

FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/01

Reading

General comments

Overall performance in the examination was good. Most candidates demonstrated their comprehension of the texts and tasks. Some candidates produced work of an exceptionally high standard, showing their ability to analyse and evaluate relevant information from the text for each question with a clear and an appropriate style of language for their answers.

However, some candidates did not present their answers in full sentences. Candidates should be made aware that presenting their answers in such a way, using bullet points for example, or lists of notes or sentences that are syntactically too simple may mean that fewer marks can be awarded for quality of language.

Candidates should also be reminded that they should use an appropriate and consistent style of language for their answers, rather than mixing different styles. In some instances, the written style and the formal spoken style were used alongside each other.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, all of the sub-questions were answered adequately. However, some candidates did not demonstrate that they understood the questions fully and addressed them only partially. For example, **Question 1(b)** asked what *dual diagnosis* (양면진단) meant and for a detailed explanation of why it was needed. Many candidates referred in their answer to the *financial* aspect of the diagnosis but did not refer to the *physical* aspect. In **Question (g)** candidates were asked to explain what Dr Inuk Lee's reason was for sending Chunsok away rather than admitting him to his hospital when Chunsok was carried in. There were two main reasons. In the first place, Dr Lee did not treat poor patients, which Chunsok appeared to be, as did the person who carried him into the hospital. The other reason was that he did not want to treat a patient who was a political offender in Japanese eyes as Dr Lee was pro-Japanese and well regarded by them. Many candidates were able to identify the Japanese connection but did not mention that Chunsok looked poor, something which Dr Lee considered an important part of the diagnostic procedures.

The majority of candidates had difficulty answering **Question (j)** correctly. **Question (j)** asked them to summarise how Dr Lee's psychological/emotional state changed following certain events. The answer in short was that, just after the liberation of Korea, Dr Lee tried to convince himself that he would be all right despite the circumstances but could not help feeling anxious and uneasy. Then, when he was captured and taken away, he did not feel remorse or regret for what he had done as someone who was pro-Japanese, but continued to hope. Lastly, when he met Chunsok he despaired. Many candidates recognised some but not all of the changes in his psychological state. Some candidates answered incorrectly saying he had felt remorseful and repentant.

Question 2

The majority of candidates successfully linked and explored the common themes of the two texts and answered the question as instructed. However, some candidates did not select and analyse what was relevant or did not answer the question fully enough. For some candidates, it was apparent that they were not able to answer appropriately, as they did not have enough time.

Question 2 asked candidates to summarise the differences between and similarities linking the two characters from Text 1 and Text 2. Many candidates answered adequately on the similarities, stating that both characters' social standing rose as they aligned themselves with foreign powers but also fell, as they were both chasing money and power. However, many did not answer adequately on the differences. Hardly any candidate pointed out that, in their effort to accumulate wealth, Dr Lee was wrong morally but not legally whereas Mr Bang took bribes to make money using his connection to an American officer. The reasons for the fall of the two characters also differed in that Dr Lee's fall was due to both social and personal reasons, whereas Mr Bang's fall was due to personal reasons.

A few candidates did not use a good summary style with an orderly grouping and good linkage of ideas. Candidates should be reminded that their responses are assessed on the quality of the language as well as the content.

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Paper 0521/02

Writing

As last year, candidates generally produced writing of fairly good quality on a paper judged to be of similar level of difficulty. The majority of candidates have quite similar ideas and opinions on the topics. On the language side, the way in which candidates express themselves seems to have become more standardised.

Section 1 Discussion and Argument

Question (a): *'Bad law is still the law. So we must abide by the law.'* Discuss if you are for or against this statement with reasons.

A small number of candidates chose this title. Candidates needed to back up their argument and reasons effectively along lines such as the following: if the law is bad why is it so? Who made the law? Is it right for our society and, if not, is there anything we can do about it? However, candidate responses were for the most part limited to the idea that we need to abide by the law even if it does not work in our favour.

Question (b): *What do you think about the relation between scientific development and environmental issues? Discuss.*

There were surprisingly few candidates for this topic. Some candidates did not go into sufficient detail about the relationship between the two areas mentioned in the title, including whether they could function together or not and why.

Question (c): *Discuss the positive and negative aspects of the increase in Internet use.*

This was the most popular topic with candidates. Those who chose it generally had similar ideas. The important thing is how these ideas are then expressed and developed in language that should be fluent and varied and demonstrate assured use of grammar and punctuation and accuracy to access the highest marks. The points made by candidates were generally relevant and their sequencing of paragraphs was satisfactory. However, the language used was repetitious at times and not sufficiently complex to be credited with higher marks.

Question (d): *'가장 한국적인 것이 가장 세계적인 것이다'* *The success of Korean art and culture in the international context.*

There were relatively few candidates for this question, which produced some good writing with relevant and well-made points.

Generally speaking, in order to achieve good marks on this section, candidates need to make effective and varied use of vocabulary and include sentences that are well-constructed. Each stage of their argument needs to be clearly defined and the stages to follow on from each other in a coherent way. Where the number of relevant points made is limited and the sequencing of points is unsatisfactory, candidates may not be awarded high marks for content. Repetitious use of language restricts the language marks that can be awarded.

Section 2 Description and Narration

Candidates' quality of writing in this section was generally of a reasonable level. The majority of candidates chose to write a descriptive essay rather than a narrative one. For candidates who choose the descriptive option it is important to use the ideas and images that they select to create atmosphere and build tension in order to add to the coherence and interest of their story.

The Narrative option generally involves more straightforward story telling, though here candidates focus on effective use of devices such as flashback and creating a convincing climax to achieve high marks.

Question (a): *Choose a season and describe it.*

There were just a few candidates for this topic. Where candidates did attempt it the results were some well constructed descriptions of the weather, the natural world, the people and the activities associated with the season chosen.

Question (b): *Choose a school event and describe it.*

This was the most popular topic in this section. The title addresses an area familiar to candidates in their experience of school life. Most candidates produced a well written description of a school event – almost all chose to write about the school sports' day.

Question (c): *Write a story including the words: convenience store, laptop computer, puppy.*

A small number of candidates chose this option. While some were able to build up an engaging story with the elements given, others simply included them as background to their own story, some of which were incomplete and relatively unstructured. Candidates are reminded to include some examples of more complex language in their work and to aim to use language for particular effects.

Question (d): *Write a part of a story beginning 'In a quiet village, people are beginning to fall ill for no apparent reason. The Government and Research Centre are trying to discover the reason.'*

This was the second most popular topic in this section. Here too candidates needed to structure their narrative carefully, incorporating features to engage the interest of the reader and to build up tension. Use of devices such as flashback allows candidates to add interest to their narrative.

The quality of writing in this section overall was satisfactory. However, in terms of content, candidates' handling of the story writing task was rather less creative than at the previous session.