

PORTUGUESE

Paper 8672/04

GCE Advanced Level, Portuguese

General comments

Most candidates coped well with the questions. It was clear that they had read the books, or had at least gone through a detailed analysis of some of them in class. They were aware of the plot and characters, although sometimes the names were changed. Some candidates were able to look beyond the immediate material and show some understanding of the author's intentions, focusing on some particular passages, being coherent in their explanations and choosing a detailed approach and adequate illustrations.

However, a large number of candidates tended to narrate the story of the book without linking it to the question. Some summarised the question in no more than ten lines after having been through a lot of unnecessary details. There were many answers that did not refer to the question asked or that simply did not bear any relation to it. Some responses were over-simplified and superficial. In the future, candidates should pay closer attention to the questions asked.

Unfortunately there were also some candidates who appeared to have simply memorised certain parts of the stories and then were not able to develop some important points. They produced very basic material without showing any understanding of the text.

Candidates should be reminded at the beginning of the exam to identify the questions they are answering. They do not have to re-write the whole question; they just need to write the number and letter for the chosen question.

A few candidates chose **Questions 1, 2 or 3 (a)** in **Section 1** but forgot that they had to answer both sub-questions **(i)** and **(ii)**.

Candidates should always make an effort to write legibly, and make sure their handwriting is clear, which is not always the case.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

In Section 1, most candidates opted for **Question 1(b)** about the evolution of *Teodoro in O Mandarin* but some failed to relate their answer to the question. The Examiner was expecting candidates to illustrate this evolution, to explain in which parts of the story this can be seen and why, with close reference to the text.

Questions 2(a) and **2(b)** were also popular amongst candidates and whilst candidates had few problems with **Question 2(a)**, they found **Question 2(b)** more challenging. There were three topics that candidates were expected to develop in **Question 2(b)**: love, family and money.

Section 2

In Section 2, many candidates answered **Questions 4(a)** and **6(b)**. In **Question 4(a)** the candidates were required to analyse the presence of destiny in every short story of *Nós matámos o cão tinhoso*. Some candidates only picked two or three short stories and did not exemplify their answer thoroughly enough. It was also clear that some candidates did not know the real story behind the characters, what they really represented and this also affected the quality of their answer.

Candidates answered **Question 6(b)** with accuracy and pertinence. The relationship between the two characters and the historical context of the time was analysed in detail. Some candidates related these two characters to the social, economic and political context of the time and compared their lives in an interesting way. The candidates that scored lower marks were not able to illustrate properly the relationship between these two characters and managed to write simple and superficial answers.