

TAMIL

Paper 9689/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages:

- In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to demonstrate understanding of the passage given.
- In the comprehension question section candidates should consider the full demands of the question before attempting to answer.
- Candidates are expected to answer the questions using their own vocabulary as far as possible.
- Wide ranging general reading will give candidates the necessary breadth of vocabulary.
- Candidates would benefit from more practice in finding and understanding antonyms and synonyms.

General comments:

In general candidates have done well on this paper. However, a number of candidates copied out long portions of the text, which was not always selective enough to demonstrate adequate comprehension

Comment on individual questions:

Question 1

Several candidates didn't manage to find any of the matching words in the text, but most have identified at least two words out of five. Teachers can help the candidates by training them to recognise synonyms.

Question 2

In this exercise candidates were required to use the given words in sentences. Candidates have done well and many of them scored full marks on this question.

Question 3 and Question 4

Candidates are advised to look at the number of marks awarded for each question (indicated in square brackets) as a guide to the number of points to be made.

Some candidates have mixed up the answers and wrote the answers under the wrong place i.e. answer for **Question 3(a)** is written under **Question 3(b)** and so on.

Candidates should be trained to read all the questions first and then start answering them in an organised and orderly manner. This way there is less of a chance of a chance they will give the answers in the wrong order.

Generally candidates did well in answering the comprehension questions and a number of them answered all or almost all the questions correctly.

Candidates must be trained to write concise answers instead of lengthy ones in **Question 3** and **Question 4** in order to avoid making language mistakes.

Questions 5(a) and 5(b)

Question **5(a)** asked the candidates to summarise the arguments in the two reading texts.

Being concise is part of the task. Candidates need to start straight away with identifying and giving point-scoring information without a general introduction.

Most candidates seemed well trained in this exercise and only a few of them have exceeded the prescribed word length.

In question **5(b)**, candidates were asked to give their personal response / experience about the effect of anger or doing something wrong. However, many candidates have summarised the points from the text without giving any personal reaction to it and therefore could not score any point for this part of the exercise.

Candidates sometimes wrote the answer to question **5(a)** and **5(b)** together, without signalling where one stops and the other begins. Candidates are advised to write their answers **5(a)** and **5(b)** separately.

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Paper 9689/03

Essay

Key Messages:

In order to perform well on this paper, candidates need to choose an essay title about which they can write a response that is clearly relevant, well-illustrated and coherent. Candidates should plan essays carefully, using the introduction to show their understanding of the essay title with all its elements and the conclusion to show their considered final judgment of the issues they have discussed.

General Comments:

This is an Essay paper in which candidates are required to compose one essay from a choice of five topics. The essay is marked out of 40 with 16 marks available for Content and 24 marks available for Quality of Language.

Overall, performance on this paper was good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

Weaker responses were characterised by a combination of misunderstanding of the question (leading to loss of marks for Content) and poor language skills.

The most common spelling errors occurred in the use of the following letters, which were often written in an incorrect form:

- – –
- – –
- –

Candidates would benefit from more practice in using these letters. Candidates should also be reminded that the letter when conjugated with consonants, will become , , , etc.

Some candidates wrote , , rather than , , .

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

A food number of candidates chose this question to answer and did fairly well.

Question 2

This was the least popular questions but those who chose it did quite well and produced comprehensive and well-structured essays.

Question 3

This was the most popular question. Strong candidates' responses were characterised by well-structured, complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors. Poor spelling and lack of focussed content was seen in weaker candidates' responses.

Question 4 & 5

There was a number of strong responses to these questions and these were characterised by inspired use of complex sentences and correct spelling and grammar, as well as interesting treatment of the question.

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Paper 9689/04

Texts

Key messages:

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to ensure that they answer the specific question asked and that they understand the focus of the question before beginning to write their answers.

Candidates should be reminded that in passage-based questions the passage is a stimulus to be used as a springboard to give them a starting point for their answer. Candidates need to ensure that they expand their answers.

Candidates are also advised to:

- choose the correct number of questions from each section.
- write question numbers correctly.
- answer only three questions
- write answers in paragraphs (with sub headings).
- quote verses or lines from verses or quotable lines from stories and dramas and explain the meaning of the quotations

General comments:

Many candidates have done quite well on this paper: they have clearly worked hard and mastered the texts they studied.

Some candidates seemed to be unfamiliar with the requirements of this paper (laid out in the syllabus) and either answered more than three questions or chose more than two questions from the same section or answered two questions on the same texts. These are prohibited by the combination rules explained on the front cover of the question paper and in the syllabus.

Candidates are required to be familiar with these rules before being entered for the exam.

Very few candidates have answered **Questions 1** (ancient *Sangam* literature), therefore no meaningful comment is possible on these.

Question 2

Most of the candidates chose *Tirukkural*. Candidates must now that they should cover at least of 8 out of 10 couplets.

When it came to answering the specific meaning of two given words, not many candidates answered it correctly.

Question 3

The questions on *Thevaram*, devotional hymns, were quite popular and there were many excellent responses.

Question 4

Similarly, the poems from the modern period attracted many candidates and a number of them generated very good answers.

Question 5 and Question 6

Drama and Short Stories

A number of candidates gave responses below the level of an A-Level examination: they simply narrated the story without analysing the style or answering the specific point (style, characterisation, theme, plot, message of the writer, and portrayal of social evils.)

Teachers should help candidates study drama and short stories critically instead of just summarising them.

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Paper 9689/05
Prose

Key message

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should ensure that they read through the prose passage carefully before beginning the translation work. While translating, candidates should bear in mind the context of the passage and the tenses used. It is not enough to translate individual words or short phrases from the text without any reference to the context. Candidates should try to allow themselves a little time at the end to read over what they have written to ensure that it makes sense. It is also essential to check their spelling and grammar. Particular attention should be given to tenses while translating.

General Comments

In this paper candidates are required to translate a short passage from English to Tamil.

Performance on this paper was generally good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

Many candidates gained high marks for inspired and grammatically correct translations; however, weaker candidates lost marks through spelling errors, incorrect translation of vocabulary items and faulty sentence construction.

Stronger candidates were able to break up some longer sentences into two separate sentences and produce largely correct and meaningful translations.

Sentences that seemed to be particularly challenging for candidates include:

- She would look at the goods on offer at every stall and compare the prices and the quality of the fruit and vegetables on sale.
- He hoped that his mother would buy some fruit soon so that he could have a piece to eat.
- He tripped over an empty banana box and fell into the pile of fruit, which collapsed on top of him.