

# BAHASA INDONESIA

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Paper 0538/01  
Reading and Understanding

## Key messages

- Candidates need to read the questions carefully to understand exactly what information is required.
- Although they do not always have to use full sentences, candidates should ensure that they have communicated the full answer required for each question.
- For **Exercise 2**, candidates should practice answering in note form, covering all the information specified in the bullet points; they should avoid copying out the text or writing long sentences.

## General comments

Most candidates had a clear understanding of the requirements of each exercise. They were able to provide answers based on the text, although there were some candidates who were less careful in reading the questions and provided irrelevant information.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Exercise 1 Questions 1-7**

The questions were generally well answered. In **Question 2**, some weaker candidates responded with the word *menominasikan*, although this was not structurally appropriate within the sentence's context. Additionally, **Question 6** proved to be somewhat challenging, as many candidates answered with 'the material' rather than specifying 'the thickness of the material,' as stated in the text.

### **Exercise 2 Question 8**

Most candidates performed well. Some errors occurred when candidates explained Wira and Putri's occupations as a chef and writer in response to the second part of the question, which asked about the factors that contributed to the success of their cookbook. In the first part of the question, several candidates focused on Wira and Putri as winners rather than addressing why the award itself was considered prestigious. Candidates need to pay close attention to the wording of the question and understand the specific information being asked. In the third part of the question, the majority of candidates were able to provide accurate and relevant responses.

### **Exercise 3 Questions 9-15**

The majority of candidates were able to answer this section fairly well. Nevertheless, there were some questions that proved to be challenging for some candidates, who did not fully understand what the question was asking. In **Question 10**, some candidates mistakenly answered with information about free VIP membership for parents. In **Question 12**, which required candidates to describe the size and material of the tablet, some candidates instead provided information about the design and colour of the tablet. As a result, their responses did not address the question appropriately. Some candidates scored only 1 mark in **Question 14** because they were unable to clearly provide the two required elements. A number of candidates repeated the same information they had used in the first part of their response. Candidates should ensure they provide distinct and appropriate responses when asked to give two answers.

#### Exercise 4 Questions 16–25

Candidates answered **Questions 16, 17, 18, 20, 23** and **24** well.

For **Question 19**, candidates were expected to provide their interpretation based on the text. However, many candidates simply restated what was written in the text. They struggled to interpret why Odi was described as a *nakhoda* (captain) in the passage. This may be because the term *nakhoda* is unfamiliar to some candidates.

For **Question 21**, weaker candidates were unable to achieve full marks because their responses focused on how Odi and his friends approached the passenger motorboat, rather than on the main attraction, which was their ability to dive without any equipment and retrieve the coins.

For **Question 22**, a reason why some candidates earned only one mark was because they focused solely on the concern for Surman's safety, paying insufficient attention to the descriptive detail in the story about the narrator's hallucination of the sea turning red, which was caused by his anxiety. Candidates are expected to consider multiple pieces of information presented in a scene to form a more complete interpretation.

For **Questions 25a** and **25b**, candidates generally provided good responses. Candidates found **Question 25c** more challenging due to their limited interpretation of the figurative expression *laksana kapal perang mengejar musuh*. Most candidates only identified the literal meaning of moving fast or swiftly, without exploring the deeper or alternative connotations implied by the comparison. For **Questions 25d, 25e**, and **25f**, candidates generally provided good responses.

# BAHASA INDONESIA

Paper 0538/02  
Reading and Writing

## Key messages

To do well in this paper, candidates are advised to:

- read the questions carefully before starting their answers
- structure ideas logically and organize their writing effectively
- use an appropriate form and style, adapted for the intended audience and genre
- produce detailed and evocative descriptions and engaging, credible narratives
- construct sentences accurately and vary sentence types to create effects
- select appropriate and wide-ranging vocabulary and use it accurately.

## General comments

### *Language*

Candidates are encouraged to focus on making their writing as accurate as possible to access the higher mark bands for Style and Accuracy. Where there were errors, these included:

