



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

**MAURITIUS
EXAMINATIONS
SYNDICATE**

**NCE 2024
GRADE 9
ARABIC**

Subject code: N660

EXAMINERS' REPORT

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
 - comparative form
 - transformation of masculine to feminine, from plural to singular and vice versa
 - ordinal numbers
 - transforming declarative sentences into negatives properly
 - transforming verbal sentences into nominal 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 86.21% 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, fewer candidates 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 well done by most candidates (Question 2). 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 quite disappointing.

As far as grammar is concerned, 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, despite it's being the most challenging skill for most of our students, a majority attempted the tasks, be it at a basic level where they have to produce syntactically correct sentences, positioning verbs, 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 preposition, pronouns (demonstrative, relative and personal), conjunction, comparative adjective, interrogative particles and ordinal numbers. Items tested through open ended were the transformation of feminine plural word into singular, masculine form into feminine form, transformation of affirmative sentence into negative form, verbal sentence to nominal sentence, broken plural and re-arranging words in order to form meaningful sentence.

The best-done items in part A were:

Item 1 (Preposition)

سافر أبي إلى مصر.

Item 2 (Demonstrative Pronoun)

هذه الفتاة جميلة.

Item 3 (Conjunction)

أكل الخبز و أشرب الشاي.

Item 5 (Interrogative particle)

كيف الجو في مدينتك؟

Item 7 (Personal/detached pronoun)

يا فاطمة! هل أنت مريضة؟

It is encouraging to see that candidates can do items testing preposition, demonstrative pronoun, conjunction, interrogative particles and personal/detached pronouns correctly.

The following items were found challenging:

Item 4 (Comparative form)

السفينة أكبر من القارب.

Comparative adjectives follow a specific pattern, in this item candidates were required to identify the given construct as a comparative sentence in order to choose from the given adjectives.

Item 6 (Relative Pronoun)

الخبازون الذين حضروا ماهرون.

This item tested the application of relative pronouns. Some candidates incorrectly selected the plural masculine form as the answer.

Item 8 (Ordinal numbers)

في الحافلة تسعة ركاب.

This item tested the ordinal number. Candidates failed to apply the rules concerning numbers 3 to 10. In this item, 'passengers' is a masculine word, thus the number needs to be feminine.

Item 9 (Use of tenses: Simple present)

يلعبُ أحمد كرة القدم كل يوم.

A common wrong answer was (يلعب) instead of (يلعبُ) where candidates failed to notice the diacritic marks.

Candidates fared well in the following items in part B:

Item 15 (Re-arranging words in order to form meaningful sentence)

تشرب الأم العصير في الصباح.

الأم تشرب العصير في الصباح.

في الصباح تشرب الأم العصير.

The following items posed some difficulty:

Item 10

حضرت الطالبة الدرس أمس.

This item tested the transformation from feminine plural form to singular. A large number of candidates instead transformed the underlined word into masculine plural as well as singular form.

Item 11

الابنة في الغرفة.

This item tested the transformation from masculine to feminine form. In the case of many candidates, instead of using (ابنة) they have used (بنت).

Item 12

لا يمارس عمر الرياضة يوميا

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 negative sentence in Arabic, leading them to transform the sentence into nominal or interrogative sentence.

Item 13

الأولاد يساعدون أستاذهم.

The transformation of verbal sentences to nominal sentences is a common task. Despite its frequency, many candidates still find it challenging when it comes to agreement of the verb. In this case, the verb follows a plural subject, therefore, it must agree in number and be in plural form. This distinction in verb agreement is crucial to ensure grammatical accuracy.

Item 14 (Broken plural)

الكلاب داخل البيت.

In this item, many candidates transformed the word (كلب) into (كليون) instead of (كلاب), i.e. they have used the sound masculine plural form instead of pattern of broken plural.

Examiners would like to highlight that candidates did indicate their answer clearly.

