

# PORTUGUESE LITERATURE

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Paper 8672/04  
Texts

## Key messages

To do well in this paper, candidates are expected to answer three questions, each on a different text. One question from **Section 1**, one from **Section 2** and one other. Candidates are expected to use their own language, show their ability to organise material, demonstrate close attention to detail of passages, have a good insight when discussing characters and be sensitive to the language and to the author's intentions. Quality of Language is also important in order to achieve a high mark therefore candidates should display a good command of the language by spelling words correctly, varying the way they start their sentences and show a good grasp of grammatical structures. Being able to show some literary techniques would also be a bonus, also, candidates should refer to the question during the answer using quotes where possible.

## General comments

Most candidates coped well with the questions but there was a small number of candidates who were not familiar with the structure of the paper and ended up answering Questions **(a)** and **(b)** from the same group. Candidates need to be aware that they have to read at least three of the six books recommended and each question answered needs to be about a different text. This is clearly stated in the instructions and the syllabus. The best candidates read the questions carefully and made a plan of the answer to avoid repetition and/or answering something different from what was asked.

This year candidates didn't have great difficulty with regard to vocabulary. There was perhaps some influence from another language, and this was reflected in the spelling of some words but it was easy to understand what was meant. Some areas that candidates found difficult included the subjunctive, 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural (present tense) and future tense. There were a lot of mistakes with the structure: : 'fala-se'; 'falasse'. Candidates should always re-read their work to avoid mistakes with agreement of gender and number.

Candidates should also always make an effort to write legibly, and make sure their handwriting is clear.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section 1**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Some candidates who answered this question didn't develop the meaning of the 'passarola' to its full potential, focusing their answer mainly in the second part of the question where they had to explain the relationship between Bartolomeu, Blimunda and Baltasar.
- (b) This question was popular and it was good to see how candidates felt at ease with the description of each couple and their role within the whole story. There was a lot of detail in most of the answers and quotes from the original text to emphasise how different both couples were. Some candidates however got a bit confused when trying to explain the similarities between D.João and D.Ana and Blimunda and Baltasar.

## Question 2

- (a) Some of the candidates who answered this question were too attached to the extract and didn't say much about Tuahir and Muidinga. They mentioned the Civil War but kept repeating themselves when describing what these characters were experiencing.
- (b) Some good answers with a lot of detail. Candidates mentioned the lack of hope the characters had and how important believing in their dreams was. There were references to different dreams from Siqueleto, Kindzu and Farida and how important they were as well as their real meaning. Again all the quotes and explanations made it easier to understand the real meaning of *Terra Sonâmbula*.

## Question 3

- (a) Some candidates didn't really know what 'Caixão Vazio' represented and only described what was in the text, what the characters thought this gang looked like and what was told they did with teachers and students at schools. In the second part of this question, most candidates wrote that Ndalú had a really good relationship with his school colleagues but it would have been nice to read about how their social and cultural differences affected their relationship too.
- (b) Most candidates had a lot to say here mentioning not only the relationship Ndalú had with António, the Cuban teachers and his school colleagues but also the different episodes with the Aunt who came to visit from Portugal stressing the differences between Portugal and Angola too.

## Question 4

- (a) In general candidates answered this question well. Some mentioned the stratification of the society already inside the convent school and then carried on exposing both the inadequate educational system and the limited role allowed to women in Brazilian society mainly through the three main characters.
- (b) The best responses explained why Guta, Maria José and Maria da Glória were separated or what caused the separation but they focused their answer on explaining how the girls met and what they used to do, why they were so united as well as the different paths each of the characters took after leaving school.

**Question 5**

- (a) Many candidates tried to explain the whole story here which wasn't asked for and unfortunately only mentioned the Gafeira in one paragraph. The ones who did develop their answer were able to mention Portugal during the Estado Novo and a lot of the symbolism used by the author.
- (b) This answer was interesting to read with a variety of suggestions of who was responsible for the death of Domingos and D. Mercês. Nevertheless, most candidates decided to write all the different possibilities instead of choosing one and justifying their own opinion.

**Question 6**

- (a) One third of the novel is about Chiquinho's childhood but many responses did not demonstrate much knowledge of this part of the story. The best responses included information about the visitors who frequently stopped at Chiquinho's house to inquire about one's wellbeing and to share food. Nhô Chic'Ana, for example, often stopped for coffee and to recount stories.
- (b) There was a lot of information here. Most candidates mentioned the importance of 'o Grémio' and Nuninha and were able to develop their answers to a good standard.