

# FIRST LANGUAGE ARABIC

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<p><b>Paper 7184/01 English Version</b> <b>Reading</b></p>
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## Key messages

- Candidates should read questions carefully and make sure they are answering the right question.
- Candidates are urged to use their own words when answering the questions and avoid copying full sentences or paragraphs from the texts.
- In the summary question, candidates should be reminded to address the demand of the summary question, to only summarise the ideas relevant to the summary question and to use the ideas from both texts.

## General comments

- There is a noticeable improvement in the performance of candidates in this series.
- There is an attempt to use own words and avoid lifting from the text.
- There is still a need for candidates to show control of a more varied range of language and structures in their writing. Effective support in grammar and sentences' structure is needed.
- Some candidates need more support in writing a summary by focusing on relevant ideas, using appropriate and varied linkage in order to produce coherent paragraphs and using correct punctuation.
- Summary skills are still in need of further polishing as there is a tendency to write all the ideas in both texts, disregarding the demand of the question.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly by quoting the evidence from the text as requested.
- (b) Accurate response from most candidates.
- (c) Some candidates did not recognise that the question is asking about an evidence of writer's sarcasm, so they either reworded the question or did not provide a correct answer.
- (d) Most candidates were able to provide two of the three required reasons. It is very important to train the candidates on the skill of identifying relevant information that targets the demand in the question.
- (e) Many candidates did not answer this question correctly. The reason perhaps is the lack of understanding of the reference in the question to 'those whom the writer opposes'. Establishing the writer's point view as the champion of the Arabic fuṣḥā is key to answering this question correctly.
- (f) Many candidates gave the right answer. Some were able to express the two ideas in their own words.
- (g) This question asked about two pieces of evidence from the text. Candidates should be trained to respond to these types of questions by providing what the writer has thought or expressed. It is not necessary to lift whole sentences from the text, but it is highly recommended to manipulate the language to present the evidence in their own words.

- (h) This question needed to be carefully considered by candidates. Some answered by rewording the idea in the question itself, i.e. that colloquial language is not the language of all Arabs. They should be trained to read the question thoroughly and extrapolate the reason behind the statement in the question, which is that colloquial language differs from one Arab nation to the other.
- (i) The right answer to this question required good inference skills from the candidates. Those who copied and pasted phrases from the text did not respond successfully to it. Candidates should specify which language is to be used and the reason behind this. Most answers did not provide these two pieces of information.
- (j) Many candidates gave accurate answers and explained the idea using their own words.
- (k) There were successful responses from a good number of candidates, however, some did not recognise that the two words التوقع والانغلاق are synonyms hence they were only awarded one mark.
- (l) The question clearly targets the plan of resolving the problem of education, so candidates' responses should revolve around this. Some included the idea of the result of this plan, i.e. أسس بناء تعليم وطني قوي. They should have differentiated between the plan and its consequences. Others used the wrong verb الإفراط to mean التفريط. Training candidates to widen their knowledge of vocabulary is highly recommended.

**Accuracy of Language:** This section assesses the accurate use and good style when writing. The emphasis here is to encourage candidates to use their own words when answering the questions. The expectation is to see varied sentences with good grammatical structure and accurate spelling.

## Question 2

Question 2 is the summary question where candidates are asked to summarise the main ideas on the rejection of the call to teach in colloquial Arabic.

The total mark for this question is divided into three parts:

1. **Content:** where candidates are expected to

- equally quote ideas from both texts to support their summary
- link the ideas in an organised and logical way
- use own words and avoid direct lifting of phrases from both texts
- disregard ideas that does not target the requirement of the question, e.g. Morocco called for the use of colloquialisms in teaching, or the various meanings of the word 'to sit' in fuṣḥā.

Many candidates tried to achieve this but there is still some evidence that summary skills and techniques need further improvement.

2. **Style and Organisation:** where candidates should show ability to

- express and focus relevant ideas with assured use of own words
- present these ideas in a good summary style with orderly grouping of ideas using linking words.

There is some improvement in the candidates' responses this series, but there is still a need to train candidates on using paragraphs and sentences that are correctly punctuated.

3. **Accuracy of Language:** where candidates should show ability to

- use of the right tense of verbs
- conjugate verbs in the right form (plural, dual),
- use of possessions and prepositions, definite/indefinite articles and "idhafa".

Examiners noted that there are various cases of candidates not distinguishing between the letters ي and ى, or the letters ( ة ) and ( ة ) (as endings for nouns or as possessive or object pronouns, in the case of the letter ( ة ))

Spelling should be addressed explicitly, in class. The examples mentioned above suggest that more attention should be focused on mastering spelling, as many candidates who expressed themselves clearly, unfortunately, failed in writing the letters as they should appear.

Teachers need to make sure their candidates understand the significance of dots on or under letters, as they are crucial in conveying meaning.