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

أختي تحتاج إلى دولاب لتضع ملابسها فيها.

Item 3

التلميذ كسلان، لا يكتب واجباته المنزلية أبداً.

Item 4

نذهب إلى السوق لنشتري الخضر كل يوم الأحد.

Item 5

الرجل يجري مائة متر كل يوم.

The following item proved to be challenging:

Item 2 بمناسبة عيد ميلاد أمي، زين أبي البيت بالزهور.

Several candidates get confused or some simply have no knowledge about the meaning of the given words which resulted in them selecting random answers. Hence, they could not choose the correct answer which was 'decorated'.

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 centered around a talk on Road Safety, the other featuring a poster of a cleaning company. On the whole, performance was encouraging with most candidates showing that the basic reading skill of literal understanding has been acquired even for the low achievers.

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

Part A:

Item 5

كيف يساعد هذا الكلام التلاميذ؟

Some candidates lost marks by giving incomplete answer:

"هذا الكلام سيساعد التلاميذ أن يفهموا"

Part B: Item 5

من صاحب الشركة؟

Many candidates got confused about this item. They gave the phone number (٤٦٨٤٤٥٢) instead of the name of the owner of the company (السيد عبد القادر). This issue has cropped up mostly because normally the last question in this part used to be that of contact details. Hence, candidates have answered blindly without paying attention to the question.

It is worth reminding Educators to advise their students to read questions carefully and understand the wordings before writing their answers.

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.

The following items proved to be problematic:

Item 1 بعد أن انتهت المدرسة، ركب سلمان الحافلة لـ... (رجوع) إلى البيت.

This item tested whether candidates could transform the verbal noun (رجوع) into the Present tense in accusative form (يرجع). Certain candidates were able to put the verb in the correct tense but scored no marks because of wrong diacritic mark (يرجع).

In addition, some others wrote (للرجوع) which was also unacceptable because there has been no real change in the word formation by just making the word in its definite form.

Item 2 كانت الحافلة ... (ازدحم) بالطلاب

In this item candidates were required to transform the verbal noun into either its past participle form (تزدحم) or to use it as predicate for the quasi verb (مزدحمة). Unfortunately, candidates who were able to identify the required transformation were penalized due to grammatical mistakes such as (مزدحمًا) or (مزدحم) or (مزدحمًا).

Item 5 ولكنه خاف ألا يستيقظ عند وصول... (وقف) الحافلات

In this item, candidates were required to transform the verb into the noun of place (موقف). Instead, candidates transformed the word into verbal noun (وقوف) which does not correspond to the context.

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.

Nevertheless, it was noted that items 1, 3 and 5 posed difficulties to a number of candidates in this task.

Item 1 عندما كان أحمد طفلاً،

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 وهم يصرخ من كل جانب

In this item, it was required to give the verb in the Present tense masculine plural form (يصرخون). Instead, quite a number of candidates have written (يصرخوا) or (صرخوا). This shows confusion when to drop 'ن' and when to keep it.

Item 5 وصاح الطباخ: "كلو ما هو طازج..!"

This item aimed to assess candidates' knowledge of the imperative form (كلوا). Most candidates struggled to find the correct spelling and provided (كلو), (كل), (كلوة) as answers. A significant number of candidates failed to use Imperative form properly and gave (أكل) as answer.

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 was set on a drama competition held in school.

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.

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** تعجبت عندما سمعت أن مدرستنا نجحت.
Item 2 فسألني أصدقائي أن أقبَل الجائزة.
Item 3 رأيت أصدقائنا كانوا سعداء
Item 5 نحن اجتهدنا لإعداد المسرحية

Some candidates found this item challenging:

- Item 4** وكان أباؤنا أيضا يفتخرون بنجاحنا.

Candidates filled the gap using (دائما) while the correct answer was (أباؤنا). Had they read the sentence properly, they would have noticed that this fails to correctly convey the intended meaning of the sentence.

