

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/01
Reading

General comments

Overall performance in the examination was very good. Many candidates demonstrated their comprehension of the texts and tasks very well. The work some candidates produced was of an exceptionally high standard, showing their ability to identify, analyse and evaluate relevant information from the texts and demonstrate an excellent use of vocabulary and complex sentence structures. Many candidates also used a clear and an appropriate style of language for their answers, wrote in full, syntactically complex sentences and therefore achieved good scores for the accuracy of language, style and organisation.

There were some areas which can be improved upon: Firstly, some candidates lacked accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling. For example, the correct grammatical verb conjugation in the Plain style of speech (which is used in written form) for the verb '굽다' is '굽는다'. Some candidates used '구운다' which is grammatically incorrect. Secondly, some candidates did not paraphrase or use their own words in their answers, although they identified the relevant information correctly. Even though candidates were instructed to write answers in their own words, many candidates copied the texts directly into their answers, which had a negative impact on the marks available for language. Lastly, a few candidates presented their answers in syntactically too simple sentences, bullet points or a list of notes. This again resulted in loss of marks for language. Candidates are reminded that their responses are assessed on the quality of the language as well as content.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, all of the sub-questions were answered very well. **Questions 1(a)**, asking to identify two gems which have similar colour to Koryeo celadon, and **1(c)**, asking the use/purpose of Koryeo celadon, were answered accurately by the majority of candidates. **Question 1(f)** was also answered correctly, explaining the three steps in making Koryeo celadon. Many candidates provided evidence that they comprehended the specific details of the text and the questions, but some candidates addressed questions only partially. For example, **1(g)** specifically asked candidates to identify and write two things which show the evidence of how difficult it is to control the Hwanwon flame. A few candidates gave one example, such as 'Many pieces of broken celadon, which were broken by craftsmen, were found near kilns.' Though this is correct, they cannot be eligible for the two marks available for this question as this only accounts for part of the answer. Candidates should pay attention to the mark allocation for each question in order to answer relevantly and adequately.

Another question some candidates did not score highly on was **Question 1(i)**. This question asked to summarise how the jade colour of Koryeo celadon was produced. There are three elements to achieve the colour of Koryeo celadon which are the soil, flame and glaze. These elements have to work together in perfect combination to achieve the perfect colour. Candidates should expand their answers based on these key points in a good summary in order to be awarded full four marks. Some candidates only gave the three elements listed above without any explanation or failed to point out that they should work together. Others merely copied a relevant part of the text in their answers without using their own words.

Question 2

The majority of candidates successfully identified, linked and explored the common and contrasting themes of the two texts and answered the question effectively. **Question 2** asked the candidates to compare the features of Koryeo and Chosun ceramics. There are many features candidates could explore, such as their shapes, colours, artistic value, when they were made, their usage. Some candidates did not compare or

contrast these two pottery styles but instead gave a list of features of each. Some did not use a good summary style with an orderly grouping and good linkage of ideas, others only focused on one feature of the ceramics, rather than going into the details of the many aspects of the two styles. As pointed out earlier, a number of candidates did not present their answers in their own words and instead copied the text word by word into their answers. This practice resulted in loss of marks for language as candidates did not demonstrate sophisticated use of vocabulary and structures.

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/02

Writing

Section 1 Discussion and Argument

All the topics for the *Discussion and Argument* section seemed familiar to candidates and the four questions were chosen in a more balanced way than in past exams. The quality of writing was good, most essays were well structured. However, it would be pleasing to see more detailed supporting argument and more examples in future exams. There were few serious spelling mistakes, but there are still quite a few problems with punctuation and spacing between words.

- (a) 'We shouldn't copy films and music illegally.' Do you agree?

This (together with question (b)) was the second most popular question. Many of those who wrote about this developed their argument in support of the statement in the question.

- (b) Abbreviation of words is very common nowadays (on Internet, phone, etc.). What do you think about it?

This was the most popular question and it generated good essays, with generally relevant arguments for and against the practice of abbreviation.

- (c) People say 'when away from home you will have a hard time.' What do you think about this statement?

A reasonable amount of students wrote on this topic. The quote in the question is a proverb commonly used when parents worry about their children leaving home in Korea. It was interesting to learn how candidates feel about this how they feel about adventure and challenge and about the outside world. Somewhat surprisingly the majority of candidates agreed with the proverb and reached the conclusion that it is best at home.

- (d) Many countries are now trying to impose a strict regulation on immigration. Do you support or oppose this?

This was the least popular topic, but it has nevertheless generated some good essays, with balanced discussion of the issues involved in immigration.

Section 2 Description and Narration

The topics in this section have also proved familiar to candidates. As usual, narration was more popular than description.

- (a) Describe one your memorable teachers and explain why (s)he is memorable.

This was the second most popular topic, close to the candidates' present experience. However, many candidates tended to narrate events rather than describing a person or a related event.

- (b) Describe an impressive performance (or a performance that touched you).

This was the least popular option, but one which nevertheless generated some good descriptions. Some of the essays however lacked in structuring.

- (c) Write a story about a travel on your own.

This title generated some good stories, but a number of them lacked good build-up of characters and or a climax.

- (d)** Write a story that starts with 'I left home as usual. It is the same routine everyday but I felt somewhat different today. Is it because of the dream I had last night?'

The most popular topic in the section, it usually gave rise to straightforward stories with good identification of features such as setting and atmosphere but the opportunities for appropriate development of ideas and climax have often been missed.