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FOREIGN LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0540/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

It was pleasing to see once again an overall high standard achieved in the exam, reflecting a commendable degree of commitment from candidates and teachers.

Comments on specific questions

The first section of the paper had questions that tested the candidates' knowledge of basic vocabulary and they scored high marks on this part of the exam.

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-5

An accessible exercise to start the paper. There were no problems. Responding to language through the visuals posed no difficulty. Most gained full marks but in **Question 1**, a few answered D as they homed in on the word *Perigo* and not read, or did not know, *obras*.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-10

Very few candidates had problems with matching the letters.

Exercise 3 Questions 11-15

The *fitas coloridas* were confused with *etiquetas* and some candidates were caught out in **Question 11**. Otherwise the text was adequately scanned for relevant information and there was an even rate of positive responses.

Exercise 4 Question 16

This writing exercise presented no difficulties as it is familiar ground to most candidates.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17-22

The increased challenge of having to pick out specific detail was difficult for some candidates. Not everyone was able to identify the main points of the text.

Exercise 2 Question 23

The stimulus for the directed writing was quite accessible. In some cases the task was completed confidently, with imaginative and creative flair. However, there were cases in which the letter etiquette was not used and communication suffered due to errors in grammar and spelling.

Section 3

Exercise 1 and Exercise 2 Questions 24-33 and Questions 34-40

The extra complexity in this section was within the capability of a large number of candidates and some obtained top marks in the interpretation of both texts. For others it was too challenging.

<p>Paper 0540/03 Speaking</p>

General comments

It is pleasing to report that there were very few problems with this year's Speaking Test. In the great majority of Centres, candidates were clearly well prepared and at ease with the format of this component, and it is appropriate at this point to thank teachers and Examiners for the care taken in both the preparation for and conduct of the test.

In only a minority of cases did any difficulties arise, and these were usually a result of misinterpretation of the rubric. As always, Centres are urged to ensure that the Examiner is familiar with the instructions detailed in the Teachers' Notes. In particular, it should be noted that there is nothing to be gained from adding to or deviating from the utterances set out in the role plays; indeed, candidates may be disadvantaged if they or their Examiners alter or omit specific utterances.

Comments on specific questions***Test 1 – Role Plays****Role Play A***Cards one, two and three**

This was well done by most candidates.

Cards four, five and six

Occasionally, candidates omitted the final utterance, forgetting to 'thank the shop assistant'.

Cards seven, eight and nine

In this situation, some candidates and Examiners strayed significantly from the 'script', making moderation difficult.

*Role Play B***Cards one, four and seven**

This was approached with enthusiasm and imagination by many candidates, who gave interesting answers to the first two questions. There was an occasional tendency in this and the other *B Role Plays* to give excessively long responses.

Cards two, five and eight

This presented no problems for candidates.

Cards three, six and nine

Again, this was carried out most satisfactorily by most candidates.

Test 2 – Topic Conversation

Most candidates performed well in this part of the test. As in previous years, some Centres allowed candidates to deliver a prepared monologue or 'presentation'. The current syllabus does not require a presentation, and the Teachers' Notes booklet makes clear that this practice should be avoided.

Test 3 – General Conversation

The majority of candidates again performed well in this section. Unfortunately, in a few cases Examiners disregarded the requirement for candidates to show they are able to convey past and future meaning if they are to be awarded a mark in the satisfactory band or above. This requirement applies even where candidates have conveyed past and future meaning in earlier sections of the test.

It is in the interest of candidates that Examiners indicate clearly on the tape the point where the Topic Conversation ends and the General Conversation begins.

<p>Paper 0540/04 Continuous Writing</p>

General comments

Most candidates coped well with both questions. However, as in previous years, many candidates showed a defective knowledge of grammar and spelling, including of words borrowed from the texts.

A number of candidates did not appear to be adequately prepared to enter for this examination.

Many candidates did not ensure their handwriting was immediately legible and many also wrote in excess of the required number of words.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Many candidates chose **(a)**, but most preferred **(b)**. Answers were generally good and all required points were included. A few candidates did not include any of the points and wrote mostly irrelevant material.

(a) Some candidates were unsure of the form of address to be used in their letters. Some candidates used both *tu* and *você*.

Some candidates omitted one or more details, usually the season of the year and/or one reason why they wanted to work on a farm.

(b) Most answers were interesting and complete. Some candidates omitted to mention the present.

Question 2

Most candidates wrote interesting answers that included all necessary details. However, many candidates wrote totally irrelevant answers, either because they had not read the question properly or because they had not understood it.

Some candidates missed one or two of the required points, usually how they and their friends felt.

A few candidates wrote letters, which was not a requirement.