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. Others did not have the required vocabulary to provide plausible answers to the gaps provided. Some provided answers which did not do justice to the overall context of the passage. The overall performance on this part was average this year.

- Item 1** لم يكن سهلا لنجح في هذه المسابقة. من البداية إلى/حتى النهاية، وجدنا صعوبات كثيرة.

This item was generally well attempted, however, some candidates lost marks due to incorrect conjunctions such as (بعد/و/عن).

- Item 2** و/نحن/لكن لم نفقد الأمل.

Though this item was accessible to candidates, firstly some of them were penalized for orthograph errors (لاكن) and secondly, a common incorrect response noted was (لأن).

Item 3 وهننني الحاضرون/الأصدقاء/أصدقائي/المعلمون/الآباء/أباؤنا/الجميع بنجاحي في هذه المسابقة.

A number of options were acceptable here, unfortunately, candidates came up with wrong answers which were inappropriate due to them being in the *singular* form. Those common wrong answers were (كل واحد/ كثير/ والدي/صديقي/جدا).

Item 4 شكرتهم جميعا وقلت/شرحت لهم أن هذا النجاح كان من جهد كل أعضاء الفريق.

The majority of candidates got this answer correct. Those who gave wrong answers were those who have not taken the whole sentence into consideration and have written (قال).

Item 5 ولا نستطيع أن ننسى هذا اليوم/النجاح/الوقت/الفوز/الحدث/يوم/وقت أبدا.

This item was found to be confusing for certain candidates as only a suitable masculine word could be used. This is so because of the demonstrative pronoun هذا used in the sentence.

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 visit to the hospital. They had to write a letter to the doctor thanking him for his treatment. The purpose and situation proved to be challenging for some candidates. They lacked the appropriate vocabulary to address the prompts given.

A successful answer had to address the following prompts:

- When did you go to the hospital?
- Why did you go to the hospital?
- What did the doctor do to help you?
- What did you like about the doctor?
- Tell the doctor “Thank you” for his treatment and services.

For **Bullet point 1**, candidates were asked about when they went to the hospital. This was achieved by many candidates. They mentioned a specific day or time when they went to the hospital.

For **Bullet point 2**, candidates asked about the reasons for which they went to the hospital. Some wrote because of fever, others said because of headache, while some others wrote because they were having pain in their belly.

For **Bullet point 3**, candidates had to mention what the doctor did to help them. Among the ideas developed were, he consulted them and prescribed medicines. Some others said that he advised them to sleep, not to watch television and to eat healthy food.

For **Bullet point 4**, candidates were asked about what they liked about the doctor. Some wrote they like him because he was handsome, others said they love him because he was kind and generous.

For **Bullet point 5**, candidates were supposed to thank the doctor. For this one most candidates have lifted the sentence as it is and they have been awarded their mark as it was correct.

To obtain better results, candidates should be encouraged to write precise answers and 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 average. Many candidates tried to write something while few chose not to attempt the question at all. However, a handful of candidates produced very good pieces 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 introductions of learnt clichés 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

سيدي الطبيب أحمد

ذهبت في المستشفى بسيرت. فاطيمة جدة في مستشفى. فعل الطبيب يساعدك. أحببت عن الطبيب. قل للطبيب
سكرا لعلاجه ولخدمة.

بالشكر والإخلاص

مانعة

It is clear from this writing that it is irrelevant and meaningless. The candidate has just copied the bullet points and that too in an unrecognizable Arabic. There is neither clear awareness of audience nor purpose nor development of ideas. This piece of writing could not score any marks and remains in Band 5.

Functional Writing 2

سيدي الطبيب محمد

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركته. أكتب لك هذه الرسالة ليشكر. يوم الماضي ذهب إلى المستشفى لأن جرح على يد. يساعد الطبيب يدى ونعوجه. أحببت الطبيب اليك شكرا جزيلًا. مع السلامة.