- Misuse of the preposition *di* and the prefix *di-*: incorrectly separating the prefix *di-* from verbs, which should be written as a single word. For example, in the sentence '*Media sosial banyak di gunakan oleh para remaja,*' the correct form is *digunakan*. Similarly, '*waktu mereka di habiskan untuk belajar*' should be written as *dihabiskan*.
- Spelling inaccuracies such as *mengangu* (correct: *mengganggu*), *kayalanku* (correct: *khayalanku*), and *tau* (correct: *tahu*).
- Redundancy in plural forms: use of multiple plural markers simultaneously, as in '*para siswa-siswa,*' where the use of both *para* and the reduplication *siswa-siswa* is redundant. Only one plural indicator is necessary in standard usage.
- Unnatural sentence construction due to direct translation from English: some sentences included structural awkwardness resulting from literal translation. For instance, '*Siswa sebaiknya boleh memilih pelajaran yang bantu mereka di universitas dan yang mereka tertarik dengan*' is syntactically incorrect in Indonesian. A more appropriate formulation would be: '*Siswa sebaiknya dapat memilih pelajaran yang membantu mereka di universitas dan yang sesuai dengan minat mereka.*'
- Use of informal or colloquial expressions: informal language, such as '*Aku cuman bergomong dengan angin,*' is occasionally used inappropriately in narrative text. Such expressions should be reserved for direct speech or character dialogue and avoided in expository or academic writing.
- Errors in the use of conjunctions: both within and between clauses, particularly in compound and complex sentences. Writers tend to construct overly lengthy sentences joined only by commas, resulting in confusing or ambiguous meaning.
- Punctuation and capitalisation errors: these are especially common in direct speech and in the use of capital letters for proper nouns and sentence openings. Consistent punctuation and capitalisation are essential for clarity and adherence to formal writing conventions.
- Incorrect word formation due to improper affixation: An example is the phrase '*Sosial media bernaikkan stres para remaja,*' which contains a morphological error. The correct form should be '*Media sosial meningkatkan stres para remaja* or *menyebabkan stres,*' depending on the intended meaning.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Section 1**

#### **Question 1**

Overall, most candidates showed a good understanding of the task and the reading passage. Many addressed the three required headings clearly, with stronger responses organised into well-structured paragraphs focused on relevant information.

For the first bullet point on the advantages of social media for teenagers, most candidates performed well by identifying two or three key benefits. Many attempted paraphrasing, though some included vague or unnecessary elaborations, for example, describing social media as 'a place to pursue knowledge' without clear context. More effective answers explained specific benefits, such as connecting with peers both locally and internationally.

In the second heading, while most candidates responded adequately, some struggled to identify accurate mental health issues. Weaker responses included unrelated points like procrastination or fake identities. Stronger answers mentioned sleep disruption and further explained its effects, such as increased stress or reduced concentration.

For the third heading, most candidates identified at least two relevant strategies teenagers can use to manage mental health risks from social media. However, many relied too much on direct quotations, weakening the impact of their writing. While common strategies like maintaining balance and avoiding distractions were acceptable, some students included solutions intended for parents or institutions, which were outside the task's scope. Only a few candidates successfully identified implied strategies, such as limiting screen time or avoiding fixation on likes and followers, demonstrating stronger comprehension and analytical skills.

### **General recommendations**

To attain high marks for content, candidates must ensure that their responses are focused, relevant, and free from personal opinions or generalisations. Excessive material and unnecessary listing should be avoided to maintain clarity and conciseness. Language marks are awarded based on the ability to convey information in a clear, fluent, and organized manner, using appropriate vocabulary and structure. Candidates are strongly encouraged to paraphrase effectively and to minimise direct copying from the text, as the use of their own words is a key indicator of understanding.

### **Section 2**

#### **Question 2 – Argumentative Essay**

A significant number of candidates chose **Question 2**, which required writing an argumentative essay. Many demonstrated a good understanding of the task.

Strong essays featured a clear structure, with candidates stating their stance early and maintaining it consistently. Arguments were developed using logical reasoning, relevant facts, and persuasive opinions. Each paragraph focused on a single idea, supported with examples, and transitions were smooth. Conclusions effectively summarised key points and restated the writer's position.

However, some candidates lacked focus and produced discursive essays, presenting both sides without clearly taking a stance. As a result, their conclusions were vague and unconvincing. Weaker responses also showed limited development, with poorly organized or overly brief content.

#### **Recommendations for improvement:**

- begin with a clear statement of position
- develop body paragraphs around one main idea, supported by evidence
- use persuasive and precise language
- ensure logical flow within and between paragraphs
- conclude by summarising arguments and reinforcing the stance.

As the goal of an argumentative essay is to persuade, candidates should avoid presenting multiple viewpoints without a clear position and instead focus on building a consistent, well-supported argument.

### Question 3 – Descriptive Essay

**Question 3**, which required descriptive writing, was a popular choice. Many candidates showed strong descriptive skills, especially in portraying Independence Day celebrations. Effective responses used sensory details to recreate the mood and environment, engaging the reader through vivid imagery and expressive language.

The best responses fully immersed the reader using all five senses and emotionally rich vocabulary. Metaphors, similes and personification were used effectively to enhance the impact and leave a lasting impression.

However, some candidates wrote narratives instead of descriptions, focussing on event sequences rather than creating atmosphere. These responses lacked the depth and vividness expected in descriptive writing, often resembling simple storytelling with minimal imagery.

#### Recommendations for Improvement:

- focus on mood and setting rather than chronological events
- use sensory details to spark the reader's imagination
- apply precise, ambitious vocabulary and figurative language
- aim to create vivid imagery rather than simply recounting actions.

By emphasising sensory and emotional elements over plot-driven narration, candidates can produce more engaging and memorable descriptive pieces.

