CHINESE LANGUAGE

> **Paper 8681/21**
>
> **Reading and Writing**

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning with those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions. Those requiring simple and straightforward answers were done well, while answers to more stretching questions needed to contain more explanation.

- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal responses to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience, and opinion of the issues raised. These should be kept as two separate sections.

- Candidates should be made aware of the relation between the number of points expected and the number of marks shown in brackets in **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**

- Candidates are reminded that, as far as possible, they should use their own words in response to **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

This question was generally tackled well. Where candidates did answer incorrectly, this tended to be in parts **(b)** and **(d)**. For **Question 1(b)**, some candidates answered "参加", which was not in the second paragraph of the reading passage, the correct answer being "参与". For **Question 1(d)**, some candidates answered "涉及到" instead of "涉及". Candidates need to take care to answer using words from the specified paragraphs.

Question 2

Part **(c)** was answered correctly by most candidates, and **(a)** was handled well by many. Where candidates did make mistakes in part **(a)**, it was generally caused by candidates not understanding the usage of "为了". Part **(b)** proved to be the most challenging part of this question, with a number of candidates answering incorrectly by not dropping "便" from the sentence.

Questions 3 and 4

Most candidates did very well on these questions, and showed good levels of comprehension. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

Improvements were seen in candidates answering using their own words. In doing this, however, candidates must be careful not to change the meaning of the point being re-phrased, as this may render the answer incorrect.

It is also worth reminding candidates that reading comprehension questions are intended to test the extent to which candidates have understood the reading passages in the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these reading passages. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from the candidate's personal knowledge.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question in which candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning with those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions. Those requiring simple and straightforward answers were done well, while answers to more stretching questions needed to contain more explanation.

- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal responses to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience, and opinion of the issues raised. These should be kept as two separate sections.

- Candidates should be made aware of the relation between the number of points expected and the number of marks shown in brackets in **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**

- Candidates are reminded that, as far as possible, they should use their own words in response to **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

This question was generally tackled well. Where candidates did answer incorrectly, this tended to be in parts **(b)** and **(d)**. For **Question 1(b)**, some candidates answered "参加", which was not in the second paragraph of the reading passage, the correct answer being "参与". For **Question 1(d)**, some candidates answered "涉及到" instead of "涉及". Candidates need to take care to answer using words from the specified paragraphs.

Question 2

Part **(c)** was answered correctly by most candidates, and **(a)** was handled well by many. Where candidates did make mistakes in part **(a)**, it was generally caused by candidates not understanding the usage of "为了". Part **(b)** proved to be the most challenging part of this question, with a number of candidates answering incorrectly by not dropping "便" from the sentence.

Questions 3 and 4

Most candidates did very well on these questions, and showed good levels of comprehension. Where candidates did not score full marks, it was often because answers were not full enough for all marks to be awarded. Candidates should be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

Improvements were seen in candidates answering using their own words. In doing this, however, candidates must be careful not to change the meaning of the point being re-phrased, as this may render the answer incorrect.

It is also worth reminding candidates that reading comprehension questions are intended to test the extent to which candidates have understood the reading passages in the question paper. Therefore marks are only awarded for information taken from these reading passages. Marks cannot be awarded for answers drawn from the candidate's personal knowledge.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question in which candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Key messages

- **Question 1** is a vocabulary recognition exercise, which requires candidates to find words or phrases from the first reading passage that are closest in meaning with those given in the question. Words that are not in the specified paragraphs of the passage are not acceptable.

- **Question 2** is a grammatical manipulation exercise. It requires candidates to rewrite the sentences using the given phrases, without changing the meaning.

- **Question 3** and **Question 4** consist of a series of comprehension questions. Those requiring simple and straightforward answers were done well, while answers to more stretching questions needed to contain more explanation.

- **Question 5(a)** requires candidates to produce a summary of the information given in both passages. **Question 5(b)** requires candidates to give their personal responses to the material, which can be their own understanding, experience, and opinion of the issues raised. These should be kept as two separate sections.

- Candidates should be made aware of the relation between the number of points expected and the number of marks shown in brackets in **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**

- Candidates are reminded that, as far as possible, they should use their own words in response to **Questions 3**, **4 and 5**.

General comments

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the two reading passages and responded well to the questions asked.

Many candidates were able to express information in their own words as well as show engagement with the reading passages. Some did an excellent job in this respect. Many good and clearly expressed answers were seen. This year fewer candidates simply copied word for word from the reading passages, which was an improvement on previous years. Candidates need to be careful not to stray from the text of the reading passages, and not to change the meaning of the information given in the effort of using their own words.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Most candidates answered these questions correctly. Where mistakes were made, these tended to be in parts **(b)**, **(c)** and **(e)**. Candidates are reminded that they should not add extra words to those given in the passage.

Question 2

This question was well answered, with most candidates answering **(a)** and **(c)** correctly. Several candidates found part **(b)** difficult, their mistakes indicating that the usage of "被" needs to be better understood.

Questions 3 and 4

The majority of candidates were able to show very good to excellent levels of comprehension in their responses to these questions. **Question 4** in particular was very well answered with most candidates scoring well. In **Question 3**, where candidates did not score full marks, it was often either as a result of the answer not being full enough, or not accurate enough. Candidates are reminded of the need to read the questions carefully to ensure that their responses fully answer the question. Candidates should also be reminded to take note of the mark allocation when they write their answers, in order to ensure that they provide sufficient detail to gain the maximum marks for each answer.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to this question in which candidates drew relevant material from both reading passages in response to the summary question and added to this a convincing personal response.

