

# FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/01

Reading

## General comments

The overall performance of the candidature was good. Most candidates demonstrated their comprehension of the texts and tasks. A few candidates produced work of an exceptionally high standard; a very few candidates failed to show their ability to comprehend the tasks and answer all the questions. Candidates are to be commended this year for answers which were relevant to the texts and not the candidates' own ideas, views or opinions.

There were a few common problems as was the case in previous years. Firstly, some candidates did not write their answers in full sentences. Candidates should be made aware that answers presented in such a style, for example, bullet points or a list of notes, will have a negative impact on marks available for language. Secondly, some candidates did not use a consistent writing style. For example, the written style and the formal spoken style were used in the same paper. Candidates should be reminded that their responses are assessed on quality of language as well as content.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

Generally, all the sub-questions were answered adequately. However, some candidates did not provide evidence that they comprehended the specific details of the text and the questions. For example, **Question (f)** asked candidates to explain, in the candidate's own words, what the author wanted to say through the metaphors 'thorn, nylon underpants, bow and scarecrow' in the text. Some candidates did not explain what these metaphors were used for and some candidates only copied the text in explanation rather than explaining in their own words. Also, many candidates failed to provide evidence that they understood the specific details of the text in relation to **Question (j)**. The question asked candidates to explain how Youngho was going to live his life in the sentence 'I know what I'm going to do.' The answer in short is that Youngho would not pay attention to conscience, morals, custom and law, and he would do anything in order to make money. Many candidates answered quite the opposite stating he would abide by conscience, morals, custom and law.

### Question 2

The majority of candidates successfully linked and explored the common themes of the two texts. However, some candidates did not pay attention to the specific instructions in the questions. For example, **Question (a)** asked candidates to summarise the specific points with regards to Kim Manpil's contradictory feelings. However, some candidates did not state the specifics but tried to describe Kim Manpil's overall characteristics. Also, **Question (b)** asked specifically what the differences were between Cheolho and the other three characters in passage 1 and passage 2, and what were the similarities and differences between the three characters. Not all the candidates correctly followed the instructions. For example, some discussed the similarities between Cheolho and Kim Manpil.

Some candidates successfully answered the questions as instructed, however, some tried to group the characters in a different way, which is not what the questions required.

# FIRST LANGUAGE KOREAN

Paper 0521/02

Writing

Generally, candidates coped well with the paper and were able to write on the topics or themes of the questions. There were a few excellent pieces of writing. This time, in terms of style and accuracy, most candidates showed quite a good command of grammar and accuracy in their language and chose to write in an appropriate style. Overall, appropriate vocabulary, style and expressions were used.

Some candidates expressed their ideas and opinions in a structured way using appropriate arguments. A few candidates needed to develop more organised writing skills with more supporting arguments. Even though some responses started with good points, sometimes these were developed only partially, were repeated, or the thread of the argument was lost due to paragraphs being not well sequenced.

A popular choice was the narrative question. For those who responded, the development of the story was generally sound, but some lacked attention to character, setting, events or climax.

Those who chose the description question managed to keep the writing as descriptive as possible. In places, however, more structure and effective development of ideas would have been beneficial.

## Discussion and Argument

- (a) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of holding a big sports event or music concert in your town. This was the most popular topic. Most answers made clear points in terms of advantages and disadvantages, but some reasons given became repetitive. More supporting argument would have helped, in some cases.
- (b) Between 'Freedom' and 'Equality', which is more important? Some candidates found this question challenging. Responses to this question could have shown more focus on defining the two ideas and developing the argument.
- (c) What do you think about the argument that progress in science technology does not mean progress in the human world? Candidates also found this a challenging option. However, those who chose to answer this question managed to develop a good argument.
- (d) Competition is human nature so it cannot be avoided in our lives. Discuss what you think. Too few candidates responded to comment.

## Description and Narration

- (a) Describe an impressive place you have been. Candidates showed the ability to describe a place, but at times structure and ideas were lacking.
- (b) Choose a family member or friend and describe his or her appearance, character, etc. Too few candidates responded to comment.
- (c) You found a building on fire. Write a story about what happened next. There was one very good response to this question. Candidates are reminded that the plot and character setting is important for this sort of story writing.
- (d) Write story beginning – You noticed there was a fight outside your home. What happened next? This was the most popular topic in **Section 2**. Although candidates coped well in terms of story and plot, in places there was a lack of character setting or climax.