### Question 4 – Narrative Writing

**Question 4**, which required narrative writing, was a popular choice. Many candidates displayed creativity and imagination, with stronger responses featuring well-developed characters and settings, supported by effective use of dialogue, descriptive language, and purposeful action. These narratives were engaging and showed good control of structure.

In contrast, weaker responses relied on basic event sequences with minimal narrative techniques. Characters and settings were often underdeveloped, and although some stories included a climax, the buildup and resolution were frequently weak or unclear.

A key area for improvement was story structure. Many candidates struggled with organising their narratives, leading to abrupt transitions and unclear progression. Some responses lacked clear orientation, rising action, or resolution.

#### Recommendations for Improvement:

- structure stories using key elements: orientation, rising action, climax, and resolution
- use dialogue to reveal character and move the plot forward
- include vivid descriptions to establish mood and immerse the reader
- ensure logical flow and smooth transitions
- focus on depth, emotional engagement, and narrative tension rather than simply recounting events

Well-structured, detailed, and emotionally engaging narratives will lead to more compelling storytelling and stronger outcomes.

# BAHASA INDONESIA

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Paper 0538/03  
Speaking

## **Key messages**

### **Part 1 – Presentation**

- Candidates must prepare a presentation on a single topic or theme, directly related to the culture of an Indonesian-speaking community, in which they have a personal interest.
- The presentation should be comprehensive and well-organised, making use of a range of language features and including relevant facts, ideas, and opinions.
- Delivery should be engaging and dynamic; candidates are encouraged to be mindful of their audience.
- Teachers/examiners should allow candidates to speak uninterrupted for approximately 2-3 minutes.
- The Teachers/examiners should intervene only if the candidate appears unlikely to finish after 3 minutes, or if the candidate is struggling to continue and needs encouragement or prompting.

### **Part 2 – Conversation**

- This section should be a discussion between the teacher/Examiner and the candidate, based on the topic presented.
- The candidate should be allowed to express and defend opinions, as well as to ask for information and/or viewpoints from the teacher/Examiner.
- The teacher/Examiner should ensure that the conversation lasts around 7-8 minutes per candidate.
- Candidates are expected to sustain the conversation, respond confidently, and occasionally show enthusiasm when the conversation takes a new direction.
- They should demonstrate a strong command of vocabulary and be able to express sophisticated ideas using a variety of structures accurately, consistently, and confidently.

## **General comments**

### **Administration**

- In general, centres submitted clear and audible recordings.
- The teacher/Examiner (not the candidate) should introduce each candidate at the beginning of every recording.
- Please name the digital file for each candidate's test according to the instructions given on the samples database.
- Please include the name of the teacher/Examiner who conducted the speaking test on the Oral Examination Summary Form (OESF).
- If internal moderation is carried out, centres must ensure that the internal moderation marks are submitted to the Submit for Assessment.
- Centres are strongly advised to check the OESF before submission to confirm that the correct file is uploaded to the Submit for Assessment.

### **Timings**

- The teacher/Examiner must strictly follow the prescribed time limits for both the presentation and conversation sections.
- In some cases, the presentations and conversations were either too short or exceeded the expected duration.

## **Assessment**

In **Part 1**, candidates are expected to present a range of factual information, along with their ideas and opinions, and introduce relevant issues for discussion.

In **Part 2**, to achieve a mark in Level 5, candidates must show that they can actively initiate and sustain a conversation. To support a natural and engaging interaction, the teacher/Examiner should listen carefully to the candidate's responses and ask follow-up questions based on those responses, rather than relying on a fixed set of questions. Furthermore, the teacher/Examiner should occasionally introduce new angles or directions in the conversation while remaining within the scope of the topic.

## **Comments on specific tasks**

### **Part 1 – Presentation**

Most candidates delivered their presentations within the required 2-3 minutes, without interruption.

The majority of topics were appropriately linked to the culture of an Indonesian-speaking community or region. However, when candidates choose themes such as *Remaja dan Media Sosial*, *Teknologi*, or *Liburan*, centres must ensure that these are connected to the context or community in Indonesia, rather than treated as general topics. Centres must also ensure that the topics presented go beyond the candidates' personal experiences and are related to the context or community in Indonesia.

### **Part 2 – Conversation**

Overall, the conversations were conducted well. However, while some candidates delivered strong presentations, they struggled to respond to the teacher/Examiner's questions during the conversation.

Some teacher/Examiners provided excessive corrections or spoke too much during the conversation. They should be mindful of this to ensure that candidates are not credited for responses or ideas introduced by the teacher/Examiner.

Some teacher/Examiners asked about points the candidate had already covered in their presentation. Discussion should move beyond what was presented; the teacher/Examiner must avoid revisiting or asking previously mentioned points.

Teacher/Examiners should allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to shift the direction of the conversation by asking questions that explore different aspects of the topic or broader, related themes.