بالشكر والإخلاص

أحمد

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 means that this writing can only score very low marks and stays in Band 4.

Functional Writing 3

سيدي الطبيب عمر

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركة. كيف هالك؟ أنا أكتب هذه الرسالة لتشكر أنت لعلاج. أنا ذهبت إلى المستشفى يوم الجمعة الماضي.

أنا أشعر بألم شديد في بطني. قالت الطبيب لناكل الخضر والفواكه كثيرا. هو مدهشة جدا. أنا أشكرها كثيرا جدا.

بالشكر والإخلاص

خديجة

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.

Functional Writing 4

سيدي الطبيب يونس

سلام من الله عليك، أرجو أنك على ما يرام. الأسبوع الماضي، عندما ذهبت إلى المستشفى في الساعة التاسعة لأراك بسبب العلاج. كنت أشعر بالألم في رأسي وكدت انفجر بالبكاء. أنت، الطبيب سألتني: "ماذا بك؟" في صوت أنا أحب كثيرا. وبعد ذلك، عالجت أنا، المريض. عندما في طريقي العودة، كنت أفكر فذلك اليوم، أكتب لك هذه الرسالة لأشكرك شكرا جزيلا لعلاجك ولخدماتك. ثم شكرا.

بالشكر والإخلاص

يوسف

Functional writing 4 is a good piece of writing. The candidate showed an awareness of audience and purpose. Most of the points were addressed. 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 1 script and did not deserve the best marks.

Functional writing 5

سيدي الطبيب سمير

أتمنى أن تكون في أتم الصحة. أكتب هذه الرسالة يا طبيب العزيز لأشكرك لعلاجك ولخدماتك. يا طبيب زرتك في المستشفى في يوم الإثنين الماضي بعد الظهر. ذهبت هذا اليوم إلى المستشفى لأنني كنت أسقط في حديقتي عندما كنت ألعب مع أخي الصغير.

وعندما وصلت إلى المستشفى، كنت مستلقيا. فحصني وقاس صغطي وقام بتحليل الدم وحسن نبض قلبي والحمد لله كنت على ما يرام. يا طبيب، كنت أحب عمالك لأنك شخص وطبيب صالح وذكي وتساعد الأمراض. فجزاك الله خيرا. أريد أن أقولك "شكرا جزيلا لعلاجك ولخدماتك والله يطول بعمرك".

بالشكر والإخلاص

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 exercise evaluates the learners' ability to read and understand a passage in Arabic. The questions encompass various aspects of reading comprehension, such as direct understanding, inferential understanding, and grasping the contextual vocabulary.

The passage was about a girl named Aisha and a quiet boy named Rayyan who were not friends. They later became close friends due to pair work in the class. Cases where candidates failed to understand the passage completely were rare. On the whole, the performance was good. 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 penalized if evidence of understanding is clearly shown.

The following items are worthy of comment:

Item 2 لماذا لم تتحدث عائشة مع ريان أبداً؟

Expected answer(s): لأنه مختلف عنها/لأنهما مختلفان عن بعض

Common wrong answer(s) included:

كان ريان ولد ذكي/ لم تتحدث عائشة مع ريان أبداً لأن ريان تلميذ مختلف عن عائشة. كان ريان ولداً ذكياً ولكن لا يتكلم مع أحد.

In this task, it is important for candidates to pick up only specific information, excess information will not be given credit.

Item 4 كيف حث المعلم على عائشة أن تكتب الواجبات مع ريان؟

Expected answer(s): أنها ستتعلم أشياء كثيرة من ريان

Common wrong answer(s) included:

أن ريان ولد ذكي / فسألت عائشة معلمها: "هل أستطيع أن أكتب الواجبات مع صديق آخر؟" ولكن المعلم حثَّ على عائشة أن تكتب الواجبات مع ريان. وأخبرها بأنها ستتعلم أشياء كثيرة منه.