# FIRST LANGUAGE ARABIC

Paper 7184/02  
Writing

## Key messages

To do well on this paper, candidates are advised to:

- Pay close attention to the task and provide relevant responses to what is being asked.
- Pay attention to the difference between human and non-human plurals when applying grammatical rules.
- Pay more attention to the difference between masculine and feminine forms, especially when using verbs and relative clauses (الأسماء الموصولة).
- Use more images and metaphors in the descriptive tasks as they are powerful tools.
- Pay more attention to the difference between certain words that are close in pronunciation such as (إلى / إلى), (لكن/لاكن), and (هذا/هاذا).
- Use correct case endings. Subjects need to be in the مرفوع case, the Predicate of كان وأخواتها and objects should always be in the منصوب case.
- Use the correct prepositions with verbs. Remember that verbs in Arabic take different prepositions to English.
- Pay more attention to: همزة القطع وهمزة الوصل.
- Pay more attention to the difference between الألف المقصورة and الألف الطويلة.
- Pay attention to the difference between التاء المربوطة and التاء المفتوحة.
- Practise the conjugation of verbs.
- Improve on the use of connectors between sections and paragraphs.

## General comments

In general, **Question C** in **Section 1** of the exam proved to be the most popular among candidates. The other **Questions** were very close in popularity, with **Question B** the slightly more popular choice than the others. In the **Section 2**, **Question B** was by far the most popular while the other **Questions** were very close in terms of popularity.

Broadly speaking, there is noticeable improvement in various aspects of the exam: (i) there is less use of colloquial and foreign words and expressions in comparison to previous years, and (ii) complying with the writing styles of the tasks has noticeably improved. However, there are still several issues that need to be addressed to further improve marks. Although the use of colloquial Arabic and non-Arabic idiomatic style has dropped considerably in this session, candidates are encouraged to increase their reading of literary works by well-known Arabic authors, not only to get more accustomed to their styles of writing, but also to be able to improve their own comprehension and practice of the Arabic grammar, and subsequently, avoid making basic grammatical errors. The other area where candidates can improve on to achieve higher marks is that of descriptive and narrative styles. For the former, candidates need to improve on how to use the senses to describe things and to understand that a good description is that which has a purpose. This means they should avoid describing irrelevant persons and objects just for the sake of adding words. As for the narrative style, better marks can be achieved by managing a story containing carefully balanced introduction, climax, and conclusion sections avoiding writing series of events without a clear climax.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Section 1**

#### **Question A**

Only few candidates opted for this question on whether indecision indicates weakness. Some of the candidates who opted for it were successful in employing an argumentative style which resulted in good answers. However, others struggled to produce answers of the same quality.

#### **Question B**

Candidates were asked to give their opinion on whether students should focus on science subjects at the expense of literature and humanities. This proved to be a popular question, although not as popular as **Question C**. A good number of candidates addressed it very well and were able to produce good responses as they argued for one view or the other. However, some candidates missed the opportunity to score high marks due to lack in grammatical accuracy.

#### **Question C**

Candidates were able to relate to this question very well as it concerned a topic that is relevant to their age, and so it proved to be the most popular question by far among candidates. The question asked candidates to discuss the positives and negatives of having a gap-year before joining university. Generally speaking, a good number of those who opted for this question were able to highlight a series of relevant points and they made a clear attempt to develop some of them. Again, higher marks overall could have been achieved if grammatical accuracy had been carefully reviewed. Marks could have been even higher had candidates presented the reasons for not adopting the opposing view along with reasons for their stance.

#### **Question D**

This question on the use of cameras in public and the issue of privacy was not very popular, as only few candidates opted for it. Many candidates struggled with it, however a few candidates were successful in producing good quality answers in arguing for their standpoints. Additionally, as with the previous question, higher marks overall could have been achieved if grammatical accuracy had been carefully reviewed.

### **Section 2**

#### **Question A**

This question drew a fairly good interest from the candidates as it gave them the opportunity to describe the ideal mother who they believe would be best in bringing up future generations in the Arab world. Many candidates showed an improvement in using the descriptive style compared to previous years and some candidates were able to deliver effective descriptions using powerful images and well-defined details. However, some candidates missed the opportunity for scoring higher marks by not being able to avoid some basic grammatical errors.

#### **Question B**

This was the most popular question in this section, and the task was to provide a description of a marathon that took place in their city. Many candidates were able to effectively describe the event and to comply with the descriptive task better than in previous years. However, several candidates indulged in describing irrelevant persons and objects, possibly to meet the required number of words, which along with grammatical errors affected their writings negatively. Other candidates also replaced the descriptive task with a narrative task which prevented them from scoring higher marks.

#### **Question C**

Like **Question A**, a good number of candidates opted for this question, which required them to write a story taking place on a remote island. Some candidates were able to produce imaginative stories with a creative development of the event's details. Meanwhile, other candidates' stories lacked a real climax and were purely an account of a series of incidents. Candidates could have scored higher marks by adding some twists to their stories to prevent them from being too predictable.

### Question D

This question which required candidates to write a story around a given sentence did not prove to be very popular as only few candidates opted for it. As with the previous question, some candidates demonstrated a good ability in terms of using their imagination, yet the events of their stories were not carefully managed to run smoothly, with many writings lacking a real climax.