Where candidates did not do as well it was usually for one of the following reasons:

- not referring to the information in the reading passages for the summary element
- not incorporating their own ideas or experiences in the answer
- writing a general summary of the two reading passages rather than answering the specific question asked.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

| Paper 8681/31 |
| Essay |

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to provide a clear focus by selecting relevant pieces of information, and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination, and the level of linguistic ability displayed by some candidates was outstanding. Most managed to keep within the stated word limit.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clear understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the chosen question was maintained throughout. A coherent structure was demonstrated with a logical progression of ideas leading to a sound conclusion.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalised statements and limited use of supported examples. Some candidates restricted their marks for Content by writing pre-learnt essays that were not a sufficient response to the title, rather more of a generalised set of ideas on the topic. There was a tendency to write around the topic and use irrelevant material.

1 家庭 – family

This title was by far the most popular with candidates. The strong essays effectively explained the reasons for conflict and friction between teenagers and parents. The weaker essays suggested that teenagers ought to be obedient, and good communication was essential for improving the relationship between parents and teenagers. A number of candidates used 予盾 instead of 矛盾 in the essay.

2 法制 - law

This title was less attractive to candidates and the performance was not as strong as for other topics. Candidates needed to build up an argument leading to a strong conclusion, rather than merely listing examples of recent criminal cases. There were suggestions on how to build a harmonious society, but they did not manage to answer the question fully.

3 体育 - sport

Many candidates wrote essays which attempted to explain why sport is important, but did not answer the key question – why sport is important to *young people*. Some candidates gave lengthy examples, though the material presented was not consistently relevant.

4 就业 - employment

Most candidates dealt with this topic with confidence, by providing supporting information on their chosen career paths. Some candidates could have achieved higher marks by providing further information on how to pursue and realise their goals.

5 科技 - technology

This was the second most popular question, and most candidates who chose this topic answered it well. Candidates are reminded of the need to focus on the question asked; some wrote beautifully about developments in modern technology and the benefits it brings to our daily life, but failed to address the question fully.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to provide a clear focus by selecting relevant pieces of information, and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination, and the level of linguistic ability displayed by some candidates was outstanding. Most managed to keep within the stated word limit.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clear understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the chosen question was maintained throughout. A coherent structure was demonstrated with a logical progression of ideas leading to a sound conclusion.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalised statements and limited use of supported examples. Some candidates restricted their marks for Content by writing pre-learnt essays that were not a sufficient response to the title, rather more of a generalised set of ideas on the topic. There was a tendency to write around the topic and use irrelevant material.

1 家庭 – family

This title was by far the most popular with candidates. The strong essays effectively explained the reasons for conflict and friction between teenagers and parents. The weaker essays suggested that teenagers ought to be obedient, and good communication was essential for improving the relationship between parents and teenagers. A number of candidates used 予盾 instead of 矛盾 in the essay.

2 法制 - law

This title was less attractive to candidates and the performance was not as strong as for other topics. Candidates needed to build up an argument leading to a strong conclusion, rather than merely listing examples of recent criminal cases. There were suggestions on how to build a harmonious society, but they did not manage to answer the question fully.

3 体育 - sport

Many candidates wrote essays which attempted to explain why sport is important, but did not answer the key question – why sport is important to *young people*. Some candidates gave lengthy examples, though the material presented was not consistently relevant.

4 就业 - employment

Most candidates dealt with this topic with confidence, by providing supporting information on their chosen career paths. Some candidates could have achieved higher marks by providing further information on how to pursue and realise their goals.

5 科技 - technology

This was the second most popular question, and most candidates who chose this topic answered it well. Candidates are reminded of the need to focus on the question asked; some wrote beautifully about developments in modern technology and the benefits it brings to our daily life, but failed to address the question fully.

CHINESE LANGUAGE

Key messages

In order to score the highest marks for essays, candidates are expected to give a clear focus, selecting relevant pieces of information and organising them in a logical manner to create a coherent argument. The use of Chinese should be generally accurate and of a suitably advanced nature as well as showing a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary. It can be helpful for candidates to refer to the title as often as necessary throughout the essay in order to maintain relevance, develop strong arguments and reach a solid conclusion.

General comments

The majority of candidates seemed well prepared for the examination and the level of the linguistic ability shown by some candidates was truly outstanding.

Towards the top of the range, candidates displayed a sound knowledge of their chosen topic and a clearer understanding of the issues involved. Ideas and arguments were very effectively organised, illustrated with relevant examples. Relevance to the specific question was maintained. There was a coherent structure to the answer, with a logical progression of ideas leading to a conclusion or conclusions.

The work of weaker candidates was characterised by generalisation with little specific exemplification.
Some candidates restricted their marks for Content by writing pre-learnt essays that were clearly not a response to the title set but more a generalised set of ideas on the topic. There was a tendency to write loosely on the topic and use some irrelevant material. There was little build-up of an argument leading to a conclusion.

1 家庭 – family

This was the second most popular question, and the majority of candidates tackled this topic with a clear structure. However, some candidates spent time explaining in great detail about current Chinese family structure only, without comparing it with the family structure of fifty years ago, which was the key expectation set by the question.

2 法制 - law

There were too few answers to this question to make comment appropriate.

3 体育 - sport

This was by far the most popular question and attracted candidates from across the ability range. In general, candidates scored highly on this topic. A small number of candidates wrote wordy responses on the merit of sports in general rather than answering specifically about the sport they had chosen to write about.

4 就业 - employment

The candidates who attempted this topic handled the question competently; they wrote in a balanced way, supporting their arguments with convincing information points. However, some students spent too much time on the relationship between capability/talent and securing a good job, rather than referring back to the question and arguing the relationship between an education/certificate and a good job.

5 科技 - technology

There were too few answers to this question to make comment appropriate.