Indiscriminate lifting containing excess information cannot be given credit.

Item 7 لماذا أحببت عائشة ريان؟

Expected answer(s): لأنه ولد ذكي / لأنه ولد مجتهد / تعلمت من ريان أشياء كثيرة

Common wrong answer(s) included:

في وقت قصير أصبح ريان وعائشة صديقين حميمين

This is not a plausible answer; therefore, credit could not be given.

Item 9(b) وكيف شعر ريان وعائشة عندما سخر الأصدقاء عنهما؟

Expected answer(s): حزن ريان و عائشة على كلام أصدقائهما/ حزن ريان وعائشة:

Common wrong answer(s) included:

حزن ريان وعائشة على كلام أصدقائهما ولكن بقيا صديقين.

This item was found to be challenging by many candidates who copied indiscriminately due to misunderstanding of the passage content.

Item 10 مع مرور الوقت، ماذا فهم الأصدقاء عن الصداقة؟

Expected answer(s): مع مرور الأيام، فهم الأصدقاء أنّ شخصين مختلفين يستطيعان أن يكونا صديقين. / فهموا أن الاختلاف ليس مهما / فهموا أن الشخصين المختلفين يستطيعان أن يكونا صديقين حميمين

Common wrong answer(s) included:

أصبح كلهم أصدقاء.

Many candidates had difficulty in giving the precise answer.

Item 11 ماذا تغير لريان في النهاية؟

Expected answer(s): في النهاية أصبح لريان أصدقاء كثيرون / والآن عند ريان أصدقاء كثيرون.

Common wrong answer(s) included:

الآن عند ريان أصدقاء كثيرون. هذه القصة تعلمنا درسا عن الصداقة

The lift above was not given credit.

Item 12

Many candidates found it challenging because they were not able to figure out the meaning of the vocabulary in context. However, candidates tried hard to explain the first and second word but failed to give the correct answer for the third word (مختلفين). This part seemed ambiguous to candidates.

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** horse
- Item 3** shop
- Item 5** suddenly

Candidates, however, struggled with the following items:

- Item 2** moon

Among the wrong answers were (ليل / هلال). Candidates should be made aware that there is a difference between قمر and هلال.

- Item 4** famous

This item was poorly done. Although being a common adjective, candidates couldn't figure out its translation. An answer that was not given credit is مشروف.

The attention of educators is drawn to the fact that spelling mistakes are penalised, for instance wrong spelling of words فارس / الدكين / مشحور / فجئة.

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** *I go to my grandmother's house during holidays.*

A significant number of candidates struggled to accurately translate the *idhafa* structure (possessive). The answers البيت جدتي / البيت الجدة / البيت جدتي were not given credit. While many others missed out the word holidays while translating.

- Item 2** *She is happy to see me.*

Candidates failed to give the correct answer due to wrong grammatical agreement. Among the incorrect translations were تريني / تشاهدني.

- Item 3** *We cook delicious food.*

In this item, candidates did not pay heed to the noun-adjective agreement. Thus, translating 'delicious food' as الطعام لذيذا was not given any credit.

- Item 4** *We watch movies.*

Several candidates omitted this item completely while others mistakenly translated 'watch' as نشهد / نرى. Moreover, many did not translate 'movies' in the plural form or simply wrongly translated it as (فلمون).

- Item 5** *We go to the seaside.*

This item was rather well done by most candidates.

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 a place which they like to visit or to write a narrative essay which comprised the following sentence *"I was worried and upset because I could not see it."*

Compared to last year, there is improvement in this task this year. 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. Some candidates did not attempt the question while many others tried to write something relevant this time. 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.

This year there is an increase in the number of candidates who opted for descriptive essay as the title seemed easier than the narrative one. Unfortunately, many ended it up as narrative.

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, **a place you like to visit**, was attempted by a 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 this place instead of focusing on a description of the place. They relied more heavily on narrating what they like rather than describing the place.

