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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned**.

UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

TAMIL

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Papers 8689/02 and 9689/02

Reading and Writing

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 2

Candidates found it difficult to form sentences with the given words. This is a type of exercise that candidates are expected to be familiar with at this level. Candidates need therefore to dedicate more time to the practice of this exercise.

Section 2

Question 5

Many candidates used in their answers words taken from the question paper itself. Paraphrasing is strongly discouraged as this does not gain marks. Except for key words, candidates should use their own words.

Papers 8689/03 and 9689/03

Essay

General comments

The overall performance of candidates this year was good, with only a small number of entrants at both extremes of the mark range. Weaker candidates' responses were characterised by a combination of misunderstanding of the question, especially on **Questions 3**, **5** and **6** leading to a loss of marks for content, and poorer language skills (spelling mistakes and poor construction of sentences).

There was little evidence of questions that failed to achieve differentiation as the questions attempted by large numbers of candidates did produce a good range of marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

No candidate attempted this question.

Question 2

Few candidates chose this question.

Question 3

Few candidates attempted this question, achieving marks across the middle range (16-30).

Question 4

This was the most popular question, attempted by thirty-two candidates. This question showed the biggest range of marks (6-40). Spelling errors and poor focus on content, as well as repetition, were seen in weaker responses. Strong candidates' responses were characterised by well-structured, complex sentences and had few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 5

Few candidates attempted this question. A good range of marks was attained here (10-32). Poor spelling and lack of focused content was seen in weaker candidates' responses.

Question 6

Few candidates attempted this question with a reasonable range of marks achieved (12-33). More marks were dropped on the content area for this question by some of the weaker candidates with fewer errors on the language side.

> **Paper 9689/04**
> **Texts**

General comments

A lot of spelling mistakes were found in the candidates' work this year. Examiners do not expect such mistakes at this level. Many candidates also struggled to construct correct grammatical sentences.

No candidate attempted the drama or novel questions. The only story attempted by candidates was *Kathavu*.

Candidates found it difficult to form simple sentences with the five given words. This shows that they lack practice and knowledge in the language at Advanced Level. The paraphrasing question (140 words) was not answered properly. A majority of the candidates used the same words and sentences from the question itself.

The way candidates answered by choosing the same question (for example *Tirukkural*) gave the impression that they read very little.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

(a)   It is surprising that none of the candidates answered this question. *Purananauru* is one of the most important books of the Sangam literature.

Section 2

Question 5

Two of the candidates gave a completely wrong answer. It is worthwhile to see whether the teacher taught only that portion. Instead of answering the question about Bhartiyar's *Knannan Paattu*, they wrote about Bharatiyar's poems on the liberation of women.

Questions 6 and 8

Nobody answered these questions on drama and short stories.

Paper 9689/05
Prose

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was generally good. The marks ranged between 9 and 33 out of 40. The majority of the candidates gained more than half the marks available.

However, a relatively wide range of candidates had difficulty with some specific sentences within the passage. The length and complexity of the first sentence, for example, resulted in many mistranslations, suggesting that candidates did not understand or were not able to translate particular words in that sentence. Similarly, the phrases 'I agree with you entirely', 'the ageing fan', and 'the man was slightly taken aback' were also misinterpreted and therefore mistranslated. Weaker candidates lost extra marks through spelling errors and incorrect sentence construction.

However, even the most able candidates encountered difficulties in the task at hand. For example, although the most able candidates were able to produce a largely correct translation of the first sentence by breaking it into two shorter sentences, easier to understand and therefore easier to translate, they failed to translate it as a whole. The weaker candidates, however, failed to produce any correct translation at all. The prose offered therefore good differentiation between the candidates. There were moreover no apparent difficulties with the use of time and the interpretation of the rubric.