

FIRST LANGUAGE THAI

Paper 0518/02

Reading and Directed Writing

Section 1

Question 1: Summarise 2 texts

This question tends to be the most difficult part for candidates as it requires rather complex skills to summarise effectively when compared with the other 2 questions. However this year candidates, in general, have done really well. Strong candidates have written with clear coherent outlines, with an appropriate and formal register. They know how to select information effectively and rearranged the information clearly and competently, and the unity of the summary was good. However, for weaker candidates there are a few points need to be addressed in that this is a summary, not an article – candidates do not have to write an introduction and a conclusion. They must present the points that are asked and make sure that they select only what the questions ask for. Detailed information that is not relevant does not need to be included. This skill needs to be highlighted in order to improve their writing skills.

Question 2

Task: to use the 2 texts to write a leaflet, persuading your school to be aware of conservation by writing about this doctor, who is regarded as the first conservationist in Thailand.

The quality of writing was of high standard. Candidates did well, with a clear introduction and conclusion. Most knew how to persuade by highlighting what this doctor has contributed and giving a brief history of his life. Apart from that, some strong candidates made sure the reader knew why this doctor, who saw hunting as a game, had changed his mind to become a true conservationist instead. However, weak candidates tended to ignore the reader and write whatever they saw fit without thinking of organization or register.

Section 2: Write an interview with a Lao lady, who has a Thai mother and a Lao father on the subject of Thai-Laos Relations.

This part candidates overall did well and to a high standard. Strong candidates were really good at making the interview really interesting, by highlighting the points related to the topic. Some highlighted the misunderstanding between the two nations, and let this person in the article voice her concerns and find the solutions without being bitter or having a contempt for either of the two nations. Strong candidates knew how to ask questions that were logical and sensible and at the same time follow the answers by giving some brief comments that were appropriate. However, one point that needs to be emphasized is that this part requires candidates to write not just questions. They needed to provide answers from this lady as well. Quite a few of them made this mistake. Some also used their ideas or opinions, especially about the conflicts between the two nations, and that is not what the instructions required: it is vital to follow the instructions strictly. In addition, it is recommended that teachers should advise candidates to write an introduction, so that the reader could appreciate the interview in context.

In summary, this year indeed candidates are of high standard. The results are satisfying and hopefully, next year will be of the same level or even better. Some schools have done extremely well and some are improving. It is gratifying to see the level of performance achieved by candidates and teachers.

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Paper 0518/03
Continuous Writing

General Comments

The majority of candidates were well prepared and produced good work in this examination. The paper discriminated well among the candidate entry: just over 10% obtained 30 out of 40 marks. At the same time, almost 15% of candidates scored below 20 marks.

In previous years sentence structure was an area of ongoing concern, with considerable interference from English sentence patterns rather than Thai. In the response to this year's paper, however, sentence structure generally showed an improvement upon last year, and Centres are to be congratulated in this respect on their preparation of candidates. Hand writing was also, thankfully, better than that of last year.

As for previous years, candidates are reminded of the importance of planning carefully, keeping to word limits, and allowing time for reviewing their work.

Question choice proved significant this year, and it is worth emphasising again the need to take sufficient time to study all the tasks before beginning to write. As always, candidates who produce plans seem to produce better structured, more coherent texts.

Candidates are reminded of the need to match the style used to the task chosen, and to present their ideas in a logical progression and a structure appropriate to the question that they are answering.

Comments on Specific Questions

For this session/June 2009, there are 9 questions, most which are intended to give candidates the chance to express their ideas freely. 4 out of 9 questions offer candidates the opportunity to base their answers on their attitudes and opinions, and the candidates generally responded well in the work that they produced.

In terms of question popularity, **Questions No. 1, No. 2, No. 5, No. 7 and No. 8** found most favour among candidates. Although these were challenging questions, most candidates who selected them performed well and showed their ability.

Similarly, **Question No. 3 and No. 5**, which gave the chance to use imagination in generating answers, also brought out good performances from candidates, who had clearly been prepared for this aspect of writing.

Question No. 6 and No. 9 proved difficult for some candidates, who may have made choices outside the range of writing for which they had been prepared. The verse in **No. 6** proved demanding for some candidates in terms of interpretation, especially at the level of metaphor. **Question No. 9** demanded the particular skill of persuasive writing, and some candidates found it hard to achieve the correct style for an effective answer.