The following responses illustrate examiners' expectations in descriptive essays.

Essay 1

اليوم يوم الأحد. كان الجو جميل ومعتدل وشمس مشرقة في السماء. وكان أسرتي في البيت. فقرر أبي أن تذهب إلى الشاطئ البحر مع أسرتي. وبعد أن يجهز الطعام والشراب ووضعتها في السلة، قرر أن تذهب إلى الشاطئ البحر "مون الشوازي". وكان هذا اليوم يزور مكانا جميلا. هناك الشجرة كبيرة والرمل والماء والسماك وكان الناس فرح شديدا.

وحتى وصل هناك يلعب الكرة القدم مع أبي وأخي. وبعد قليل دخل الماء ليسمح مع أختي وصديقتها. ثم تصلي صلات وبعد ذلك أكل العداء البيراني وأشرب الببسي. وفي نهاية اليوم رجع إلى البيت مسرورون.

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

أحب حديقة "كازيلا" جدا. هناك كان الجو لطيفا والشمس ساطعة في السماء زرقاء والصافية. تطير الطيور الملونة على عشب الأشجار.

هناك لم مزدحما بالسيارات والحافلات. وذهب كثير السائحون هناك. كان كثير الحيوانات والأزهار المختلفة. في حوض صغير يسبح الاسماك الملونة والمختلفة.

ثم، أحب أمشي مع الأسد وأيضا يذهب إلى "سافري". نشاهد الطبيعة والأزهار والأشجار العالية. نأخذ صوراً كثيرة.

أتمنى يوم مسرورة في الطبيعة. وأنا أيضا أحب الحيوانات كثيرة ولن أنسى هذا اليوم. ونجد على كل الانسان ان تزور حديقة كازيلا.

In this essay, the description lacks details. Concerning grammar, spelling and syntax, the meaning is not in doubt, but errors are quite frequent. Basic vocabulary has been used and it is not always accurate. Consequently, this essay remains in Band 4.

Essay 3

كان الجميع يحب مكانا أن يزوره كان البعض يحبون الشاطئ أو الحديقة والآخرين يحبون البلاد مثل دبي أو فرنسا. أما أنا فأحب أن أزور حديقة الحيوانات.

حديقتي الحيوانات المفضلة هي حديقة كازيلا التي تقع في جنوب موريشيوس في منطقة "بلاك ريفر". هي حديقة جميلة ونظيفة ورائعة وواسعة جدا جدا. تتكون كازيلا حول مائة حيوان مختلف في مدخل البستان، حوض كبير. وفي هذا الحوض، ماء هادئ ودافئ. وفي الماء، أسماك ملونة جميلة كبيرة. عندما تمشي في الداخل، ترى أشجار عالية جدا. فتتفكر أن أعصانها في السماء الزرقاء. كان الجو هناك رائعا والشمس ساطعة في السماء وكان الدرجة الحرارة عالية دائما. وهكذا، يجلس الناس في ظلل الأشجار لمدة بضع دقائق ليستريحوا.

كان البيئة هناك مثل في الغابة والسبب هو في كازيلا ستري حيوانات مثل القرد على الأشجار الذي يستمتع الأطفال أن يشاهدوا، والفرس الأبيض والفرس الأسود بركضان في ملعب، والقطة الكبيرة مثل النمر وملك الغابة: الأسد وعائلتهما ينامون على الأرض الأخضر. وأيضا، كان هناك طيور كثيرة وملونة وكبيرة وصغيرة. فكان بعضهم يغنون أغنية مختلفة التي يسمع كل الناس إليها والآخرين يطربون. كان شاب جرى كالجن وراء الطير الأزرق المشهور "المكو".

