

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 once again 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.
- Avoid bullet points in their answers.
- Lift the information from the text, in **Question 1**, but try to use their own words as much as possible.
- Look for information in both texts for **Question 2** and should not give their own opinion.

General comments

The environment and what should be done by everyone to protect it is a much discussed topic and for that reason candidates had a good knowledge about it. However, their opinion was not the subject matter of the task; therefore they could not be assessed for that. It was clear that candidates understood both texts and the vast majority were able to give accurate answers to many of the questions.

This year some candidates based their answers for **Question 2** mainly on Text A, but others managed to refer to both texts in a balanced way. In general, candidates were able to identify between four and seven of the requested details and the best candidates referred to at least eleven of the items requested and performed the task adequately, both in terms of style and organisation. There were some candidates who did not refer to either or both texts and give their own opinion.

Quality of Language

The quality of language varied. The notion of agreement of verb with subject was still visible. Basic agreements of adjectives were also routinely ignored by some candidates. Most exams revealed an adequate expression (3 marks). The syntax and the vocabulary were simple, and there were some technical errors.

It was good to see that this year more candidates revealed more sophistication in terms of syntax and vocabulary use, and more accuracy overall (4/5 marks). Very few exams were graded with a weak performance (2 marks), corresponding to limited expression, lack of clarity and limited vocabulary.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) As this question had a few possible answers it was fairly easy to get full marks here, unfortunately some candidates did not know the meaning of '*validade*' and wrote '*validade*' or '*variedade*' and that was not accepted.
- (b) Most candidates got this answer right with complete answers for both options.

- (c) Most candidates managed to get one mark when referring to the first point linked to '*igualdade e qualidade no trabalho*' and '*mostram respeito pelo ambiente*' or '*querem que os consumidores acreditem no trabalho que está a ser feito*' with the expression '*transparência em relação ao consumidor*'.
- (d) Some candidates mentioned the fact that throwing clothes away does not solve the problem, because these clothes will always end up somewhere else, but other candidates completely misunderstood the meaning of the question.
- (d) Most candidates tried to explain the meaning of '*fechar o ciclo*' unfortunately some were not very successful with their explanation. Nevertheless, the vast majority of candidates managed to get one or two marks out of the three available for this question.
- (f) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly but some only mentioned that *Iracema* was selling clothes online or donating them.
- (g) Most candidates managed to get at least three of the four marks available for this question. A high percentage of them obtained full marks.
- (h) This question did not cause great difficulties. However, when identifying some of the required details such as '*estimular a economia dos outros países*', a few candidates ended up by repeating the same idea in the course of their answer. The reference to '*criar emprego*' and '*dar trabalho aos mais desfavorecidos*' was also repeated.

Question 2

The answers to **Question 2** revealed a good engagement with the topic. Although most candidates interpreted the task well and wrote in summary style with a good degree of focus, some did not mention a sufficient number of points in order to attain higher marks. Many candidates wrote about what can be done to improve the environmental conditions today, not about what can convince a wide audience to implement measures that will improve the state of the environment.

It was good to see that a few candidates were outstanding in providing good insight on the summary needed to get the highest marks keeping the word limit. Unfortunately, there were also a few candidates that scored less than four marks, out of the available fifteen, because they did not link their answers to the points from both texts as it was expected. Some texts were well written but were opinions, not facts from both texts.

Question 2 – Writing: Style and Organisation

In terms of expression, most candidates revealed a satisfactory expression in own words, with some sense of order. A reasonable number of candidates displayed good expression in recognisable summary style, with good focus and linkage. There were a few cases in which the structure of the summary was expressed with great self-awareness and sophistication, relating to a personal, coherent and cohesive organisation of the text, the use of own words and of advanced level syntax and connectors.

Question 2 – Writing: Accuracy of Language

Many candidates were able to express themselves with appropriate syntax and vocabulary and their responses exhibited few technical errors. Adequate and good language uses were the most common features in the cohort. Nevertheless, centres should work with candidates on the use of prepositions, verb tenses and subject/verb and non-phrase agreement.

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Paper 0504/02 Writing
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Key messages

- It is important to pay attention to the recommended word limit. Short answers are unlikely to meet the criteria needed to be placed in the higher bands.
- Candidates need to be careful when memorising texts pre-created at home, and then using them to try and answer the exam questions. This often does not work well.
- Candidates need to carefully read the questions, and make sure they clearly understand the task required – if description is requested, they need to describe the ambience, what they see, smell, feel, etc. and avoid narrating stories. They also need to make sure they understand all the terms used in each sentence, to ensure they are giving the correct answer.

General comments

Candidates with high marks developed well-structured answers focusing on what was asked of them; and often keeping the reader interested.

Narratives scoring higher marks told stories containing well sequenced events, which may have been real or imaginary.

There were a significant number of answers with a strong presence of Spanish. Some scripts scored very low marks because candidates did not demonstrate an acceptable knowledge of the Portuguese language. There was sometime very limited use of Portuguese words, and the overall sentences did not make much, or in some cases, any sense.

Overall, there were many mistakes related to punctuation and accentuation and verb-subject agreement.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular question amongst candidates. Texts that scored lower grades, the candidates could not state their opinion and support it. They tended to write generally about technology and how it changed society; and focus less on the requested task.
- (b) It was interesting to read candidates' views on graffiti. Overall, the candidates presented good arguments to support their opinion and even included examples, and names of well-known artists.
- (c) This was the most popular question. Overall, the candidates had very strong opinions about this matter and completed their task successfully. Most candidates were able to present a good range of reasons to support their argument. Candidates scoring lower grades, struggled to express their thoughts and discuss different reasons. Others presented some ideas but with limited discussion.
- (d) This was one of the less popular questions in group 1. There were a number of answers where candidates wrote about Global Warming or climate change, without answering the task requested. The candidates that scored higher marks for this question were clear to agree with the statement presented to them and to identify the reasons.

Question 2

- (a) This was a popular question. Some candidates truly enjoyed telling us about the most beautiful place to go on holidays. However, candidates scoring lower grades often wrote texts sounding more like an advertisement trying to convince the reader to visit that place but giving little description. Other, candidates, created narratives instead of descriptions. They focused more on the events than on the scenery.
- (b) This question was less popular amongst candidates. We found answers, where candidates narrated their day in a football stadium instead of describing the ambience.
- (c) We noticed that candidates who scored lower marks for this question, often showed that they misunderstood what was requested of them – perhaps they did not understand the meaning of ‘atribulada’ and they narrated their holidays, or wrote about a trip they had been on; without making references to any funny/curious experiences, or any other details that would be seen as a ‘viagem atribulada’
- (d) This was also one of the most popular questions amongst the candidates. Overall, the candidates did well when answering this question. Candidates scoring lower marks often did not link the suggested start sentence to the development of the narrative.