

SINHALA

Paper 3205/01
Composition

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they answer one question from **Section A** and one question from **Section B**
- adhere to the word limits specified
- ensure that their work is legible, accurate and logically presented
- ensure that they present their response in the form stipulated in the question (e.g. letter, dialogue etc)
- plan their use of time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work.

General comments

In general, candidates had been very well prepared for the examination.

An improvement was noted in candidates' handwriting this year.

Some candidates did not seem familiar with the basic grammar of Sinhala, and would benefit from further practice in this area. Candidates should be encouraged to read more widely to help consolidate spelling and grammar.

A small number of candidates mixed formal and informal registers in their responses, which was not always appropriate. Candidates should be reminded that the formal register is required when writing their answers to this paper, unless specifically stated otherwise in the question. Candidates needed to have a better understanding of the difference between formal/written and informal/spoken Sinhala.

Some candidates demonstrated a good grasp of Sinhalese idiom and used this to good effect to make their compositions creative and interesting.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Letter, Report or Speech, Dialogue

Candidates were asked to write a response of approximately 120 words on one of the three given topics.

In **Section A**, candidates generally wrote successfully on their chosen topic. This year, candidates showed better understanding than in previous years of how to compose a letter, a dialogue and a speech.

Question 1(a) ("Imagine you are a teacher. Write a letter to a parent about a pupil's ongoing misbehaviour at school.") was very popular and there were many good responses to this question.

Those who chose **Question 1(b)** ("Write a speech thanking a local company for a donation to your school.") generally produced interesting and well-constructed speeches.

Question 1(c) ("Write a dialogue describing an argument between a shopkeeper and a customer over the quality of an item purchased.") was also popular. Many candidates drew on their own experiences and other real-life situations that they had observed to produce interesting and amusing dialogues.



Section B – Essay

Candidates were asked to write an essay of approximately 200 words on one of the four given topics.

All of the topics proved popular, but **Question 2(c)** (“Write an essay about how you celebrate the festival of New Year.”) was the most popular.

In general, candidates showed good understanding of the principles of essay writing.

A number of candidates wrote considerably more than the number of words stated in the question. Candidates should be reminded that going beyond the word limit does not improve the quality of the work presented and may indeed increase the likelihood of mistakes occurring.

SINHALA

Paper 3205/02 Translation and Reading Comprehension

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should:

- ensure that they plan their time for each question and allow time for thorough checking of their work
- ensure that their work is legible and logically presented
- read the translation passages carefully before beginning to translate.

General comments

Overall, candidates' performance on this paper was of a high standard.

Candidates should be encouraged to read a variety of books and newspapers in Sinhala as this will increase exposure to a wide range of Sinhalese vocabulary, grammar and idiom, and will help candidates to improve their writing skills and reading comprehension skills.

In a few cases, handwriting was so poor as to render answers illegible. Candidates need to make sure that their work is tidy and legible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Translation

Question 1: Translation into English

Generally, the translation into English was tackled very well. Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the passage and provided translations that were clear and accurate. There were many excellent translations.

Question 2: Translation into Sinhala

Most candidates approached this translation well. There were a few translations which were less successful than others – this was mainly due to poor handwriting and/or lack of appropriate vocabulary and idiom.

Section B – Reading Comprehension

There were many good attempts at this section, with a number of excellent ones. On the whole, performance in this section was commendable.