سببي لحب هذه الحديقة هي كل ما كتبت من بداية هذا التعبير. أتمنى أمن يقرأ تعبيرتي هو يستطيع أن يزور كازيلا وأن يرى جمالها مثلي إن شاء الله. في رؤيتي، حديقة كازيلا هي أحسن مكان في العالم.

In essay 3, 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. This essay stays in Band 3.

Narrative Writing

On the whole, performance in the narrative task was good enough. This year, candidates were asked to write a story which includes the line ***“I was worried and upset because I could not see it.”*** and this was the most popular option among candidates.

Candidates who attempted the narrative essay were able to insert the sentence given to them in their essay, but some wrote they could not find a person instead of a thing. In this case, candidates have not been penalized. Very few candidates were able to produce 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

كان الجو جميلا ومشمسا. أستيقظ مبكرا في صباح لساعد التلفاز. ثم يتناول الفطور مع أمي وأبي. بعد ذلك، يقرر أبي أن يذهب إلى شاطئ البحر. ثم تقدم أم الملابس للسباح والطعام ليتناول هناك. ثم دخل في سيارة ويذهب.
بعد نصف ساعة، وصل أبي شاطئ البحر. خرج من السيارة وذهب إلى رما. ثم يتناول الغداء هناك مع أمي وأبي. بعد نصف ساعة، “put” ملابس السباح ويذهب إلى الماء.
كنت قلقا ومصطربا لأنني لا أشطيع أن أراه. بعد ثمانية ساعة، دخل إلى سيارة وخرج إلى المنزل مسرورا.

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 يوم من الأيام الشتوي، ذهبت إلى الشاطئ البحر مع أجي وعمي وإبنين عمي أنس وأويس. عندما أوبس الماء البحر، بدأ أن يجري إليه. هو لم يسمع إلى عمي. جرا أخي بعد أوبس يأكل أيس كريم. عندما رأى أنس ذلك، بدأ أن يقول بسوت عال: "أريد أيس كريم! يا أبي، من فضلك! تأخذني أيس كريم!"

قال عمي أن سيشتري لنا الجميع أيس كريم. كان نحن سعيدا وبدأنا أن يمشي إلى الشاحنة الأيس كريم. فجأة، ضحك أوبس: "أبي، أين أنس؟" عندما سمعنا ذلك، بدأنا أن يشاهد لأنس. كنت قلقا ومضطربا لأنني لا أستطيع أن أراه أنس. سألت نفسي: "أين أنس؟ هل هو في الماء؟" لا. ليس أنس في الماء أو على الرمل الصفراء. جلست على الأرض وأخذت حاتفي لأقل لعمي أو أخي أن ليس

ترين! ترين! رن هاتفني. كان أوبس الذي ينكلم وقال أن أنس مع عمي قريت بالشاحنة الأيس كريم. كان أنس جراً إليها عندما قال عمي أن سيشتري أيس كريم للجميع.

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 الشهر الماضي، في العطلة قررت أسرتي الذهاب إلى الشاطئ البحر. نحن سعداء فجهزنا حقائبنا مع ملابس السباحة، الكرة والأطعام اللذيذة.

يوم الثلاثاء، في الساعة التاسعة، خرجنا من البيت إلى هناك، شاطئ البحر فليك أن فلاك. بعد نصف ساعة، كنا في الشاطئ. فغير ملابسنا لنسبح. لعبنا كرة القدم وكرة السلة والنصي في البحر. بعد ذلك، سمعنا، أخي وأنا، أغنيا. فبسرعة جرينا إلى هناك ورأينا رجلا يبيع الشوكولات والحلويات والعصير. فسألنا أولادنا الفلوس لشراء بعض الكعك.

أخذنا أبي النقود وشريت الكعك. عندما كنت أشتري هذا، ذهب أخي الصغير إلى الحمام العامة. انتظرتة فما غادر. "كنت قلقا ومضطربا لأنني لا أستطيع أن أراه." كدت انفجر بالبكاء. بدون إضاعة الوقت، اتصل بأبي ليخبره عن الحادث وقلت للناس ببني: "هل رأيت ولد صغير يلبس قميص أحمر؟" لكن بدون جدوي. قرر أبي أن اتصل برجال الشرطة عن هذا.

