

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/01 Reading
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Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to:

- Use their own words as much as possible and not copy full sentences from the text.
- Write an initial plan, mainly for **Question 2**, to avoid repetition of ideas.
- Use synonyms in order to avoid repetition of ideas.
- Write a good structured piece of work, divided into paragraphs with an introduction, development and conclusion.
- Think carefully about what the question is asking them before they start to write.

Candidates should:

- Carry on making an effort to write as clearly as possible and make sure their handwriting is legible.
- Read the texts carefully.
- Avoid bullet points in their answers.
- Find the information from the text, in **Question 1**, but try to use their own words as much as possible.
- Plan their answers, re-read at the end to avoid repetition and mistakes with agreement of gender and number.
- In **Question 2** finish with a concluding paragraph without repeating everything that has been said previously.
- Look for information in both texts for **Question 2** and should not give their own opinion.

To do well in this paper, candidates are expected to answer **Question 1** in a concise manner always relating to the information in the text but preferably without bullet points. To score high marks for Quality of Language, candidates should display a good command of the language by spelling words correctly, varying the way they start their sentences and showing a good grasp of grammatical structures. Full sentences also score a higher mark.

In **Question 2** candidates are expected to use their own language and write their own text on the basis of the two texts they read and should not give their own opinion. They are rewarded for their capacity to summarise the main ideas in both texts and to produce their own well-structured piece of writing. Candidates who do very well in this question always organise ideas into different paragraphs, use correct punctuation and accents, link ideas by means of a variety of connectives and use a broad range of vocabulary.

General comments

The topic of both texts related to the immediate experiences of youngsters, which resulted in a good and personal engagement with the tasks. Candidates were able to give accurate answers to many of the questions.

Some candidates answered **Question 2** based mainly on Text B. Candidates need to refer to both texts in a balanced way when producing their answers to be more successful. Stronger candidates managed to organise and articulate their discourse in a clear, personal, confident and sophisticated manner. In general, candidates referred to at least 7 to 8 of the items requested and performed the task adequately, both in terms of style and organisation.

Other responses overlooked the information from the texts completely and decided to answer the question by giving their own opinion.

Quality of Language

The quality of language varied from excellent to poor. The weakest candidates found it difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form. The notion of agreement of verb with subject was still visible but basic agreements of adjectives were routinely ignored by some candidates. Most candidates revealed an adequate expression. The syntax and the vocabulary presented were simple and there were some technical errors when producing their answers.

A small percentage of candidates revealed more sophistication in terms of syntax and vocabulary use as well as more accuracy overall. Only a few candidates presented answers with a limited expression, lack of clarity and general clumsiness which impacted their performance overall.

Most candidates answered questions appropriately in full text rather than through small bullet points.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Candidates struggled to achieve full marks in this question and seemed to misunderstand the focus of the question. Many candidates mentioned freedom and body changes but those were the changes. The focus of question was about the repercussions of these changes.
- (b) Most candidates got at least 2 out of 3 marks as some forgot to mention the mental health problems.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly, only a few did not specify what type of games were not good for adolescents.
- (d) Many candidates answered this question correctly. Answers like 'it's easy to research' or 'the digital world is fabulous due to the quality of information' could not be accepted as they were not referred in the text.
- (e) Candidates were able to identify at least three of the items requested and have struggled to identify the fourth item and sometimes repeated the same idea twice.
- (f) This question proved to be more challenging to many candidates. However, some candidates achieved full marks. This question required a certain degree of inference, and while most candidates identified one of the items requested: *curiosidade*, others struggled to identify the second one which was that we are interested in other people's lives; we want to see what they are doing. A small percentage of candidates was altogether unable to tackle the challenge and merely repeated the formulation of the question and have not provided any clear interpretative explanation.
- (g) Most candidates managed to get at least 2 out of the 3 items requested but some candidates seemed not to understand the text fully and quoted the wrong examples to justify their answers.
- (h) The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly and efficiently.

Question 2

In general, it was clear that many candidates had an opinion about the topic, in particular, about Fake News, but once again it's important to stress that candidates' opinion is not being assessed here. Candidates need to read the question attentively, link both texts and summarise the ideas.

Many candidates were able to identify at least 8 of the items requested but the ones who merely wrote opinion responses only mentioned 2 to 3 of the points that could be accepted.

Whilst most candidates were able to express themselves coherently with the appropriate use of syntax and vocabulary, their responses still presented some technical issues. The confident use of sophisticated syntax and vocabulary was infrequent. Syntax, grammar, spelling, inaccuracy in subject/verb agreement and non-phrase agreement were among the most frequent issues arising from candidates' responses. The use of prepositions was also a critical issue this series. In terms of vocabulary, interferences from English and

mostly Spanish were quite noticeable which led to too many spelling mistakes which was unfortunately, one of the biggest problems this series. The inaccuracy in the use of vocabulary seems to be in some way related with the use of Portuguese as a heritage language.

Overall, the level of the candidates was above average, and they were generally well prepared for the exam. Some of them were repetitive in their writing and confused in the development of their ideas but, there were also some other candidates that showed clear evidence of planning, drafting and editing their writing with the word limit in mind.

