر الرملية ولعب اللعب مختلفة مثل الجري وكرة القدم وكرة السلة. بعد وقت قليل، نزلت أمطار عزيرة.

جرنا إلى السيارة ولم فتح الباب السيارة وكان المفتاح في السيارة. سكننا على الشاطئ والصبر خارج منا. في المساء، انكسر أبي بابة السيارة وخذ المفتاح. فتح السيارة ونحن مسرورين جداً. كان أخي مريضاً لأن أمطار عزيرة ثم ذهبنا إلى المستشفى.

في ذلك اليوم، غادرنا البيت في الصباح الباكر يوم التالي كان نحن متعبون وحزينون لأن بدأ هذا وقت بالابتسام وانتهى بالحزن.

While there is a developed storyline in this response, the language used remains the main issue. Errors occur when complexity is attempted. The vocabulary is satisfactory and simple sentences dominate overall. For this reason, this response gets a mid-range score and can only stay in Band 3.

#### Essay 4

في ذلك اليوم، غادرنا البيت في الصباح الباكر. كانت الجو مغيمًا جدًا! أنا و أصدقائي، ركبنا السيارة و اتجهنا إلى الملعب لنلعب كرة القدم معًا. كنتُ مسرورًا جدًا. بعد نصف ساعة، وصلنا إلى الملعب بعد ساعة من السير. أخذنا أن نلعب كرة القدم وإستمتعنا بالمباراة كثيرًا.

بينما كنتُ ألعب كرة القدم، سقطتُ على الأرض و جُرحتُ بكيث من شدة الألم. محمد، صديدي العزيز، رأيتُ جري محمد متجه إلى منزلي و أخبر والدي بالأمر. ذهبْتُ إلى المستشفى للعلاج. فحسني الطبيب وقال لي إن ساقِي مكسورة و وصف لي الدواء.

وبعد ذلك، ذهبْتُ مع والدي إلى الصيدلية لشراء الدواء. شكرتُ صديقي محمد شكرًا جزيلا و رجعتُ إلى بيتي. أدع الله العظيم بالشفاء القريب و بعد أسبوع تحسنت صحتي و شعرتُ بفرح شديد و أشكر الله . الحمد لله على كل حال!

Essay 4 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. This is clearly a candidate who can develop narratives with proper sequencing of sentences with ease and as such deserves a high mark. Yet, the grammatical mistakes cannot be overlooked. With fewer mistakes, this essay could have scored very highly.



## Essay 5

جاء فصل الصيف، فصل الراحة والسفر. في يوم الأحد الماضي، قرّر والذي أن يأخذنا إلى شاطئ البحر. شعرنا بالفرح والسعادة. وبدأنا نستعدّ لهذه الرحلة الممتعة. جهزت والدتي بعض الوجبات الخفيفة واشترى أبي المشروبات الغازية. وفي ذلك اليوم غادرنا البيت في الصباح الباكر. واتجهنا نحو شمال الجزيرة إلى "مون شوازي". كان السفر طويلاً ومتعباً.

بعد ساعة من السير، وصلنا إلى هناك. كان الشاطئ مزدحمًا بالناس. اخترنا مكانًا مناسبًا تحت ظلال أشجار "فيلاو". كان الناس يتمتعون أنفسهم. كان هناك سياح يمشون على الرمال الناعمة وكان الأطفال يبنون القلاع الرملية وهو سعداء وأما الكبار فكانوا يسبحون في الماء الدافئ. كان هناك من يلعب تنس الريشة والكرة الطائرة على الشاطئ.

بعد ذلك لعبت كرة القدم مع أختي الصغيرة ثم ذهبنا في جولة بحرية في القارب زجاجي القاع وشاهدنا الشعاب المرجانية والأسماك الملونة بكل أنواع مختلفة. كان صوت الأمواج يعطيني الهدوء. يا له من منظر رائع! قد دهشتُ بجمال البحر. "إن الله أحسن الخالقين".

ولما حان وقت الغداء اتجهنا إلى مطعم فاخر بالقرب من البحر وتناولنا الأطباق الشهيرة وكان فعلاً لذيذاً وشهياً جداً. أكلنا الدجاج المقلي والحساء والسلطة. أكلنا حتى شبعنا. وبعد ذلك طلبنا البوظة. وفي النهاية جاء النادل بالفاتورة ودفع له والذي النقود. تركنا المطعم في الساعة التاسعة تقريباً ورجعنا إلى البيت متعبين ولكننا مسرورون جداً. كان يوماً ممتعاً جداً وشكرت والدي شكراً جزيلاً. لن أنسى ذلك اليوم أبداً.

This essay is a very good piece of work at this level, with mastery of grammar, spelling and punctuation. It fulfils the objectives of this question which is to produce a piece of work using creativity and imagination while making use of appropriate and varied vocabulary. A variety of sentence structures has been used consistently and in a very natural way. This essay scores very highly for these reasons and is in Band 1.