بعد وقت قصير، أتى الشرطة وبالمساعدة كلب الشرطة لحسن الحظ، وجدنا أخي. ظهر الخوف على وجهه وقد إحمر وجهه. كنا سعيدا جدا ورجعنا إلى البيت وشعرنا بالفرح.

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 يوم السبت الماضي، قررت أن أزور جدتي المريضة والعجوزة التي تسكن في دبي. كانت تسكن على نفسها وهي ستون من العمر. حزنت بحالتها فأردت ان أذهب إلى بيتها لأساعدها.

في هذا اليوم، استيقظت مبكرا وجهزت نفسي للسفر إلى دبي. استعدت حقائبي التي وضعت فيها الملابس وبعض الأطعمة والمشروبات وغيرها. وبعد الفطور، أخذت تذكرتي السفر ووضعتها في أحد من حقائبي. ثم أخذت سيارة أجرة إلى محطة القطار. أفضلت السفر بالقطار لأنه سريع ورخيص.

وصلت إلى هناك في الساعة التاسعة والنصف وكان القطار المتجه إلى دبي يغادر بعد نصف ساعة. فكرت أنني وصلت مبكرا فذهبت إلى مقصف واشتريت قهوة وكعكة الشوكولات. بعد قليل قال أحد من العمال: "القطار إلى دبي سيصل بعد قليل. الركاب ، اكشفوني تذاكر السفر من فضلك." فعندما بحثت للحقيبة التي وضعت فيها التذكرة، لم أجدها. كنت قلقا ومضطربا لأنني لا أستطيع أن أراها. أدركت أنني نسيتها في البيت. جريت أسرع بما أمكن ودخلت سيارة أجرة. قلت تاريخ بيتي إلى السابق وأسرعنا إلى هناك. عند بيتي، بحثت للتذكرة في كل مكان. في الأخير، استطاعت أن أراها ورجعت إلى المحطة فورا.

في النهاية، وصلت إلى المحطة اثناء دقائق قبل مغادرة القطار فاستطاعت أن أدخله. وصلت إلى دبي بأمان وساعدت جدتي. ما له من يوم!

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. Therefore, it remains in Band 2

Essay 5

ذات يوم في عطلة السنة الماضية، قررت أنا وأصدقائي أن نقضي أربعة أيام في فندق. كان معي عمر وأحمد وجابر. ذهبنا إلى فندق في شمال موريشيوس في "جراند باي". كنا سعداء لأنها كانت أول مرة نذهب إلى فندق. عندما وصلنا في اليوم الأول، كنا مندهشين بنظافة الفندق. كان هناك غرفتين. الغرفة الأولى كانت تطل على شاطئ البحر، والغرفة الثانية كانت تطل على المسبح. أخترت أنا وجابر الغرفة الأولى، وعمر وأحمد الغرفة الثانية. وفي صباح اليوم الثاني، ذهبنا إلى شاطئ البحر مع جابر. استلقينا على الرمال، وبعد قليل ذهبنا في غفوة. عندما استيقظت، لم أرى ساعتني التي أعطاها إلي والدي. كنت قلقا ومضطربا لأنني لا أستطيع أن أراها. اتصلت بجابر فورا وأخبرته بكل شيء. أسرع إلي جابر وبدأ يبحث معي، ولكن من دون فائدة. وبعد نصف ساعة، اتصل عمر وقال بأنني نسيت ساعتني على السرير. ضحكنا جميعا، وكان حدث لا ينسى، وفي النهاية أكملنا رحلتنا وعدنا إلى البيت مسرورين.

This essay is a very good piece of work at this level, with mastery of grammar, spelling and punctuation. It fulfills 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.