FIRST LANGUAGE PORTUGUESE

Paper 0504/02
Writing

Key messages

- It is important for candidates to demonstrate their ability to use a wide range of expressions and vocabulary accurately – to do this repetition and colloquial language must be avoided.
- The recommended word limit is important. Very short essays are unlikely to meet the criteria needed to be placed in the higher bands.
- An essay lacking structure will not achieve high marks. It is also important to use linking words/expressions between some paragraphs to ensure that ideas within sentences are appropriately connected.
- To score full marks in **section A** essays should include facts, reasons, explanations, and examples.

General comments

Stronger candidates created well-structured essays, focusing on what was asked of them (in the question) and keeping the reader interested.

Discursive essays that scored high marks contained a variety of ideas and examples, leading to a conclusion in which candidates summarised their findings.

Candidates who produced answers close to the word limit fully develop their ideas, presenting a good structure and using examples.

Many excellent argumentative essays used facts and evidence to support the position that was being presented and included a compelling conclusion.

High score narrative essays told a story containing a sequence of connected events which may have been real or imaginary.

A good descriptive piece of writing described places, objects or a situation, painting a picture with words that allowed the reader to picture it in his/her mind. Other responses struggled to write good descriptive texts of places or objects and those texts tended to veer towards the narrative style, which used up precious word count off task.

Frequent found grammar and spelling errors: 'o que' as one word 'oque', and words mixed up: (*estaram and estarão*), (*a ver and haver*), (*á and há*).

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Discussão e Argumento

Question 1

- (a) ***Qual considera ser o maior desafio social no seu país? Elabore a sua resposta, referindo razões e possíveis soluções.***

Due to most candidates choosing 1(c) only a few chose **Question (a)** and (d) and a even more reduced number chose (b). Many candidates were able to identify the most significant social issue

in their countries. It was noticed that most candidates choosing this question wrote about issues in Brazil, followed by a reduced number writing about Mozambique. The very best essays were extremely well argued and logically organised. Some candidates needed to focus more on giving well-structured answers.

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- (b) ***A fábula da formiga e da cigarra mostra que o trabalho árduo compensa. Concorda que somente com esforço se obtém sucesso?***

This was the less popular question among candidates. There were responses that showed an understanding of the task. Other responses needed to better explain the reasons why '**somente com esforço se obtém sucesso**' or struggled to give clear examples. Weaker candidates ended up going off the topic or writing about a different topic.

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- (c) ***Os (as) alunos (as) adolescentes deveriam ter o direito de escolher apenas aquelas disciplinas que lhes interessam. Concorda com a afirmação?***

This was the preferred question for **section 1**. The great majority of candidates chose to discuss whether young candidates had a right to choose their favourite subjects or not. The candidates really enjoyed giving their opinion about this matter, demonstrating a good knowledge about the topic and often writing about their own experiences. Most candidates were able to present a good range of reasons to support their argument. The most successful answers, scoring higher marks, were extremely well argued and logically organised, used the correct language, a wide variety of sophisticated vocabulary and varied grammatical structures. Other candidates struggled to express themselves and discuss different viewpoints and presented some ideas without elaborating or discussing them.

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- (d) ***Hoje em dia saber falar outra língua é essencial para poder arranjar um bom trabalho. Concorda com esta afirmação?***

This question followed (c) as the second favourite choice. Overall, candidates were good at expressing their ideas for and against 'how a second language is important to help find a job'. Stronger candidates clearly identified the advantages of speaking a language and presented examples, with the most common answer being that knowing other languages bring advantages to people when looking for certain jobs or travelling abroad. Fewer candidates did not agree with the statement and were able to identify the reasons by arguing that many jobs do not required the knowledge of a second language.

Section 2

Descrição e Narração

Question 2

- (a) ***Narre um acontecimento positivo dos últimos anos, que tenha tido um impacto significativo na sua vida.***

This was the second most chosen question in **section 2**. The most successful texts presented a narrative piece of writing that told a story containing a sequence of connected events, and telling a story through the sequence of facts, showing the reader who was involved (characters) and what was the context addressed (time and space). Other responses found difficult the creation of suspense, climax, and resolution in narrative tasks.

The structure of the narration is formed by beginning, middle (development and climax) and end but some candidates found it difficult to create the climax and/or concluding the story.

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- (b) *Escreva um texto narrativo intitulado: Como o mundo seria melhor.***

The best answers presented an interesting, original, and relevant text; with candidates demonstrating a clear understanding of the narrative text. The plot was strongly conveyed and consistently developed with convincing and engaging features of fictional writing such as description, characterisation, and effective climax. Other responses developed an argumentative text instead of narrative, listing the problems society faces and how to change it.

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- (c) *Descreva os objetos mais importantes da sua vida, e explique porque não poderia viver sem eles.***

This question was less popular with candidates. Overall, the candidates found it difficult to describe the characteristics of their chosen objects, but they were good at explaining the reasons why those objects were important to them. The most chosen objects were related to new technology, such as smart phones and computers, but they also chose surf boards and motorbikes. The descriptive style seems to be an area that needs to be improved for future candidates.

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- (d) *Descreva um lugar inesquecível.***

This was the most chosen question in **section 2**, followed by **Question (a)**. The best answers integrated formal description with an attractive story. The locations described were mostly associated with the candidates' experiences on holidays at the seaside or visiting cities abroad. The best responses addressed what the specific question asked, considered all aspects, and described well all the elements related to their stories.