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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.**

BENGALI

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 3204/01

Composition

General comments

Performance overall was good. Most candidates seem to be familiar with the answering techniques and that helped them to score high marks. Even the weakest candidates attempted to write good compositions in both sections whilst the more able ones took full advantage to show their command of the language. However, a small number of candidates lost marks for illogical argument, insufficient material and irrelevance. Candidates must bear in mind that frequent and unnecessary use of English words will not help them score any extra marks but instead will detract from the originality of the piece and from their marks for language. Punctuation plays an important role in composition. Misuse or lack of punctuation easily creates confusion, thus candidates risk losing marks for ambiguous sentence construction.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates attempted this question and scored highly as there was ample scope for elaborate writing. Candidates who answered according to the bullet points in a logical, reasonable and concise way, gained comparatively higher marks, whilst some others scored low marks due to a lack of understanding of the question's demand. Some candidates wrote (self-)introductions that were unnecessarily long, inevitably increasing the number of words beyond the word limit. Quite a few candidates suddenly remembered the word limit at the end of their composition, bringing the task to an abrupt end. A pre-planned scenario would have been quite useful in such cases.

Question 2

Candidates who chose this topic did remarkably well. However, a few candidates ignored the requirement to provide a full account of the whole week's cultural activities. Candidates should be advised to refer to all parts of the question.

Section B

Question 3

Most candidates who attempted to answer this question performed very well. It was impressive to see almost all candidates establishing their arguments successfully. Some candidates dealt with the topic in a very imaginative way. A small number of candidates, however, could not establish their argument logically.

Question 4

Quite a significant number of candidates attempted this topic and seemed to be very enthusiastic about it. Almost all candidates established their arguments successfully and used contextual information from their own countries.

Question 5

Another interesting topic that inspired all those who attempted it to write a full-length essays using their imagination and rhetorical devices, resulting in high scores. A handful of candidates, however, failed to present their work logically with valid points and found it difficult to maintain consistency and focus throughout the essay. This had an impact on their score.

<p style="text-align: center;">Paper 3204/02 Language Usage and Comprehension</p>

General comments

In general, candidates performed well. All candidates attempted every question regardless of their ability. Most candidates presented their work neatly, although some Centres used loose sheets tied with strings that could easily be lost or misplaced. As a result, some candidates' answer sheets were found scattered within the pack.

A number of candidates and their Centres deserve credit for a quality performance and a smart presentation of scripts.

Despite a clear warning, a few candidates used correction fluid. Centres are strongly advised to bring this to the attention of all future candidates.

Comments on specific questions***Section A*****A1**

Most candidates scored reasonably highly, although a significant number of candidates had some difficulty with spelling in the answer to **Question 4**.

A2

The vast majority of the candidates coped well with this exercise despite its demand on cultural and idiomatic knowledge, although a few candidates copied the part given in the answer booklet as well. Candidates were not, of course, penalised for this but it was unnecessary.

A3

A significant number of candidates copied the whole question instead of transforming the sentence, hence they lost marks. This could have been avoided if candidates had read the question more carefully and answered accordingly.

A4

More able candidates did comparatively better but others found it rather hard to cope with this exercise, although the text was based on a familiar theme. A small number of candidates copied the whole text and among those a few failed to identify the missing words. Candidates need to be reminded that copying the whole text in a gap filling exercise does not result in extra marks and is a waste of time. The Examiners look for the missing words set against each question number.

Section B

B5

This exercise enabled candidates to score highly, although some less able candidates were confused as they did not appear to have read the text thoroughly.

Section C

C6

Quite a few candidates used the opportunity to show their command of the language whilst a vast majority of the candidates simply lifted and copied sentences from the text. Examiners look for the ability of candidates to use their own words to answer the question correctly. Copying whole paragraphs does not help with scoring full marks. Answers should be to-the-point and in the candidates' own words as far as possible. It appeared that some candidates had not read the text well enough as there were some careless mistakes.

C7

A wide variety of performances was evident. A small minority did significantly well, but some struggled with questions **39**, **40** and **41**.